

WRITINGS OF JAMES MCBROOM

by James Mcbroom

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by James Mcbroom, compiled for study and devotional reading.

36 Chapters

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01.00. Blue

Blue.

James McBroom.

01.00i. Introductory

Introductory

There is but one mind in heaven, and that is the acknowledgment of the worth of the Lamb that was slain. "Him hath God exalted"; to Him hath Jehovah said, "Sit on my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool." The whole intelligence of heaven is occupied in discovering all the glories of the Person and work of the Son. Here then, is heavenly-mindedness; it can only be the portion of those who are risen with Christ There is one all-absorbing subject — it admits not of a divided mind — the loins of the mind must be girded up. It is a subject, too, which is inexhaustible. He who is a father in Christ is one who has unlearned all else, in order to know Him that was from the beginning; and has yet to pray "that I may know him." It is, therefore, by knowing Jesus, that we know the mind of heaven. There is nothing fanciful or speculative in this; it is not giving the rein to a lively or warm imagination, in order to picture to ourselves what might be the employments of heaven, but it is our ability, through our knowledge of Him who descended first into the lower parts of the earth, and then ascended far above all heavens, to have fellowship with those who are there. The same substantial reality which is presented to us, is also to them the engrossing object, even the Lamb that was slain. It is this which measures the utter distance between the utmost stretch of human intellect, or loftiest flights of man's imagination, and one led by the Spirit — the subject is so different.

"Subjects for the Household of Faith," Page 70, 71.

01.01. Part 1

Blue.

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen." (Exodus 28:6). The complex materials which formed the high priest's garment called the Ephod, and indeed, all the priestly robes present an interesting subject of enquiry. Since they speak of the glories which shine in the Son of God, who is called to be a Priest after the order of Melchisedek, they are sure to present a rich compensation to those who reverently wait on the Lord for the explanation. They all speak of Him in one way or another, and while the gold tells of what is divine and glorious, the blue follows on to indicate the pre-eminence of heaven in correspondence with that glory and in relation to all the ways of God. Here then, my friend, is a field for research where we may contemplate heavenly and eternal things by the Spirit of God, which history cannot offer, nature cannot promise, nor science unfold; unreachable by the natural mind, incomparable for grandeur, and, because belonging to the realm of faith and revelation, infinitely beyond both the reach and conception of the creature. How great and glorious beyond all thought is the Person of our blessed Lord, and how infinitely gracious of our God to make it known to feeble creatures in this way. There is plenty of glitter and worldly pomp all around to captivate the natural heart, and those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth are accustomed, while passing through the world, to keep in check their natural desires. They may, however, let themselves out with perfect freedom in the happy contemplation of spiritual verities which are pure, heavenly, and eternal. "Things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and which have not come into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for them that love Him " (1 Corinthians 2:9). Our Lord Jesus Christ is the end and aim of all Scripture, and many and varied are the ways which the Holy Ghost takes to set Him before our hearts. Delightful as is the tracing of the typical signification of the gold with its representation of the divine glory in Man and the display of divine righteousness, there is quite as important and equally interesting line of thought in the blue. We must see, indeed, that the whole accumulation of types, shadows, promises, and prophecies, find in Him their end, and "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." Speaking on 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, "There is," says W. Kelly, "a distinct purpose or idea couched under the legal forms as their inner spirit and this he — the apostle — lets us know is really Christ the Lord. 'Now the Lord is that Spirit,' this it is that runs through the whole legal system in its different types and shadows." This brings us to the Tabernacle, the dwelling-place of God, and scene of the manifestation in type of the divine glory, every ray of which shines in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. And since it is spoken of as a figurative representation of things in heaven, we may note a beautiful link of connection between the seen and unseen, the natural and the spiritual; God as it were, speaking to us by the things He has created rather than by the language of earth. The tent of mystic beauty with its sacred furniture and favoured priestly family voiced the language of another world, indicating in those early days, the intention of God regarding another order of Man, and with Him a new company in priestly dignity, clothed in garments of glory and ornament to worship in holy splendour. Here remark the peculiar place of the tabernacle as linking together the two grand

systems of Creation and Redemption, the former setting before us omnipotent power and beneficent goodness, and the latter, eternal counsels of love from which all the rest sprang. Created things are made to teach the uncreated, and the soul is made to adore as the Holy Spirit unfolds the eternal verities which lie behind the things that are seen.

Besides the actual fabrics which composed the structure there were certain colours arranged in such a way as to give an appearance of magnificence to the whole. The tabernacle was made of fine twined linen with blue, purple, and scarlet and covered with cunningly wrought cherubim. Then there was the hangings before each entrance, including the holy veil, as well as the clothes of service and the priestly robes all being brought from the great workshop of nature and cunningly wrought by the designer for beauty and order, because it was the habitation of Him who deigned to take up His abode among His people. The fine twined linen gave a groundwork for the colours, and is in itself a fit emblem of the spotless humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, while the colours speak of the combination of graces and perfections which were proper to Him. This is seen in Hebrews 10, where the holy veil is said to represent His humanity. As the colours were arranged in the cloth in an orderly way so that unity and consistency would be seen in the whole they speak of the moral perfections of Him in whom all was so perfectly blended as to set forth a perfect human life on the earth. A distinction must be made, however, between these colours. The purple and scarlet are well known to indicate dispensational and royal glory both in Israel and the nations, speaking both of the Davidic sway and the time when the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to Him as Son of Man. Blue is the colour which speaks of heaven and heavenly things. This gives an interest to the latter different from the other two. While the claims of royalty and kingly dignity is seen in every step, all was in perfect accord with the ways, thoughts, and life of heaven all the way through. It will be seen that the blue was the predominating colour all through, for besides the combination with purple and scarlet, it is found in many places where the others are absent. See the lower fastenings of the breastplate, the long blue robe of the ephod, the ribbon which encircled the mitre and encircled the holy crown, and such is the Spirit's use of this colour that it appears again in another set of symbols altogether where everything speaks of glory. We allude to the Scripture use of precious stones where we meet with the sapphire, which is said to be the colour of the deep blue sky. It is found in combination to exhibit the divine glory in Creation, Grace, and Redemption (Ezekiel 28:13, Exodus 28:18; Revelation 21:19), and is used in the description of the throne of God Himself (Exodus 24:10; Ezekiel 1:26).

It is just possible, however, to use the types to hide the great antitype, and to be able to give a good account of the material figures with but a poor apprehension of the Lord Himself. Leaving therefore, the department of types and shadows, we enter the domain where the Person in all His moral beauty is portrayed, where the sinfulness of sin and the ruin of man supply the dark background which brings His perfection more distinctly into view. Never was there such a record as the Gospels give for there the activities both of good and evil are seen in all their varied ramifications in character, conduct, and life, and there the supremacy of good is set forth to the delight of the heart of God by a Man. The second Man out of heaven is seen making good the claims of God in the midst of a fallen race, and He is contrasted with the first man not as a sinner only, but as to order of origin. "The first man out of earth made of dust; the second Man out of heaven." The distance and estrangement which sin had wrought was removed for faith in the birth of Christ. This is put with certain touches of exquisite beauty in the early chapters of Luke. The

incident of the heavenly visitant and Zechariah leads to the song about the day-spring from on high. Then Gabriel with the most momentous of all messages, the most mysterious of all mysteries, declaring the power of the highest which leads to the song about the mighty One whose name is Holy. Next, the Angel of the Lord and the heavenly host, saying glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill to man. The aged Simeon who sees in the holy Child God's Salvation to all the earth and most wonderful of all, the opened heavens, the descending Spirit and the Father's voice proclaiming the worth of His beloved Son. The history of the intervening years is passed over till the time of His ministry with the exception of the incident in the temple, all being summed up in the words, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour both with God and man." We have often wondered at this silence and asked the reason why? All can understand that nothing could be recorded to meet mere curiosity, and that God has given all that is needed. We can understand, too, that the prophetic history of our Lord in the Old Testament includes the whole life pathway from Bethlehem to death, resurrection, and glory, see Micah 5:2; Isaiah 53:2; Psalms 16:1-11. A beautiful moral reason may be seen, however, in the history, if we take account of the change in His position when His public ministry began. From that moment, His life-work consisted in the declaration of the heart of God to man, this we have recorded to meet our need. But before that time, He was declaring before all heaven what Man is to the glory of God, and we can surely see how morally fitting it is that this should be omitted on earth and recorded in heaven. The spiritual eye will discern here the profound lessons taught by the omissions of Scripture.

He entered upon His service, not as One who was head and shoulders above all others merely, or towering above a Moses or a David as they had been above their generation. Nor is He one who perfectly reaches the standard which others sought to attain. No, He is alone of His kind. This is where some err — who use beautiful language about the Man Jesus — as if He had connected Himself with a ruined race to lift it by His incarnation. Some one said by way of illustration, that man was broken china, but He was whole china. This is to display ignorance of His marvellous stoop. It was met by the answer, "No. He was not china in the sense of the illustration at all." He was "That holy thing" spoken of by the angel "The second Man out of heaven." "We," says the apostle, "beheld His glory as of an only-begotten with a Father, full of grace and truth." The testimony of His fore-runner shows an accumulation of glories. Personal, moral, and dispensational, besides pointing out the sacrificial, which is the basis of sin's removal from the creation. The King, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, the Bridegroom, and withal, the Man out of heaven. It is with this last we are concerned here, and how beautifully it shows the blue in relation to the gold and the royal colours in Him. "He who comes from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthy and speaketh of the earth, He that cometh from heaven is above all" (John 3:31).

He came not to associate in worldly and earthly pursuits, or make His life consist in such things; there was therefore, bound to be a gap between Him and all others. We can conceive of a messenger coming from heaven delivering his message and returning without interfering with anything here. He made known His mission indeed, bringing heaven's richest and best among men, but along with that, He lived among them in the same circumstances, meeting the complications incidental to this life, apart from sin, putting His own heavenly stamp upon all. Nor could it be otherwise, for nothing could add to Him. He must give character to all He comes in contact with. The reality of this lies deep in the nature of things. His Person makes the place and

gives character to it, so that every day is alike sanctified, and every place alike holy. His birth had illuminated the stable at Bethlehem with a glory far surpassing earth's stateliest mansions, so His Presence makes the mountain-top a sanctuary and: the little boat a shrine. Think of the unfolding of truth both moral and prophetic, in the two mountain discourses recorded in Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29 and Matthew 14:1-36, Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-24, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39, Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46 : or again, the comprehensive sketch of dispensational truth recorded in Matthew 13:1-58 of the same gospel, which runs on to the consummation in the coming kingdom glories. Then remark the amazing display of power in the two boat scenes of Matthew 8:1-34 and Luke 5:1-39, where both the physical and animal creation obey His mighty voice, and note how in another kindred scene, He made the waves a highway to reach His own when they were in need (Matthew 14:1-36). But far surpassing all is the mountain scene of Galilee, where the combined glories of the King burst through the veil of humiliation, pledging to the hearts of His own the future display. Here we contemplate the gold, blue, purple, scarlet, combined with the fine linen of His spotless humanity, where His face was like the sun and His raiment glistening like the lightning's flash. Well may we with them behold by the eye of faith His Majesty, and reverently listen to the Father's voice proclaiming from the excellent glory the worth and preciousness of His beloved Son. The scene marks an epoch in His earthly career. He reaches the highest point and from there he treads the downward path to the cross, where in death He lays the basis for the full and universal display of all that which the transfiguration was a pledge. But not scenes of nature only. The busy haunts of life must be frequented, where the activities of man are met, in the village, town or city where the great questions of life, national, political, and ecclesiastical, must be met and adjusted in the light of heaven and the Father's will. It is in such scenes where wisdom and resource is called for, that the variety of His glory shines out and the pledge of His ability to subdue all things is given, for He must reign till He puts all things under His feet. The Village. Nazareth, the scene where the presentation of Man Godward had been set forth is visited with a view to presenting the heart of God manward. Though no prophet is accepted in his own country, the people there must hear from His own lips that He is the sent One of God. All bore Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth, but when He asserted the sovereignty of God and the universality of grace, they were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city. His life had been sought in infancy by Herod, but now it is the people among which He had lived and for whom He came from heaven, that seek to kill Him. The Town. Capernaum was the centre from which flowed forth His royal bounty and from which He journeyed over land and sea. Certain of His disciples were drawn from it and many works of mercy were done there. The nobleman's son, the ruler's daughter, Peter's wife's mother, and the woman with the issue of blood. There the grand discourse on the bread of God, the food of everlasting life was given, that a man may eat thereof and not die. It might well be said of that town that it was exalted to heaven; bodies and souls were under His beneficent ministry and many were made to rejoice for time and eternity. But alas! the time came when He had to speak of judgment and pronounce woe on the favoured town. The City. Jerusalem is the city of which glorious things had been spoken. The One was here that only could bring to pass all that was promised, but she knew not her day, and like Hagar, she must remain in bondage with her children many days. The seat of the nation's learning, the home of the leaders was here, and yet here was the scene of the strongest opposition. Here was seen the

fiercest bigotry and untiring energy of opposition which at last culminated in the dark tragedy of Calvary. It was here the leaders were met in the great controversies of John 5:1-47 and John 7:1-53, John 8:1-59, John 9:1-41. His own relationship with the Father set forth in sovereignty of life-giving, and supremacy of judgment, and as One who speaks the word of God and carries out His works. In that city, during the last week of His life, He met and answered the leaders in the pressing problems of the moment and when He puts before them His inquiry no one could answer. Then in a chapter which is unequalled for penetrating scrutiny He exposes and pronounces judgment. But such is the state that it cannot be that a prophet perish outside that city. Well might He say, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen her brood under her wings, but ye would not (Matthew 21:23 and Luke 13:34). On the political side the bondage of the nation is apparent. His answer to the question, "Is it right to give tribute to Caesar or not?" shows He was not there to rival the emperor or intervene at that moment for the overthrow of the Gentile. Deliverance from the yoke is linked with their repentance and reception of Him as Messiah; this had been refused. If we let Him alone said the leaders, all men will believe on Him and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. They did not let Him alone, and what they feared was carried out and with terrible vengeance. A kingdom in the earthly carnal sense could not suit the heavenly One. If My kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight for it. His kingdom we know to be righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

They stood, however, in a place of nearness dispensationally, having the covenant and the fathers, etc. His ways in the case of the Syrophenician woman shows that however they may refuse Him, the messenger of the covenant and vessel of all the Messianic blessings, He will honour and adjust everything in relation to the divine promises, putting the woman in her true place before Him,, meeting her need, and at the same time maintaining the distinctness of the nation's place in the ways of God. The children's bread is reserved, and she learns that though His grace abounds for every need, He will respect the promises made to the Fathers and the sure mercies of David.

We may note how sovereign grace and responsibility meet and are maintained here. The vessel of all the promises stood before them and every conceivable way had been tried to show them the character of the time. All having failed, the cross comes more definitely into view as a basis for the fulfilment of the same promises on the principle of divine grace, for behind the gracious offer of the Messiah to Israel at that time lay the great truth that His kingdom could not be a worldly one, but founded on His atoning death at Calvary. While He is on high at the present time all the sure mercies of David are found in Himself, ready to be made good to the nation, but on the principle of sovereign grace. "Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

01.02. Part 2.

Part 2.

Since the Holy Word exhorts us to consider Him we may draw yet nearer, and with quickened sensibilities behold the beauty of the Lord. The complete absence of what is called character meets us at every turn, every moral trait blending with every other and all crystallizing into one perfect whole. He was the humblest yet the most dignified; the most gracious and gentle, yet uncompromisingly firm and unswerving. Zeal apart from cruelty, lowliness without being mean, a kindness which delighted to make His followers His most intimate friends — their joy a place of sweetest intimacy which, however, in the very nature of things, forbade what we call familiarity. No sign of fear nor hesitancy of speech, and having spoken, there is nothing to withdraw, modify, or call for apology. This latter we see in His most devoted servants.

{“There was no unevenness in Jesus, no predominant quality to produce the effect of giving Him a distinctive character. He was, though despised and rejected of men, the perfection of human nature. The sensibilities, firmness, decision (though this attached itself also to the principle of obedience), elevation, and calm meekness which belong to human nature, all found their perfect place in Him. In a Paul I find energy and zeal; in a Peter ardent affection; in a John, tender sensibilities and abstraction of thought, united to a desire to vindicate what he loved, which scarce knew limit. But the quality we have observed in Peter predominates and characterises him. In a Paul blessed servant though he was, he does not repent, though he had repented. He had no rest in his spirit when he found not Titus, his brother. He goes off into Macedonia though a door was opened in Troas . . . John, who would have vindicated Jesus in his zeal, knew not what manner of spirit he was of, and would have forbidden the glory of God, if a man walked not with them. Such were Paul, and Peter, and John. But in Jesus, even as Man, there was none of this unevenness. There was nothing salient in His character because all was in perfection to God in His humanity, and had its place and exactly its service, and then disappeared. God was glorified in it, and all was in perfect harmony. When meekness became Him, He was meek; when indignation, who could stand before His overwhelming and withering rebuke?” J. N. Darby, Synopsis, Volume 1, pages 181-2.} In the greatest of the earthly race there are the faults of their virtues, and much that is humbling comes out in the defects of the great and the follies of the wise. Beautiful characters are portrayed by men of scholarly attainment and refined taste, and from nature’s point of view there is much to admire, but all break down somewhere. His gracious acts made hearts to leap for joy, and in that way He could not be hid, though often charging them to tell no man. We have in the Gospels a grand and incontrovertible proof of inspiration, for no mind of man could imagine what is given there. A perfect account of a perfect life written by men for the most part simple and unlearned.

Well may we ponder with deep adoration that Holy Person whose life here stands alone in all its heavenly and unsullied beauty. in the knowledge that all that was outward which could be taken account of by others, sprang from what He was with the Father. "I came down from heaven not to

do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me." He who came forth from the Father and was necessarily one with the Father, accomplishes all the Father's will, heaven thus breaking in on the life of man on the earth for its own intention and honour, in the blessing of the creature of God's purpose and electing grace. But oh! what has that meant for the world which has sealed its doom in the awful guilt of putting the Son of God to death, the shameful death of the cross?

But, with all, there was much He passed by. In the nature of things it must be so. The equalisation of capital; — "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" was His answer. Though appointed Judge for eternity He would not adjudicate in the things of time in a death-stamped scene. He had come to put things right, but not in this way, therefore, things are adjusted in the light of eternity, men are met by that which reaches the conscience and the selfishness of the heart laid bare. So it was with the world of learning. The work of God is in creation as the mirror wherein is reflected His natural attributes. Man is part of these works and is himself a marvellous piece of workmanship. In the works of creation he finds ample scope for his intellectual powers, and at that time had reached an advanced stage of science and philosophy as men speak. Whatever his progress in these things he is wrong at the centre. Having fallen from his original estate he is a lost sinner at a distance from God and unable to help himself. At that very moment, with all his learning, all the great questions pertaining to his life and being stood unanswered, and by him unanswerable. It was impossible, therefore, that the Lord Jesus could take up such things. His coming was in relation to a theme which lay nearer to the heart of God than even creation's wonders, viz., the declaration of eternal love. Moral relationships in regard to eternity, heaven, earth, and hell, sin, righteousness, and judgment, the exposure of man's heart as a sinner and the revelation of the heart of God to meet him, are the things which engage the heavenly One. No other could do this. Heavenly messengers had often been here, but merely to deliver their message and return. Both Enoch and Elijah had been caught away, and with the exception of the momentary appearance of the latter on the mount of glory, nothing had been heard of them. Again, in the commerce between earth and heaven, Paul was taken to the third heaven, but coming back could not utter what he heard. With the advent of this blessed Person, all the mind of heaven comes out. He whom God has sent speaks the words of God. How surpassingly lovely is the scene in Luke 15:1-32, where He sets forth the joy of God and the delight of heaven in the recovery of the lost. He there shows how the divine heart is satisfied in satisfying the heart of the fallen creature, the blessed God Himself giving impetus to the joy of the whole scene.

Though leaving alone the world of science He is perfectly acquainted with the book of nature. The heavens declare the glory of God, and well we know the earth and sea join in the glorious song. From all these He draws that which illustrates and enforces the great and abiding principles of the creatures obligations to the Creator. Both animate and inanimate are used, for the sun, moon, and stars come in as well as the eagle, raven, and sparrow. So with the earth, mountains, rivers, trees, as well as sheep, lambs, wolves, and for the sea, His kingdom is likened to a net cast therein, and when He would bring home to men the sorrows and consternation of a coming day, He likens it to the sea and the waves roaring. But that He is perfectly acquainted with the great drama of life in all its phases may be seen from the fact that the moral world is laid under tribute also. Kings with their subjects and armies. Masters of estates and their stewards, trades in all varieties, profit and loss, building planting, sowing, etc., etc. In the world of letters there are schools of philosophy, all of

them more or less put in language by a process of reasoning beyond ordinary people. With Jesus our Lord it is not so, for there the simplest may draw water from the wells of salvation, which the most advanced can never fathom.

Though conversant with all that was going on, His business we have seen was the work of God. In the execution of that He met not only the contradiction of sinners, but want of faith, and understanding by His own. This latter He felt keenest of all, and it was -teen most of all in the three who were favoured by being brought into the place of intimacy and nearness with Him. The brothers wanted Him to put forth His power on one occasion for destruction and on another had betrayed a covetous spirit in seeking a conspicuous place with Him in His kingdom, and Peter on one occasion sought unwittingly to come between Him and His great work of the cross, while at the end, all are found in disagreement about who would be the greatest. All is met in view of their place in testimony after He had gone on high. The time of His ministry is used by Him while proving the world's guilt to fit them for the great work of their lives, viz., the spread of the testimony after He had gone on high.

Having glanced briefly at His ways among men in the outside, let us with reverence view Him a moment among His own. He had adjusted with beautiful precision the detail of life in view of heaven and eternity and now the time has arrived when He can speak freely to them of the Father and of heaven and the counsels of love. Here; with deep delight, we behold the Lord in the midst of His own in anticipation of the day of the Church, where He could bring out without reserve the heavenly communications which concerned His glory and their association with Him in a new scene where all is of God. As soon as Judas goes out the Lord opens His blessed heart. The presence of the betrayer had caused Him distress of spirit, but now He is free to bring out all the deep, thoughts of His love. He consoles them by telling them of the Father's house and their place there with Him, and though unseen, He would come to them till the time came when He would come for them. He takes them into full confidence regarding the working out of divine interests and the new heavenly testimony in which all the Father's glory is bound up in and with the Son, and whatever was the necessities they connected with it, they had only to seek the Father in His Name, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Nor need they hesitate to do this, for the Father Himself had affection for them because they had received His Son.

He speaks of His relationship with the Father and theirs with both Him and His Father, all being made good to them by the Holy Ghost whom He would send. The Father's house as prepared by Him, the Father's love, Himself the object of it, and they with Him to enjoy it, the Father's purpose as centring in Himself and they in that purpose as given to Him by the Father. The earthly, Jewish side is left far behind in the plenitude of revelation and unfolding of the heavenly. He speaks so as to draw out their difficulties, transferring them, in thought, from Judaism and the earth to the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of God as revealed in Christianity. In that way, John 13:1-38 and John 14:1-31 are seen much like a Bible reading, where the disciples put forth their questions to Himself and are led on into the deeper things of God. On reaching the end of John 16:1-33 He turns from speaking to them to the Father. The communications of the previous chapters were to them, here, all is to the Father. He had glorified Him on earth and now looks up and seeks to be glorified above, that He may continue to glorify Him in that place. Surely this is the place where Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:11). His voice alone is heard, He traces the new heavenly

testimony from its source, in the bosom of eternal love long ere time began, to its ultimate consummation in a coming eternity of bliss. Their having been given to Him as the Father's love-gift to Himself, to have part with Him in all He takes up as Man, which necessarily would identify them with Him before the world in His rejection.

He had kept them in the Father's Name and had given them His word. All He brought from heaven is deposited with them, the name, the affections, the word, and the Father's purposes of love. All had been given. And now the Father will keep them because it concerns the glory of His Son. Loved with the same love as the Father had for Himself, and then brought home in a display of glory before the world that hated Him, and them also because of Him. He marks out a place for them in that radiant scene which is peculiar to one favoured class; a place which for favour and excellence passes beyond words, where He will have them with Himself to behold Him in that which is only His. The eternal glory which is beyond their creature ability to share, He will have them with Himself to behold.

We might stop here and ask how far these things have become a reality to our souls. A reality however, which for Him necessitated the cross. Before He could become the Centre of the glory He must first be the Centre of all the shame and ignominy. The scene in John 13:17, most lovely in its historic setting, could have no meaning did we not see by anticipation the marking out of a new order of things based upon His atoning work at the cross. He had said (John 16:16), "A little while and ye shall not see me." He was going down into a depth where they could not follow, and they would weep and lament, but He would see them again and their hearts would rejoice with a joy none could take from them.

During that little while, the blessed One had been in the conflict battling death's forces and meeting God about the whole sin question. Accomplishing the work which is of the greatest consequence for God and for the whole creation, by which all the activities of time are adjusted in relation to the divine glory. Having borne the full weight of all by going into death, He breaks death's power by rising, and thereby establishes a new creation where all is of God. The resurrection message to Mary reveals for His own that new relationship with Himself on the other side of death, which connects with the thoughts, feelings, tastes, and joys brought out by Him to them in that memorable night before He suffered (John 13:17). The blessedness of this should be pondered, seeing it is not on the surface. It is clear that every relationship must carry its own affections and feelings with it, and it is most instructive to see the way the Lord brings these latter out as connected with the presence of the Holy Ghost in our souls. The following extract may help us here.

{ "This was the introduction of the disciples into the realisation of that new state which Christ inaugurated by His resurrection, Son of God in power. They should see the second Man beyond death, and be in living communication with Him. . . . It was the same Christ, but what was of all importance, the basis of all for us, it was Christ beyond death, the power of Satan, the judgment of God, and sin; He who had been made sin for us and by whom our sins had been borne and put away, that God might remember them no more. We see here the link between Jesus, known in His humiliation in our midst in grace, and man in his new state, according to the counsels of God, a state in which He could no more be subject to death, nor put to the proof." J. N. Darby. "On the Gospel of John." Chapter 16.} But if He comes forth in resurrection it is on the way to the throne.

His going there is an event which must affect all parts of creation. Think of it, a Man above, upon the throne of God. Past angels, lordships, principalities, dominions, and authorities, beyond every circle, leaving far behind the vast hierarchies of the heavens in their stupendous grandeur, almost unknown to us, distancing every conceivable force, to the very centre of the universe, the throne of the Majesty on high. Scripture speaks of His own throne upon which He shall sit with His royal bride in the day of glorious display; the throne He sits on at the present time is His by virtue of His Deity.

He is there in Manhood that in Him all the grace of the heart of God may shine out to the creature, a fact which gives a completeness to the truth, the force of which is sometimes missed. His coming out from God as we have seen, was to make Him known, this brought out the grand secret of eternity, that a God of love will have man richly blest and at home in His own presence for His own satisfaction for ever. Such a revelation necessitates an answer in man, for God cannot be defeated. The great truth comes to light, therefore, in the exaltation of Christ, that He who came out to make the revelation as God has gone in as Man, in answer to what has been revealed, thus completing the circle of truth so that revelation and approach are complete in Himself in view of the Gospel going forth.

There is another point of importance here. At a time when God was compelled to chasten His people for their sins, the prophet Ezekiel beheld in vision a Man above upon the throne. The exaltation of Christ is the fulfilment of that vision. If, however, we examine the circumstances, we shall see a very marked difference. The prophet, sees the throne in judicial character with judgment about to be accomplished, a circumstance which is more in keeping with the character of the throne seen by the apostle in Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14. The Old Testament seer beheld the throne in view of the great dispensational change which was about to displace Israel and begin the times of the Gentiles, while the New Testament apostle beheld it at a time when all was preparing to put Christ into possession of His inheritance. Note the perfection of Scripture here. The Old Testament prophets spoke of the sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow, passing entirely over the church age: the New Testament seer stands beyond that age when the church is seen in heaven participating in the praises of the Lamb.

Well we know that the presence of Christ upon His Father's throne during the present age constitutes the reign of grace. "That as sin has reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Having been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, He is seated on high as the Centre of royal power and authority and made the Administrator of all the grace of heaven. The contrast both with Ezekiel and the Apocalypse is easily seen, for instead of messengers of judgment sent forth, the Holy Ghost comes from a glorified Christ to carry out the will of the Father and the Son. This is something new, being outside of the time-ways of God and belonging to the counsels of eternity. It is the full glory of the throne. The One who bore the judgment is there, in the supreme rights of His Person and work, and while that continues judgment, though not cancelled, is deferred. This recalls the sapphire stone colour of the deep blue sky, and tells of the triumph of God in richest blessing where all that He is shines out in holy splendour in full and unmerited blessing to sinners.

01.03. Part 3.

Part 3. So far, the moral perfections of the Lord Jesus in His life upon the earth have chiefly engaged us: a theme which calls for the exercise of holy affections. Let us turn now to the application of His grace and redemption to His saints that we may learn how the heavenly is woven into their being by the Word and Spirit of God. This calls more for the exercise of the renewed mind and connects itself with His ministry from the place where He. now is, having in view the believer's transfer from his fallen state as in Adam to a new status and position spoken of in Scripture as being "in Christ."

Here a difficulty meets us because of how few there are that have any real sense of the importance of the present time. It may be said that the hour of Christ's session at the right hand of God is exceptional and differs greatly from the divine dealings in every other hour in the history of time. Not only is it fraught with the richest unfoldings of the mind of God, surpassing anything before revealed to men, but the Spirit of God dwells in the believer to form him by the things revealed. It may be distinctly affirmed that the apprehension of Christ in glory by the Spirit puts us at the centre of all God's thoughts, and gives the key to the unlocking both of the counsels, of eternity and of all His ways in time. The light of a glorified Christ rays itself forth on all the activities of the Godhead in time, illuminating the histories, types, and shadows, with a glory which no Old Testament saint could conceive, throwing, too, its beams forward, and opening up the whole vista of glory through millennial times to God's eternal day. "Undimmed Thy radiancy appears, changeless through all the changing years." The gospel of the glory of the blessed God comes forth to meet the sinner in his need, showing how all his guilty state has been met for God at the cross. The Holy Ghost works in him, bringing the joy of what Christ has done for him into his soul and linking him up with his risen Head in glory, the divine plan being not only to clear him from the effects of the fall, but to go back to the original created position and transfer him from the earthly to the heavenly order. If we ponder this carefully, we shall see how in the wisdom of God He uses man's failure to effectuate His own purpose, and in recovery, brings him back not merely to where he departed from, but to a place marked out by Himself in the counsels of eternity. On our side, this could not be the work of a day, but is connected with a process of experience whereby the soul learns its own resourcelessness and the incorrigibility of the flesh. It is true that every believer begins with the reception of the Spirit which constitutes him part of the new order, but it must be apparent to all that changes of great import are involved in all this, and the more real the person is, the more painful must be the experience, The revolution in the soul which makes a man love what he hated and hate what he loved, involves a thorough shaking from the very foundation of his being, taking in the source of thought, feeling, desire, and conduct. It is a transition which affects both character and conduct, being connected with moral questions, involving responsibility to God and faithfulness to fellow-men, it concerns both righteousness and holiness, and is attended with great searchings of heart. This is that process spoken of as deliverance, called by some sanctification, which is set before us in Romans 7:14-25. The marvel is, that such a transfer can be made while in a bodily condition which is suited for the earth, and in that way incapable of giving

expression to the new heavenly thing implanted there.

If such a lesson is not soon learned, neither can it be got merely from books. Being an experimental process it involves the ups and downs of circumstances in trial and conflict which are necessary to self-knowledge. As we grow in this, the evil of our sinful nature shows itself more and more which, in the light of all the grace which has reached us, makes us cry out in distress: — "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" It is then that the gladdening truth dawns upon us that all this wretched state has come under the eye of God in judgment in our glorious Substitute at the cross, and we say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24-25). A landmark in the soul's history is thus reached and the person can now offer his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is his reasonable service (Romans 12:1).

Happy are they who have reached this in the soul's history; a point by no means transcendental, but a deep, practical reality known and enjoyed by those who were once far from God in their sins. For such, life is much simplified, all being reduced to a question of what is of Adam or what is of Christ. The outlet from the fallen state, whether Jew or Gentile, was by death, that only could end a condition which as long as it lives is rebellious; and the believer, in virtue of the death of Christ and the gift of the Spirit, is privileged to reckon himself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:11). The importance of our being thoroughly alive to this and entering upon it will be seen from the following, where deliverance is spoken of ill relation to life and nature.

{ "Now the things of the Spirit are the things of Christ, "all that the Father hath." Are these things less real and substantial than the things of the flesh? (Hebrews 11:1). What of our home with its new relationship and joys? What of the fellowship which is ours with the Father in His thoughts of, and plans, and counsels and work for, the glory of the Son? For which we need indeed, Christ dwelling in the heart, that we may comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, but are strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man for this very purpose. What of the new objects thus presented to us, instead of the poor things we were pursuing after the flesh? What of the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to which we are called? Is it less powerful to our heart than the association and fellowship of men we once belonged to and took such deceived interest in? What of the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory — which none of the princes of this world knew — to replace and displace for us for ever its wisdom, and learning, and philosophy.

. . . The heavens, with Christ there as the intimate link that connects us with all that is there, are the present revealed scene of our home, relationships, objects, hopes, joys, interests, and pursuits, that thus a heavenly people may be formed practically as such, by what is heavenly on the earth — showing out nothing but what is heavenly." "Truth for Believers," Volume 2, Pages 183-185, J. A. Trench.}

Looking back from this standpoint we can clearly see that the grace which came out in the birth of Christ could not stop there. That wondrous stoop had the cross in view, that the power of death which rested on man might be broken and that the Saviour might enter on life of another order wherein others could be associated with Him before His God and Father. He laid down flesh and blood, which in Him was perfect, to take up an order of Manhood which abides for eternity, while in that same act He brought to an end for God, and for faith, the state of ruin in which the objects of

His mercy lay. In His exaltation the Holy Spirit came forth for the interweaving of the blue in their souls, forming in them a new moral being which is of God in Christ Jesus, constituting them heavenly: redemption and new creation, having in view for them not only deliverance from that which came in by the fall, but lifting them from the earthly as created, to the heavenly in new creation. This work is of fine needle-work, every stitch involving the displacement of what is earthly, and is accomplished by the Word penetrating the heart through the conscience, involving constant exercise of soul, but with richest blessing. Normally, it is the result of a proper estimate, the things of heaven taking their own proper precedence, but often becomes a costly process because of the tendency to cling to things here. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life " (Job 2:4), and the ruling passion being strong in death there is often a struggle at parting with what is of earth. The effect of this formative work is put by John as that which is 'true in Him (Christ) and in you (the saints) in the first epistle, chapter two, and in chapter four it is put in the words, "as He is so are we in this world." This meets the thought underlying the garments made for Aaron's sons. While the beautiful priestly robes belonging to the high priest spoke of what was proper to, and inherent in our Lord in His glorious Manhood — nothing could possibly add to Him — the embroidered robes made for his sons, speak of the moral qualities of Christ formed in the saints to-day by the Holy Ghost. They too, were clothed in garments of glory and ornament, indicating another order of things, all of which link up beautifully with the scene and state into which reconciliation brings, as seen in Colossians and Ephesians, as well as with the grand paraphernalia of glory seen in the tabernacle and its heavenly priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Reconciliation supposes the person brought from alienation and distance to the place of nearness in the complacency of God, a condition of things made possible by the removal of enmity in the death of Christ. To be inside the house one must have on the best robe where the eye of God rests upon His saints as accepted in the Beloved. This, the parable (Luke 15:1-32) shows, has in view, love's response and festive joy where, adorned in the beauties of Christ in measure, and under His Headship, God can have returned sinners before Himself as sons for His pleasure. Of Israel Jehovah has said, "I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen? and I covered thee with silk" (Ezekiel 16:10). . .

It is in the Epistle to the Hebrews however, that the Holy Ghost seems to present the antitype to Aaron and his sons, for although the garments of glory and beauty were never worn in the Holiest in Israel all is in view of that here. Whatever breakdown may have been in man's hands, all that was sketched out must have its answer in Christ. We come into the apprehension of the revelation of God in Christ, where the delight of God is known in the expression of His counsels of grace in His well beloved Son and in perfect suitability, as the priestly company robed in garments of salvation can rest without reserve. Christ is shown to be both Son and Priest, the one hanging upon the other, the same being true of the saints whom He leads in as His companions to all the blessedness of that scene of heavenly glory. As the Minister of the sanctuary and Mediator of the covenant, saluted by God as Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, He is able to control the whole company, forming and giving character to all, and having gone in by virtue of His perfect sacrifice, He carries on through the saints the service of the sanctuary, declaring His Father's name to His brethren and leading their praises to the Father.

Ephesians opens out the purposes of eternity which necessarily shows the whole time scene to be but yesterday, every bit of which is controlled in view of these counsels and their fulfilment in the eternity to come. As we open the epistle we are, in a certain sense, outside of earth and time, being led back to before the foundation of the world, to see what engaged the Godhead regarding the display of itself and for its own pleasure. The range of blessings, the thought of which strikes the note of praise, are spiritual and heavenly as contrasted with basket, and store, and the land of Caanan and at the same time, secure in Christ as contrasted with the first Adam. The great point is Sonship and the inheritance fruit of the divine will which leads on to the new man, the House of God, and the Body of Christ. With that should be noted, however, the significant description of the new heavenly position brought out here as nowhere else in Scripture. In Ephesians 2:1-22, the saints are viewed in the work of God in their souls as having anticipated in a spiritual way both the truth of resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-58), and translation to heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18). "But God . . . has quickened us with the Christ (ye are saved by grace) and has raised us up together and has made us to sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:1-22). The blessing peculiar to the day, consequent on there being a Man in heaven and a Divine Person here, is that saints are heavenly in constitution, and in character, and in hope, and thank God, heavenly also in destiny. Nor is it different with John, the character of whose ministry is to claim the world for God. If, as is often said, Paul takes the saints to heaven, but John brings God down here, nothing could more perfectly show heaven and earth brought together in moral accord. In that Gospel eternal life being (after the Person of the Lord) the great theme, the transfer from the earthly, sinful state to association with Christ in risen heavenly life is shown. The sovereignty of the Son as life-giver, whose blessed voice is heard in death, our side being the appropriation of that death by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, all looking on to the time of meeting them in resurrection where, as last Adam, by breathing upon them He associates them with Himself in resurrection life before His God and Father.

There is nothing mechanical, legal, nor forced in all this for God does not lift a person out of his sins and lay him down so to speak a full-grown saint all at once, as a man would transfer a log of wood from one place to another. We are moral beings and He works in the soul, producing feelings of sorrow for sin and desires after Himself and holiness which bring about moral progress by which the person travels in his consciousness from the fallen Adamic condition to a new state in Christ. The sense of the new environment follows, for there must be the position. This gives the range of things the soul is introduced into — a faith system where all things are of the God which has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

O EVER GREAT AND GRACIOUS GOD AND FATHER, BEFORE WHOSE MAJESTY ALL CREATION TREMBLES, WHAT INTELLIGENCE CAN EVER CONCEIVE THE WAY THOU HAST TAKEN TO BRING GLORY TO THYSELF IN THE REMOVAL OF OUR RUIN, SIN, AND SHAME? AND WHAT INCONCEIVABLE WONDERS ARE SEEN IN THE FACT THAT WE ARE TAKEN OUT OF IT ALL AND PRESENTED BEFORE THEE IN HIM WHO ALONE COULD DO IT, THE ONE WHO IS THINE OWN CO-EQUAL, BUT MARVEL OF ALL MARVELS, IS A MAN. JESUS LORD, EVER TO BE ADORED, WE ARE AMAZED AT THY WONDROUS STOOP AND DESIRE TO HONOUR THEE HERE, THEN TO LIVE WITH THEE IN A SINLESS, STAINLESS SCENE TO PRAISE THEE AND THY GOD AND FATHER IN THE POWER OF THE ETERNAL SPIRIT FOR EVERMORE

01.04. Part 4.

Part 4.

It is one of the greatest deceptions of the human heart that it can accept the wealth of blessing which grace brings, persuading itself that all is right, while the practice betrays the opposite. In what is around us today many are found in positions which belie the heavenly status of saints and the heavenly calling of the Church. We do well to remember that a mental acquisition of truth leaves the conscience untouched, and that credulity is not faith, and that only as the truth reaches the heart by the conscience can there be any real soul progress.

Part with a glorified Christ necessitates sharing the portion of a rejected Christ on the earth. The practice consistent with such blessing may therefore engage us for a moment. Since conduct springs from character, and the Spirit in the Christian forms a new heavenly character, there is bound to follow a new line of practice different from that of saints in former days. He who we have seen gilded everything down here with the colour of heaven, has left us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2:21), and consistency demands it, for "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked (1 John 2:6). In previous ages they rightly used the sword, he that does so today shall die by the same (Matthew 26:52). They were commanded to fight, Jehovah fighting with them, and some have honourable mention because they waxed valiant in fight in Hebrews 11:1-40. But now they are commended for having endured a great fight of afflictions and taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Solomon prayed that Jehovah's eyes might rest continually on the House he had built for His name, and Daniel prayed in his chamber with open windows toward Jerusalem, but Stephen looked up and saw the glory of God and Jesus. Israel prided themselves in the pleasant land but now they seek a heavenly country. "For if Joshua had given them rest then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day." Hezekiah wept in the presence of death as that which was taking him away from his blessings, but Paul rejoiced in the prospect of the same because it was his servant to usher him into his heavenly home.

There is a sameness yet practical difference which we note between the saints of the heavenly and those of the earthly calling. Prayer, piety, and separation must ever mark the children of faith in this fallen world. But even in these things, the way of a heavenly people will be different from all others. This lies in the nature of things, each being formed by the revelation given. Piety today is bound to bring in God as revealed in fulness of love in trinity, a thing which was not possible for the saints of former days. Prayer for them was outlined by their knowledge of God, and is often marked by calling down judgment on their enemies, a thing diametrically opposed to the spirit of the gospel. Then as God's witnesses they were to be separate from the nations, but must enter into the affairs of the state and if necessary, take up arms in its defence, a thing which marks the most faithful men of the Old Testament. The saints of today have put on the new man where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free, but Christ is all and in all, a thing which lifts him out of national and patriotic feelings, entirely forbidding the thought of his taking part either in politics or in wars. In the application of all this to

daily life we know that God would not deny His saints a happy domestic circle. It is not to be had, however, by putting things of nature first and saying, I have married a wife and cannot come. The same may be said of the piece of land and five yoke of oxen. Such things are by no means evil in themselves; the whole point being how they are used. They belong so to speak, to the twilight of God's ways with man. Adam got a wife, the Patriarchs got flocks, and Israel got the piece of land. Now the blessed God sets forth, through the work of His Son, that which ever lay near to His heart, viz., the things of eternal purpose wherein is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Instead of being in the twilight He would have us in the full sunshine, enjoying the full measure of divine favour — enjoying the feast He has provided in a risen Christ (Luke 14:1-35).

Since the divine Centre being changed from earth to heaven immensely enlarges the blessing it must also affect the obligation, and since it greatly enlarges the outlook, it must cause the charge of narrow-mindedness to reflect back upon the man of the earth. The Jew had a divinely-given portion on the earth which the Gentile never had: on the other hand, the Christian has a portion in heaven which they as Jews never can have. If in the providence of God, Christians are entrusted with certain things here, they are for time and the circumstances connected with their sojourn here, and must be given back. "If ye have not been faithful," says the Lord, "in that which is another's." — temporal things — "who shall give to you your own?" — the things of the Spirit. In this way we are adjusted in relation to both spheres and shown that the use made of the things of divine providence affects us now in relation to the heavenly sphere, and will affect our future position in the kingdom glory. But follow with us a little further. It is a day of great and imposing architecture, houses are built flat upon flat to a great height so that an elevator is necessary because the higher they go the further they get from their source of supply. It is not so in the spiritual realm. The Christian belongs to God's upper chambers (see Psalms 104:3, New Translation), heaven is his source of supply and the Holy Ghost is the Divine Elevator which keeps him in touch with the Lord, who is the Administrator of all the divine bounty, When a member of parliament is made a peer, he is said to be transferred to the upper chamber. The simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who is indwelt by the Holy Ghost, has his life, his home, his all, in the upper chambers of God.

Like the lightning conductors, we are privileged to transmit heaven's precious things to earth. We have access to that blessed scene with a view to carrying down into the detail of life on earth the mind of heaven. This answers to the ribbon of blue on the border of the Israelite's garment. How important for us to cultivate the mind of heaven by setting our minds on things above and seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. No mere stretch of the imagination can do this. We sometimes hear of high talk and low walk, and doubtless the Lord has had to deal with us about this. In Ephesians we got the highest expression both of the truth and the walk, the latter being connected in that Epistle both with the Person of our Lord and the purpose of God (see Ephesians 5:1; Ephesians 2:10). Have we not sometimes thought that offering the body to God as a living sacrifice is some great thing done only by preachers or those devoting themselves to the work of the Lord in a foreign land and forgetting that it is the simple obligation of every saint. It is very much in evidence that we may assume to be preachers and missionaries and yet not have given our bodies to God as our reasonable service. It were better not to encourage the inherent desire for activity on the part of young saints till they have learned something of the blessing, for it has been well said that the Lord has more to do in us than by us, and rightly understood, the saint is like a lamp-post, always shedding light in darkness but making

no noise.

If we have followed thus far, it will be clear that the attempt to link Christianity on to the world's system can only end in failure. Many have tried this to their sorrow. It has often been said that the world needs good men, and Christians are the men to fill responsible positions for the good of the people. It is true that the world is helplessly in need of good rule, but the death of the Lord Jesus Christ proves it to be a system dominated by Satan who is its god, and the sentence of God lies upon it. The blessed God sends His servants to it with the good things of heaven, this is the proper service of those who have learnt the goodness of God. No amount of good men could ever put this world right, the Christian is taken out of it in view of the divine system and is being trained in it in view of future service above while on his way home. But what of the religious side? Here the success of the enemy seems complete. The judaising element having become almost universal so that the enjoyment of heaven and heavenly life by holding the Head is either unknown or ignored. Worse indeed than this is seen in the spread of satanic systems, calling themselves Christian, wherein we have the resurrection so to speak of all the heresies of early days. It is not of these, however, we wish to speak, but of the church as composed of all those who know Christ as their Saviour.

It is a time of great gospel work. Many laudable efforts are put forth, and many are found devoting their time, strength, and means to the service of Christ for the conversion of souls in a way which He can and will appraise. There is much that is noble and unselfish for which we can sincerely thank God. But after all, we cannot ignore the fact that it is far from being the full Gospel of the glory of the blessed God (1 Timothy 1:11).

What is preached is largely man's relief, forgiveness of sins, and heaven in the end, comforting as far as it goes, but often without insisting on repentance, as if a fallen sinner could enter into blessing by a mere mental assent to the Word. This, by lowering the Gospel, tends to popularise that, which in the nature of things, can never be made so in this world. God's Holy Gospel, which shows the establishment of divine righteousness in the cross, is lost sight of, as also the removal in judgment of man in the flesh, the gain for the believer of a new relationship in virtue of which he is united to a glorified Christ, the ability to take account of himself as belonging to a new generation and consequently, the triumph of God in having man for Himself in a new power in the very place in which he fell.

Why all this? Is it that God has ceased to work among His people? Far be the thought. It can be proved on the contrary that these last days have witnessed the greatest revival of truth since Apostolic times. The Lord has graciously given back the truth in such a way that many have been enlightened and blessed beyond anything known since the apostles left the scene. But alas, like every other movement of the Spirit, it has waned, and many favoured with the light of Paul's gospel and the revelation of the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ are letting all go for what appears to be an easier path, proving that it had never reached the heart by the conscience.

It is sweet to think, however, that there are some who through mercy are seeking, though in weakness, to answer to the mind of the Lord for the moment. Like the men of Issacher that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do, and did it, there are those to-day who value Christ's word and seek to keep it. To such He says "Thou hast a little power and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name." There is nothing outwardly imposing, but they have seen

and escaped from the wholesale departure from the truth by taking heed to Christ's word.

How blessed to know that at such a time as this the individual may have the word of Christ dwelling in him richly in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, a blessed reality which opens up for him the whole Christian revelation, giving access to the Father and all the system of heavenly and holy affections connected with the Father and the Son and the home of divine affections to which the Son will bring His own. In this way many hearts have been recalled at the close, and able to stand in the presence of Laodicean indifference in the conscious light and gain of what was true of the Church in her brightest day. But if they taste the joys there are other things to be reckoned with. In the history of the professing church in Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22, we get the development of evil in that which calls itself the church, and reach a time in the progress of the apostasy when Christ Himself is shut out. Those who are loyal to Him are bound to share that place for He has said that where He is there would His servant be (John 12:1-50). Faithfulness to Christ in a day of apostasy puts one outside of the circle of accredited religion, as we see in the man whose eyes the Lord had opened in John 9:1-41. They cast him out because of his testimony, but the outside proved to him the most blessed place of all, for in meeting with the Son of God he reached in principle the holiest of all. So it is here. The world-church goes on, having the pretension and receiving honour one of another in much outward pomp and show, she trades in gold, silver, and precious stones, but there is no mention of the blue, the heavenly calling and the rights of heaven are disowned. In the midst of it all, there are those who through infinite grace are led into the mind and secrets of heaven, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that blessed scheme of divine counsel wherein is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But there is more, for the promise to the overcomer at the point we have reached in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:1-22), is couched in the most precious words of all. Let us listen with adoring hearts and seek to weigh something of the depth of feeling expressed here by our Lord. "He that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more at all out; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from MY God, and My new name." Who shall attempt to expound a verse of Scripture like this? Blessed, holy Lord, the time is near when Thy blessed heart shall find fullest expression in bringing out into public distinction those, who through Thine own grace, have had in this scene any measure of faithfulness for Thee.

"O endless joy, how shall my heart Thy riches all unfold: Or tell the grace that gave me part in bliss no tongue hath told.

Lord, let me wait for Thee alone: my life be only this, To serve Thee here on earth unknown, then share Thy heavenly bliss."

They had kept the word of His patience, and to overcome was to hold fast what they had that no one take their crown. The public mark of His approval would be to make them a pillar in the temple of His God. It had been the place where He dwelt between the Cherubim, where everything uttered glory and where He was approached in holy splendour. A pillar there is His answer to a little strength here. The Jachin and Boaz of Solomon's temple are evidently in mind, but here we are infinitely above all that is connected with Israel and the earth. "They shall go no more out" is His answer to the place they had been in here. The time of testimony goes on here today along with the holy privilege of priestly approach, but then the idea of testimony in a scene of reproach

shall have ceased for ever for he shall go no more out at all, but remain in the sunshine of eternal love by the Son's eternal decree and for God's eternal pleasure.

"And I will write upon him the name of My God." The resurrection message to Mary will be recalled when He used the words "My Father and your Father and My God and your God," and the prayer of Paul to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:1-23). It is the place the only-begotten stood in as Man, for He delights to bring us as His well-beloved to that bright scene above to share with Himself all that is there. It is Christ in the day of His glory distinguishing those who have shared His shame by displaying them with and like Himself before His God.

Then there is the administration of the throne, and the city is where the throne is set. "And the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from My God." He who once wrote upon the ground and to-day is writing upon the heart shall then show — like what David did with his devoted followers when he came to the throne — in complete identification with Himself all those who remained loyal in His absence. The City being the Vessel of rule in that radiant scene, all administration will emanate from it, and the word of the Lord here assures to the devoted heart a place of rank and honour which shows the insignificance of the distinction which is being so much sought after to-day.

"And My new name." How beautifully touching this is at the end of such a marvellous communication, where He speaks of His God four times over. He had undertaken to accomplish the will of His God and had been exalted to the highest place in virtue of that work. God had highly exalted Him, giving Him a name above every name, something new and belonging to the new resurrection world where all His renown shines out. He would not withhold even this from those, but write upon them His new name. Blessed, glorious Lord, Thy love would produce in our hearts loyalty to Thyself, not for what it gives nor for reward merely, but for its own blessedness and the prospect of being with Thyself for evermore.

All the above is connected with the Kingdom reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is precious to think that grace will take every blood-bought one to the Father's house, that scene of love which our Lord has gone to prepare. His death puts all on a level, and the grace that takes the greatest saint to heaven will take also the least. In the Kingdom, however, the Lord is the righteous Judge who gives to every one according to his works. We must therefore connect the place of distinction spoken of above with the coming out to reign with Christ in glory, and in doing so, it will be evident that whatever place one fills in the day of Christ's glory must be in exact correspondence with divinely-formed ability here in the day of His reproach. This shows the true connection of the writing of Revelation 3:12, with the writing on the heart of 2 Corinthians 3:1-18. The writing of Christ on the heart today by a ministry of righteousness from heaven, produces conformity to the glory and corresponding reflection of itself on the moral waste around, this fits the person for the service of the King! in the time of His glorious reign, when His people shall be willing in the day of His power and when the glad earth shall ring with His praise. Hallelujah. Praise Jehovah from the heavens: praise Him in the heights. Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts (Psalms 148:1-2). The connection between what is heavenly and the truth connected with the terms second man and new man is of such an intimate nature that our meditation would scarcely be complete without a few moments' consideration.

There are four passages in the writings of Paul which we may note, — "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him " (Romans 6:6). Here there is no mention of a new man, and it is noticeable that it is our old man, i.e., not exactly the old man viewed as an abstract entity, but what belonged to the saved ones out of the fallen first order seen to be judged in the death of Christ. Next, "that He might form the two, in Himself, into one new man making peace " (Ephesians 2:15). In this there is no mention of the old man, but simply that which was in view in the death of Christ and has come to pass in the establishment of Christianity by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven and the removal of the enmity existing between Jew and Gentile by forming them in a new state. Again. — "Your having put off, according to the former conversation, the old man which corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts; and being renewed in the spirit of your mind; and your having put on the new man which, according to God, is created in truthful righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24). There is here the mention of both with the moral character of each, the new being alone spoken of as created. Lastly, "Do not lie one to another, having put off the old man with his deeds, and having put on the new, renewed into full knowledge according to the image of Him that created him" (Colossians 3:9-10). Here again we have the creation of the new man and his renewal after the image of Christ. The last two passages give our coming into what Christ has done. He formed the new man; we put that man on by the same act as we put off the old, viz., turning away from ourselves to Christ for salvation. From all this we see that the character of the old man is unmixed evil. It must be clear, therefore, where he came from: to connect the origin of that with God would be to make Him the Author of evil. On that account the Spirit is careful to avoid using the word created in regard to the old man in the above passages. On the other hand, neither good nor evil was directly connected with the creation of the first man, but simply that he is out of earth, earthy; the contrast not being between good and evil, but between the earthy and the heavenly, as seen in the words of 1 Corinthians 15:47. Man, the creature, is upon the scene and placed in responsibility before the state described as deceitful lusts existed. There could indeed have been no fall if responsibility had not been there before. It is clear that the first man was created of God and life with its moral obligation known before the breakdown took place by which the old man came into existence.

We who live in the full light of divine revelation can see that both the above terms, or at least, the ideas connected with them, centred in the race down through the Old Testament ages. It would be meaningless, however, to speak of a first man until there was a second, and also of an old until there was a new. We must then keep clearly before us that it was man as created by God, a moral and responsible agent, that God was dealing with down through the ages of probation, and that it was that same being His judgment dealt with substitutionally in the Person of His Son at the cross. It was said to Adam, In the day thou eatest thou shalt die. In his fall, sin entered, and death by sin, the very thing by which he would be removed from his created place as representative of God in His authority on the earth. If the point be missed here we may fall into the mistake that it was the old man only, i.e., the state described by deceitful lusts that God removed from before His sight in the cross, losing the solemn truth that the sentence of death lay upon him as a fallen creature, and that that sentence was carried out judicially for the divine glory at Calvary. The distinction between the two terms — for there is a great distinction — may be further seen from the fact that the old man is defined as a lie and only evil with not a shadow of good, nor a capability for it. This is not said of man as God's creature, nor could it be since he is the highest part of the Creator's work, and though fallen, is not spoken of before the incarnation of the Son as being incapable of good.

At his Creation he stands as the crown and beauty of the whole order, the most marvellous exhibition of the power and wisdom of God: and such is the combination of his creaturehood, physical, mortal, moral, and spiritual, that to this day he is to himself the most wonderful prodigy of all. As it is written, "fearfully and wonderfully made."

It was this that Satan set himself to destroy, and how well he succeeded, though the evidence is all around, only God can say. But a house may be broken down and dilapidated and still retain some marks of its former greatness. So it is with man; depraved thoughts, perverted feelings and actions, and indeed, much more of a like character. But amidst it all there remains that which God can take account of as in accord with Himself — natural affection (what would this world be without them) innocence, intelligence, etc., etc. These, though mixed up with much that is sinful, God's eye can take account of and He can appreciate (see Mark 10:21). Were this distinction kept more in view we might be able to use with more caution the phrase "end of the first man " as handed on to us by those taught of God, and see more clearly his removal by judgment from the place he stood in between Eden and Calvary.

If there was some time elapsed between the creation of the first man and the entrance of the old in the same way, an interval of time passed between the coming of the second Man and the creation of the New. Our Lord is seen as the second Man during His life here, and is sometimes spoken of as a new Man, but Scripture connects the creation of the new man with His death and resurrection. The removal of the old and the creation of the new is outside the creature's reach, being work of the God; the point for us is to put off the one and put on the other, the warrant being, that our old man is crucified with Christ. As to the place of nature in all this, man may be spoken of as the natural man, whether innocent or fallen. It is of interest to see that the words, natural man, in 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 is taken from the same word as the Scripture (Sept. ver.) uses for man as he came from the hand of God. Whether he be innocent, fallen, or recovered, nature remains, not unaffected, however, for the fall has affected his whole being. In conversion he receives a new nature, and in connection with it, the Holy Ghost to dwell in his soul, whereby everything in his life may be adjusted according to the will of God. We see in our Lord how perfectly all is adjusted, everything perfectly honoured as of God. So with those brought back to God in Christ there is power to carry out all the legitimate claims of nature in a becoming way, but being heavenly in calling, their life consists in the things of the diving nature — heavenly things.

Natural relationships are God's richest mercies to a heavenly people, and it is well when they are received as such, if for wise purposes our gracious God is pleased to assert His claim on these we are made to feel the pain connected therewith. How marvellous are the ways of God. If at the cross we see the darkest deed we have also the divine estimate of him that did it. It had been the divine intention that a public demonstration of His estimate of the sinner should be given. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The blessed Lord takes that place vicariously, that the judgment might be carried out and in Him the divine estimate of man is publicly declared to all. The deed that fills up man's guilt demonstrates his state and sets him aside for ever.

Taking the four forms in a general way, the second Man must be first morally: He is the beginning of the creation of God, and became Man by an act of His own. Not so the first man who, being a creature, had no choice; being created in innocence, a state which could not apply to the Lord Jesus. Again, the new man like the first is a creation, but contrasts in that he is created in

righteousness, etc., instead of the innocence of the first. The new contrasts with the old as to truth and falsehood; the old is a lie. Again, the second Man could not be a creation because He is God the Son, the old man is not a creation because God is good.

We can see then, that beside the well-known dependence of the earth and its inhabitants for physical existence, on the heavens there may be traced the moral and spiritual dependence as well. In doing so, however, we must remember the place the earth has in the mind of God above all other parts of His creation and that its very existence is the necessity of divine counsel. At its creation, the intelligences of heaven peal forth the Creator's praise, and throughout the multiplied distances of the universe there was heavenly celebration. When earth's foundations were laid — home of him who is the crown of all creation — the scene in which would be worked out both the ways and purposes of God, "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Can we wonder, if these holy beings had some divinely-given glimpse of the mysterious depth of suffering and consequent height of glory that lay in the womb of the future for the new-born earth and its future inhabitants, things which were destined to bring out the deepest and richest revelation of the Being and Nature of God. For a brief moment the complacency of God rested upon all, but the fall soon cast its blight upon the whole scene. Even then, however, the rule of the heavens asserts itself and promise, prophecy, providence, and government goes on, heavenly visitors and communications being kept up, till in the incarnation of the Son, the distance and estrangement was for faith removed. The Spirit's presence here, consequent on redemption, maintains that still, for heaven could not be shut on a Divine Person on the earth. All is thus prepared for the greatest transaction of the time-ways of God, when millions shall in glorified bodies go up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18). These bodies of glory are characterised as our house which is from heaven, the connection being maintained between the present heavenly status of the saints and the permanent state in glory, for "He that has wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit " (2 Corinthians 5:1-21).

However we may speak of heavenly life upon earth it can never be permanent here and therefore, the Church, as composed of the saints called in the day of Christ's absence, must ever be an exotic here. The time is near when it shall not be so, when every man shall sit under his own vine and when Israel shall dwell in safety alone and his heaven shall drop down dew, when they shall be satisfied with favour and filled with the blessing of the Lord, and it shall be said, "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, a people saved by the Lord" (Deuteronomy 33:1-29). Earth shall then rightly be his home, and the rule of the King Messiah being in force, the curse removed, and creation's groan hushed, man will hold the earth for God, not as in untried innocence but as knowing good and evil, and by divine power, cleaving to the good for ever. For those of earth's race taken up to be the bride or the second Man earth can never again be their home. The upper chambers is that alone which answers to the relationship which is theirs. Myriads of saints belonging to other dispensations will be there also, for earth can never again be the home of resurrected persons. Such will be promoted to positions of rank and honour in proportion to past faithfulness on earth, but for one class remains the highest place of creature exaltation. Earthly saints will live through that long reign of blessing in flesh and blood. The close of the Millennium must therefore bring about for them the transfer to new and eternal conditions, for all things have then become new. The new heavens and new earth speak of the whole scene in perfect accord

with the will of God through the Son's atoning work, but leave room for the distinction throughout eternal days of heavenly and earthly life according to the will of God. The Book of Revelation shows the whole company gathered home without distinction, an order apparently maintained all the time the preparatory judgments are being poured out in view of the Lamb taking His inheritance. But a moment arrives when the false apostate church is judged, then the glorified church in heaven is seen in her own place, in relation to the Lamb as distinguished from all the other heavenly saints. From that time, right on through days of Kingdom glory, she is seen as the vessel of administration, and Help-meet of Him who claims her as His royal Bride, the distinction being maintained throughout eternity, when she is seen as the tabernacle of God, wherein He dwells for the outshining of His glory for evermore. This is the prospect; may we make an appeal to the heart in the light of it all. As part of that favoured company whom He will have brought home publicly as loved by the Father with the same love that rests on Him, the Son, to be witness both to the glory and love of God, a glory and love known now in faith by the strengthening power of the Spirit, where the Church is as a chaste virgin espoused to Himself. Shall we not seek by the Spirit to dwell with delight on the ineffable beauties and glories of Him who loves us so much? speaking to the Father in holy worship of what He has taught us of the glory of that blessed One whose stupendous stoop to Calvary baffles all thought. And shall we not appreciate more the favour of being associated with the Son before the Father in the joy of such holy relationships, where the treasures of the Father and Son are made known, where the Holy Ghost delights to open out the wealth of eternal counsel, where all things are of God and where, clothed with the best robe, we can enjoy the Father's deep delight in the revelation of Himself in the Son. May it be the blessed portion of both reader and writer to enter into and enjoy these things for the glory of our adorable Lord. Amen.

02.00. Fine Twined Linen

Fine Twined Linen

James McBroom.

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen with cunning work." — Exodus 28:6.

02.01. Part 1.

Part 1.

If the first four things mentioned in the above verse speak of the glories of the Son of God, Personal, Moral and Official, covering a very wide field; the fine linen into which these things were wrought, or dyed, speaks of the Man Christ Jesus in Whom all glories shine. In this fine linen, we pass in thought from the side of eternal Godhead in an eternal Person, to the side of Manhood in the same Person and behold the MAN in Whom every glory centres and indeed go beyond that to the complete unveiling of God. Of the five things mentioned, all of them except gold were to be found in the veil of the sanctuary. Here, the inwrought cherubim took the place of the gold, whereas in the ephod the gold was present but no cherubim. The holy veil hung between the holy place and the holiest of all and was suspended by golden hooks upon four pillars. This formed a doorway into the place where all was gold and every whit uttered glory. The Man Christ Jesus is in Himself the "way" into where all the deep unfoldings of God are displayed. The veil speaks of His flesh, that is, His precious body. (Hebrews 10:20); and if the four pillars be taken as expressive of the four Gospels and their writers, we can see the answer to the Holy of Holies in His Person and are led to these holy records as being the inner shrine of God's holy book. The fact that the veil speaks of His flesh explains the reason why the gold was displaced by cherubim, for that holy Man ever displayed the justice of God which the cherubim set forth, but beyond all that "God was in Christ" a holy mystery which speaks of the heavenly grandeur which was inside the veil. With the ephod it was different. Here, Christ is prefigured as Head of a new order in resurrection. This leads in thought to the Epistles of the New Testament and particularly to Hebrews where He is seen as the great King-Priest, the Glorified Man. To supply a figure of this there-must also be gold. "He that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Hebrews 5:5-6. In the Gospel we see Christ in relation to God's glory in this world, the scene of sin and man's failure; but in the Epistles we behold Him Head of a new world, which is the domain of divine purpose where all His glorious perfections shine out, with nothing of sin to interfere.

While we dare not separate, we may profitably distinguish between the unique Personality of the Man Christ Jesus and the various features of glory and beauty that shone out in Him. There were incidents in that busy life that brought each to the front, here one, and there another, so that it might be the outshining of the gold of divine Sonship or, the simple display of the Man who stamped everything with the blue of heaven's beauty. Again, it might be the dispensing of covenant blessings as Son of David or, the homeless Son of Man Who was the appointed Heir of all things. But besides these, there were times when He might be seen as it were in the centre of a circle, where each glory combined in such beautiful harmony in Him, as to give all in one distinctive view.

Two outstanding events, namely, the Temptation at the beginning of His ministry and the Transfiguration at the end may illustrate this. At the end of Matthew 3:1-17 the Father proclaims

Him, His Beloved Son and immediately the tempter comes forward with the challenge — "If thou be the Son of God."

All this relates surely to the gold of His glory but the tempter goes on to that which relates to the blue as seen in the Man out of heaven. The first temptation takes us back to Eden and the Lord's answer from Deuteronomy gives a sublime description of man's place in relation to God but in an obedience peculiar to Himself. "The obedience of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:2. The second recalls the scarlet by the mention of the holy city and the temple. The third recalls the purple and bespeaks His universal place as Son of Man by the mention of the high mountain and the kingdoms of the world. This is a scene of perfect moral beauty. God gets His place; man gets his place; and, for the first time in man's history, the Devil gets his place from One who has a perfect right to all but seeks no place at all. The vision on the holy mount presents a scene of unalloyed delight, where there is nothing to oppose. We judge there is nothing absent to complete the picture which, by including the Father's voice and the Shekinah, carries us in thought beyond the administrative order of full millennial display, to the glories of the Father's house where sons shall be at home with the Father and the Son, in a scene pervaded by the Spirit's power. The heavens and earth in all their departments of blessing and glory are depicted here but beyond that, the Father's voice indicates something, which John the Apostle of love was given to bring out, and the blessed Son of the Father, Who is here rejected by man, is the centre and guarantee of all.

God's order in the race must be noted that we may see how this blessed Man adapted Himself in every way to the divine plan. The Creator puts forth His intentions for the race in one man. The character and order for the whole is set forth in the head. This works out both in regard to created status and moral condition; those connected with Adam being earthly as to creaturehood and sinful in moral condition, while those connected with Christ are heavenly in origin and holy as to condition. In all this we can see Adam as a figure of Him that was to come. Here we touch the scheme of sacred typology, the wealth of which pours itself out around the Person of this blessed MAN. This in itself is a rich study but we must remember that it is only one side, that side indeed which connects itself with the time ways of God. When we turn to the study of God's eternal purpose, we behold our Lord as the eternal Son, marked out for incarnation and redemption. Consequently, Adam's creation was a necessity and He, the eternal One, the great proto-type. We rightly say that at the birth of our Lord, all, including heaven, earth, and hell, were in commotion. (Psalms 90:1-17; Hebrews 10:1-39; Matthew 2:1-23; Luke 2:1-52; Revelation 12:1-17). But along with that, God required One to make known His plan and purpose. Man on earth needed a Redeemer and Satan the enemy looked on, entirely ignorant of divine resources, trying if he could, to thwart and hinder the work of the blessed God. The advent of the Son met every need, God's perfect claims and all His desires, and man's every need, and forever defeated and exposed all the forces of evil. That advent filled up the whole ways of God by taking up every thread of these ways, not only in type and shadow but also in promise; prophecy; government and grace; imparting a completeness to all, while at the same time going back beyond Genesis. He, the Son, linked up in Himself the whole scheme of God's eternal purpose, that God might be made known in a triumph of glory from eternity to eternity, and the universe put on the basis, not only of omnipotence but on the stable footing of redemption which, through Calvary's depth of woe, the depths of God found a channel to flow forth. From the above it will be seen that the Incarnation made it possible for the Spirit of God to speak of our Lord both as Second Man and Last Adam,

while every thing both in nature and revelation witnesses to Him as first in cause, dignity, moral sequence and result. In coming into time, unlike Adam, He became a babe, that in every phase of human life God might be glorified. Much was called for in this world for moral disorder prevailed and all along the line outstanding individuals had tried to put things right. Being themselves part of the ruin, this was impossible. The only way things could be put right was by Calvary since man was lying under the judgment of death. He came to die that death and to redeem the creature who lay under it, but all the way to it from the manger was marked by His putting the stamp of heaven and the will of God on every detail of life here as in flesh and blood. What could be more pleasing to God? Yea, what could be sweeter to the believing heart that has drawn upon His grace and delights to worship Him? But some one will say, This involves going over ground already trodden. (See the booklets "Gold:" "Blue:" "Purple:" "Scarlet.") Our answer is, Why not? Who would lay claim to originality here? Nay — let us ask — who would desire it? If such transcendent things are to engage us forever, surely we may well continue in them now. But after all, such a fear may be groundless. Many and varied are the highways of Holy Writ. We need not travel precisely by the same route as before. There are lines of truth in this holy book of God but little known; sights and scenes within the domain of the Spirit but little frequented which will yield both honey and cream if we will but commit ourselves to the care of our great guide the Holy Spirit. He will lead us into the Messianic chambers of Holy Writ to behold Him Who preceded all; Whose will originated all, and Whose stupendous stoop put the stamp of finality upon all.

Before coming to the New Testament, let us glance a moment at the range of moral instruction wrapped up in these holy garments. Aaron was to be clothed with garments for glory and ornament. The Tabernacle had been previously set out in prescriptive order which, in type, speaks of the holy universal order and calls for a living centre who would impart life and completeness to the whole scene. The high priest is the answer. He is taken out of ordinary life and clothed with these garments of official splendour as fore-shadowing our Lord in His triumph and splendour, at the centre of redeemed creation. The ingenuity of divine device gives a present application of all this as a faith system in the Assembly, as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but in the nature of things the typical significance goes on to the full issue in glory. The fine linen of the passage is the translation of the Hebrew word *Shes*, which signifies whiteness and supplies another colour to the group mentioned here. It would remind us of the spotless purity of the Man, Christ Jesus. It was woven of twisted threads of flax, foreshadowing the union in Him of every beautiful grace, in the power of which every detail of that perfect life was adjusted.

Two different orders of dress were called for on the part of Aaron in the exercise of his priestly duties. On the day of atonement he must lay aside the garments of glory and be clothed in fine linen only, because his duties on that day bespoke the Cross in all its magnitude of meaning for God and the creation. The garments of glory and ornament might be suitable for him to function in the whole year through but on that day, they must be laid aside. The solemn reality pictured here, the reader may see portrayed in Hebrews 9:1-28. In Hebrews 9:12, the Lord entered the holiest in virtue of His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. This answers to the solemn time when the blood of the sin offering was taken within the veil, for upon that day the blood of the sin offering was prominent. While all the glory of God is made to rest upon our Lord in that aspect, it was not in itself a time for a blaze of glory but a time of woe. Then in Hebrews 9:24 He is seen as "gone into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us." These last two little words here

indicate that He is there in the robes of glory. And why not? since all the woe is past. It may be further noted in Hebrews 9:12, that the Lord takes ground which we in Hebrews 10:19 are exhorted to occupy, but in Hebrews 9:24 He is gone to where we cannot go till He Himself comes to take us there. The Holy Spirit has come out to report His glory there but besides that, He leads us even now to enjoy all the blessedness of His own company within the holiest of all. Hebrews 10:19-22.

Another class of robes is used to designate our Lord in judgment. "Therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke." Isaiah 59:16-17. In this dress He comes forth conquering and to conquer, for — "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Revelation 19:13-16. In all this we may visualise the rider of Psalms 45:1-17 Who, in majesty rides prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness and Whose arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies. Jacob's words about Benjamin point to the same time when, in solemn majesty, He shall devour the prey and divide the booty. This is the Man of Isaiah 63:1-19, Who comes from Bozrah, glorious in apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, Whose garments are stained with the Blood of His enemies. Scripture puts this as the vintage of the earth but the harvest is to follow when He shall sit upon the throne of glory — His own throne — in solemn majesty, when the nations shall be gathered before Him; the harvest of the earth gathered in and all this in view of His glorious administration when His Name shall rule throughout the multiplied distances of creation. Here again we may connect Psalms 45, where the King is seen in robes of royal splendour; where His Israel takes her proper place and the nations of the earth come in to fill up the picture.

Various other features of the character of our Lord mark the Tabernacle and its services. For example — "Take fragrant drugs — stacte, and onycha, and galbanum — fragrant drugs and pure frankincense; in like proportions shall it be. And thou shalt make it into incense, a perfume, after the work of the perfumer, salted, pure, holy." Exodus 30:34-35 New. Trans. None of these ingredients grew in Israel's land and it is striking that to this day, it is not known for certain where they come from. May not the divine intention be to remind us that our Lord learned nothing from man, or this world's teaching, but that all He was and did was of the Second Man out of heaven. It was said of Him, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" And again. "Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works?" There was nothing here to minister to Him; He grew up as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground. All was to be tempered together by the art of the perfumer.

Here we stand and behold with deep adoration Jesus — our Lord Jesus — in His own inimitable perfection whom none but the Father can know. Neither irreverent curiosity, nor unholy speculation will help us here for — "Jesus fills that holy place" as well as everlasting love. But if flesh cannot follow, thank God faith may and He graciously beckons us to Himself that we may behold Him, the Only-begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. We know now in measure

and ever shall delight to learn the wonders of His glorious Person but it must ever remain true that, "No man knoweth who the Son is." Luke 10:22. This abiding wonder must remain true within the circle of Deity to all eternity. "Ye shall not make for your selves according to the proportions of it; it shall be unto thee holy to Jehovah." If the redolence of it came out in His life, well we know that its fulness came out at the cross. It was to be beaten small and laid up before the testimony. This carries us in thought to the hour of His bruising for — "He was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed."

It will be recalled that the burnt and meat offerings go together, fore-showing what Christ was to God both in life and death. In the burnt offering, the carcass had to be parted in pieces but this was after death. In the anti-type, the parting all took place before He died; all the dissecting and scrutinising had to be gone through that the excellency of the offering might be proved and so the holy scrutiny of divine majesty searched Him in the hour of Calvary. The peace offering seems to amplify this for at the close of that blessed life, the Holy One of God was parted in pieces in a way beyond all our comprehension. "At a place called Calvary," holy Manhood in Him was torn to pieces in the midst of the most coarse and cruel indignities and brutalities, in a way that leaves the sufferings of the most spiritual far far behind. He was indeed led as a lamb to the slaughter for these men were so hardened under the power of Satan as to be carried beyond all the practices carried out in the execution of the vilest of criminals. "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me." "They that sit in the gate speak against me and I was the song of the drunkard." But there is another side and to that we may turn. "Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." Leaving the pictorial scenes of the typical system, let us with reverence draw near and behold the Saviour, more directly as He is presented in the holy Gospels where, surpassingly, the inimitable grandeur of His moral glory shines forth.

02.02. Part 2.

Part 2.

If the Old Testament may be looked upon as a great picture gallery where our Lord is portrayed in sundry ways and divers manners, the New Testament takes us inside where we see God unveiled in a MAN. The holy Gospels are the areas storehouse of heavenly manna — the resource of God for a wilderness people. It is true we are made God-conscious here, but that was also true of the previous part of Scripture. There is not merely gold, blue, purple and scarlet with what they entail in that glorious Man but the majesty of Deity. It is not only glories of different variety coming out, one here, and another there, but God at one time, Man at another and more often both in one holy combination which produces praise but baffles thought. For example — see the wearied Man of Mark 4 in that holy slumber connected with the sinless condition of humanity which He had taken up. The next moment, His Godhead power shines forth in quieting the storm. The scene at the tomb of Lazarus combined both. Not only was it from human lips that the command was issued for the dead to come forth but the cheeks of Him Who did so were wet with the holy tears of human sympathy. His obedience was different from all others, even from man in innocence, since it called neither for command nor prohibition. The law of His life was such that it ever gravitated Godward. Hence, the obedience of Jesus Christ was unique. He did not serve in view of reward nor could there be any servile work, for it all sprang from a nature that knew no distrust. The joy set before Him of the accomplishment of His Father's will, produced a life in a scene of contrariety that stands alone; treasured up before God for ever. Nothing could rival the joy, or compare with the pleasure it gave, of carrying out all that was due to the Father. "As the living Father has sent me and I live by the Father." Again. "I have set the Lord always before me." This was the law of the Man. (2 Samuel 7:19, Rev. Ver. and New Trans.). If He be viewed in relation to the moral virtues, these are in Him elevated to a new plane. Truth, integrity, patience and sincerity are all there but on the high plane of the will of God. All His actions have a charm of their own whether commanding, or obeying. He did what He did, because He was Who He was, and in doing it, He showed Who He was and IS.

See Him in command. We have already noted His way both with nature in the storm and the unseen region in raising Lazarus. With the Devil it was, "Get thee behind me," with demons, "Hold thy peace;" with the diseased, "I will;" with the woman of Samaria, "Go, call thy husband" — which had soul conviction in view; the resurrection message, "Go, tell my brethren." Whatever be the sphere, He is Master but all had in view the unveiling of God. In Luke 4:1-44 we read that the people of the village where He had been brought up sought to cast Him over a precipice but He walked quietly away as if nothing had happened. So we read again in Luke 7:1-50, in the house of Simon, He asserted His supremacy, Simon was judged, the sinner for which He came from heaven was blessed, and God was glorified. What hidden glories lie behind the scene of His temptation, yea, whether we take His service, temptation, transfiguration or, greatest of all, His crucifixion, there is that that could be written which would fill more books than the world could hold.

While the above incidents bring out each side of the Person of our Lord respectively, that is, both Godhead and Manhood, it should be noted that each side implies and necessitates the other. To illustrate this we may turn to Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18. Hebrews 1:1-14 describes the incomparable glories of the Son but in Manhood. The second shows us His incomparable greatness in Manhood but in language that implies that He is God. So it is in the Gospels, whichever side comes out, the other is Inseparable in His Person. There is therefore another class of His sayings and doings which are not so much expressive of one side but are the fruit of the combined activity of both in one Divine-Human Person. In proof, note the words, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25. While each of these statements came from a Man, they indicate one Who was more than a Man and not less than God. The terms Saviour and Redeemer carry the same sense, implying as they do something that only God could accomplish but necessarily by Incarnation. We have seen this at the tomb of Lazarus, but is not the same thing clearly in evidence when He walked on the sea? He calmed their fears when they thought it was a spirit by saying, "Fear not, I am." It was God Himself, not in abstract Deity, but the Man they knew as their Master and Lord. The same may be said about the feeding of the multitude for, while all the grace and compassion of the Man Christ Jesus came out, it was in the Omnipotence of creatorial power and goodness.

Having noted these distinctions, let us follow this wonderful Person like some of old whom He called to abide with Himself. His separation was different from His servant John the Baptist. Such was the state of the people that John was called to live in the desert but the Lord went in and out among the people. As the centre and source of holiness, He walked in the midst of the uncleanness, unstained and unstainable. The location of the servant apart, has been taken up in the church in a monastic way with sad and solemn results. The time will come when the words, "Come out of her my people" will sound forth. Revelation 18:4. Meantime, we are called to walk, "as He walked." (1 John 2:6), in a profession that is fast developing into full-blown apostasy. The servant was said to have a demon but the Master was called a gluttonous man and a winebibber. In holy simplicity, combined with divine dignity, Jesus goes into the house of a Pharisee and sits down to eat. On another occasion we see Him at a family gathering; then at a social feast in the house of Levi; and again, at the marriage of some of the friends. There is nothing stand-offish nor austere, while there is always that holy influence emanating from Him that gives character to all. Society in general was His province. He accepted the invitation of the rich; was at home among the poor; stooping to encourage what was of God everywhere but always supreme. The customs of society and the barriers which separate the classes and the masses, could be nothing to Him whose abundance was at the disposal of all. With the rich we may in general identify the official classes. Doctors; Lawyers; Scribes; Pharisees and Sadducees. Though there are exceptions here and there, these in general were opposed to Him. In fact, this class hung upon His footsteps till at last they succeeded in getting Him crucified. With the poor we may in general identify the diseased and sorrow stricken. This was the class which benefited most by His ministry. "The poor have the Gospel preached." But the national position of our Lord is a great study. It has been pointed out that while others fill their day and serve their generation, all are patriots and live for the land of their birth. In the conditions of human life this is somewhat of a necessity and indeed is counted a virtue. David was a Jew; Alexander a Greek; Caesar a Roman and so on but Christ stood in relation to all. As the vessel of covenant promise He was the Son of David and took the place of a Jew (John 4:22), maintaining carefully Jewish blessings and privileges. (Matthew 15:24). But He

was a MAN and as such, He stood forth in relation to, and on behalf of, mankind. At that time the people of Galilee were simple and open-minded, while they of Judea were more sophisticated and given to petty disputations about the Law. In the bosom of both classes burned a fiery passion, ever ready to break out and throw off the Roman yoke. This led to tumults in which much fanaticism was displayed as may be seen in Acts 21:1-40, or Acts 7:1-60. There was seething among them that feeling which led to the fall of Jerusalem later. Here was one Who was fitted to be a leader. Such works of power proved beyond all doubt His ability if He would only put Himself at their head. This would ensure their place of supremacy among the nations and had not their Scriptures marked out that place for them? His refusal drew out their hatred with a violence that only His death could appease. The very position they wanted Him to take, they used against Him. The depth of the iniquity of the human heart comes out in Caiaphas when he said, "It is expedient that one man die for the people and that the whole nation perish not." Little did he think that like Balaam of old, his tongue was directly under divine control. All ended in the dark tragedy of Calvary where both Jew and Gentile filled up the measure of their guilt. As we have said, He was a MAN. Two thousand years of man's history had run its course before there was a Jew or a Hebrew nation. His coming in relation to the race was made known both in type and promise in that age. The seed of the woman could not be limited to anything short of the whole race. Israel's rejection of Him opened the door for all and as it were, put Him in relation to the whole race. "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob . . . I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6). This distinction runs through all Scripture. The Gospel of Matthew shows Him Son of David and Abraham but with Luke it is the Son of Man. The temptation also brings out both, but with a further distinction between the Man in His full moral beauty and the Son of Man in official splendour. The full question there goes back to Eden and Adam in thought but the kingdoms of the world speak of the rights and glory of the Son of Man. There is far more said of this distinction than we are accustomed to think for the glories of the Son of Man in official capacity awaited death and resurrection and go out to the whole creation but the beauty, simplicity, subjection and obedience of the Man, Christ Jesus, in the varied detail of life and the complications of man's sinful condition morally, socially and nationally, becomes a feast to the devout heart. It is here we see His power for moral estimates. In the human race, every man is what he is, as a result of certain conditions. Heritage and environment are the leading factors. We all inherit both virtues and vices and are all, more or less, affected by our surroundings. Here is One Who is outside of all this. Why? Because He is the Second Man out of heaven.

Yet, while rendering to every one their dues, He had not come to take up politics. God was glorified; the covenant people owned and Caesar allowed his rights but He did not come to divide to men their inheritance. Luke 12:13-14. His work had to do with eternity and eternal realities. Man's condition and his petty rights accounted for the state of vexatious confusion existing and in his ignorance, he applies his moral standard to everything. What must it have been for our Lord to move about in a state of things like that? Knowing where He came from and where He was going and with sensibilities unimpaired by sin, He trod a path which was all His own and which in the nature of things, must inevitably lead to the cross. None can know fully what he must have felt, beholding the race around Him in all its stages of degeneration, grovelling in disease both physical and moral, with little knowledge of God, less of themselves, and without any moral objective because dominated by sin. The same perfection of touch is seen in His ways with the

Ecclesiastical order in Israel. The Tabernacle stood as a system of visible and sensuous worship, which could only be temporary and indeed was permitted as a type for the time then present of the eternal order, which was to be set up in the power and glory of redemption, which meant for Him the cross. He had not come to destroy but to fulfil and in the midst of the ruin of the dispensation in man's hands, it was necessary to disentangle certain great principles and put them in order. Marriage; the Sabbath; Circumcision; all were put in their proper setting as belonging to the ways of God in a time prior to Moses. As God's great centre standing in time with all the weight of the divine glory resting upon Himself, He adjusted all in relation to the past — right past kingdom days — to God's eternal day. The law was honoured in all its claims; the ritual owned by sending those Whom He had cleansed to the priest; the Calendar in all its enactments was answered to, while strewing on account of their state that the feasts had ceased to be Jehovah's. In a system where the word of God was set aside for tradition, He honoured that Word in a life which was its reflex to the most minute detail. In this way our God has set Christ — the object of His own delight, before our hearts for our delight and adoration. Ought we not with a devout heart to dwell on the walk, ways, words and actions of that Holy One in the clear sunshine of His presence as glorified and thus acquire riches for eternity without putting the hand on the Ark, or entrenching on that which must abide in its own sacred majesty for ever? In this way, the very theme that infidelity seeks to make capital out of, becomes the food and delight of the believer's soul. Again, note another striking feature of that life. Christ drew attention to Himself in a way that would be sin for a creature but is a proof of Who He is. "Follow me" were His words. And again, "Come unto me." But further, "He that loveth father, or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me." Would not language like this be enough to produce distrust in any other and to cause us to mark him off as one to be avoided? But we may go further, for there are words of His which would be blasphemy on the lips of any other. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Who else could speak in such a way? To give one more example, who else could say in reference to holy Scripture, "Ye have heard that it hath been said . . . but I say." (Matthew 5:21-22)? So far we have thought upon our Lord in His perfections in the precise adjustment of moral qualities, every one of which was in full accord with every other and all in due proportion, whether in activity or at rest. But says some one, Why make so much ado about it all? Who that knows Him we answer, can keep from singing His praise and spreading His fame? "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." "What is thy beloved more than another beloved that thou cost so charge us?" "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand — or, as in another translation, 'He is conspicuous among myriads' (Youngs Trans.) — His countenance is as Lebanon. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." How well it is when words fail us that we can turn to the holy book where He is well known and find there language which fitly describes Him. "Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah, in the courts of the house of our God. Praise ye Jehovah; for Jehovah is good: sing psalms unto his name for it is pleasant." There we may behold the beauty of the Lord and enquire in his temple. "Now will I sing to my beloved, a song of my beloved touching his vineyard." "O Lord our Lord how excellent is thy name in all the earth." He is well known throughout the height and the depth of the universe, adored by His own, though feared and dreaded by demons. "Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." "Thy countenance is as the sun shineth in its strength." "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made thee glad." "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in

holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Thou art greater glorious Saviour than the Temple, or Jonah, or Solomon; Lord also of the Sabbath day. "In the greatness of thine excellency, thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee." Before John the Baptist thy forerunner; before Abraham; before all things. God, co-equal in eternity with the Father and the Spirit in majesty and splendour, albeit a gracious, tender, lowly, and lovely Man. We love to think of thee, adore Thee, own Thee, and glorify Thy name. Like a favoured one of old we can say, "The king hath brought me into his chamber and his love is better than wine." My beloved reader, what thinkest thou of these glorious words concerning thy Lord and Master? "Hast thou seen Him, heard Him, known Him; Is not thine a captured heart? Chief among ten thousand own Him; Joyful choose the better part." Blessed Lord to see Thee and be like Thee is our joyful hope but Oh ! how sweet it is to be brought by the Spirit into all this to-day during the time of Thy rejection, when all that which lies before us in the day of Thy displayed glory, can be entered upon, and enjoyed on the principle of faith. To us Lord, these are, "The precious things of heaven," — things that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Corinthians 2:9-10. Yes, we love thee blessed Lord and however feeble we are, we can be in the same measure of blessed at-homeness with Thyself and God our Father. Made in infinite grace Thy companions in the blessed stability of redemption's glorious worth, we render unto Thee the homage of which thou art so worthy, both now and ever more. Can there be any wonder then — we may ask — if one is beside oneself in the contemplation of such a lovely Person? In reality we have to bow and admit that the wonder is the other way about. Nothing could prove the lack of moral refinement and depth of spiritual feeling, than the callous way we all speak of Him who fills the Father's heart. This raises another question to which we must turn, namely, Why should such a life have to come to such an inglorious end in this world? Yea more, Why should it have to cease and not be perpetuated in the earth? The answer to this covers a vast range of Scripture, bringing in the counsels of God and the deepest things of divine revelation all of which leads to another part of our theme to which we now turn.

02.03. Part 3.

Part 3.

Coming to the truth of atonement, it is necessary to view the great work of our Lord at Calvary as the centre of the eternal plan and purpose of God, in relation to the whole creation. Redemption in Christ is the central thought around which not only all the time ways of God circle but also His eternal plan and purpose. The first of these regards man in his creature responsibility; the latter is sovereign grace by God towards him, when he had lost all as a responsible creature. This is the outcome of the eternal purpose of God. Nothing could be clearer than the way the Incarnate Son is presented in Scripture as coming at the end of a long period of testing; the culminating point in the history of man's moral history in creature responsibility. Having been tried in a variety of ways, first in Eden, then by promise, law, covenant and prophets with continued failure, last of all God sent forth His Son. "This is the heir, come let us kill him and seize on the inheritance," is what they said. These things are so clearly put in Scripture and so often dwelt upon that we need not go further here. On the other hand, nothing could be clearer than the way our Lord is presented as coming forth from the womb of eternity to accomplish the will of God by redemption, in His sacrificial work at the cross. These two great thoughts of man's responsibility and God's sovereignty run all through Scripture, as seen in the two trees of paradise but there can be nothing more profound than to see how they come together in our Lord at the cross. That work which finished the history of man's responsibility in the darkest crime in the history of eternity, was at the same time a work accomplished by the Son, which brought out the full revelation of the heart of God, and instituted a righteous basis upon which all the counsels of His heart, in majesty and glory, will rest for all eternity. The combination of these two grand conceptions, worked out in the time scene in the great conflict of the ages — the conflict between good and evil — is the story of how the great and glorious Godhead has revealed Itself. That revelation has brought God out in nature, character, and Being, in a way that unveiled Him as a glorious Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; strewing each One at work in carrying out the eternal counsels, and that in a way which brings out the thoughts, feelings, delights and motives of divine Persons, which will be the delight of redeemed myriads for evermore. This is what comes before us in this part of our meditation and it will serve, we trust, to answer the question of how that glorious life, portrayed in the Gospels, is to be perpetuated in the creation, eternally. In the relative working out of things, it should not be forgotten that sin entered the creation in the higher ranks, long before man was created. God's dealing with it therefore at Calvary had the whole creation in view. But that stands as it were, at the outskirts of revelation. Man is the creature in which the whole question was to be wrought out; earth the centre and Calvary the place. In that dreadful hour — the centre as it were of two eternities — God is eternally glorified. Let us look then a moment at the cross from each of these viewpoints, that of man — the creature's guilt, and then at its glorious expression of the eternal thoughts of God.

"Crucify him." In the first mention of these words, the speakers doubtless thought of once, and forever, sinking in irretrievable defeat and shame, the Saviour's Name. Chagrined, outwitted, and

defeated by the power of good, His opponents take refuge in the diabolical subterfuge of imputing His mighty works to the Devil. This conclusion reached, they fix upon Him His death sentence. "It is needful that one man die for the nation." If we do not see to this, said Caiaphas, the Romans will kill us. (John 11:1-57) This meets with full consent but, who is to do it, and how is it to be done? We will take him to Pilate. Rome, our captors will do this. His claim to be a king constitutes the charge of treason, and he will be crucified. Such a death involved irremediable shame, infamy, execration, beyond recovery. Scripture had pronounced upon it a curse. "Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree." Rome was too proud to crucify her sons. Such a death was reserved for slaves and felons only. But note the estimate of His own people. Lepers must be put outside the camp. The pestilential infection of murderers, blasphemers, and lepers, must be kept back from the dwellings of men. Outside the gate, carrying His cross, Jesus must go a victim. If it be Rome, He must go to the bottom by crucifixion; if it be His own people, He must go outside the gate to Golgotha, carrying His cross. What a state poor, blind humanity was in, to go thus far with the Saviour. It was that very state which He, in grace, was meeting at that very moment. But what must have been the divine estimate of fallen flesh when, for its substitute, nothing less than curse would do. The curse, darkness, and abandonment of Calvary was our due but the sinless sufferer was our substitute. It is thus we get God's estimate of the creature He had been cultivating for four millenniums.

Guilty, vile, and helpless we: Spotless Lamb of God was He!

'Full atonement,' can it be? Hallelujah! what a Saviour! But the transcendent glory of Calvary links with the eternal plan and purpose of God. This plan had man in view for richest heavenly favour. His creation was but yesterday comparatively, but with it the Incarnation of the Son was indissolubly linked. Such purposes presupposed a state of breakdown that only the coming of the Son into Manhood could meet. In the creation, man came last but his fall created the position for redemption, hence, on the very day he sinned the promise of the redeemer was given. Redemption, it should be remembered supposes a third party. That third party was Satan in the form of a serpent in Eden. This of course proves that sin was there before, but man, listening to the tempter, brought it into his race and raised at once the question of the rights of God. Redemption is that which frees from an encumbrance something which already belongs to the redeemer. To free the property or inheritance from the encumbrance, a ransom must be paid. This is the story, the entrancing story of the Redeemer's blood. "The precious blood of Christ." The seduction of man by the enemy not only corrupted him and alienated him from God. It robbed God of the creature; of His highest predilection. Of the original entrance of sin we may know but little but that its entrance into the human race raised at once the whole question of God's righteousness in the highest and most important part of His creation — is the burden of a great part of holy Scripture. As a creature, Satan may well have known that the Creator had His own inviolable rights, in the creation. This is what he challenged but he could have no possible knowledge of the infinite resources of wisdom, love, and power, which lay behind these rights. The story is well known. Satan's success brought death as the judgment of God on His creature man. Not merely the article of death but its moral power, as that which Satan pressed on the spirit of our Lord in Gethsemane — death as the judgment of God. But if in His character, God in righteousness and holiness stood publicly out against man, what of His nature which is Love? Here we touch the resources of God which no creature could know. It was then that the time ways of God began in

the fallen race and He put forth His rights in a variety of ways as, for example, in the law. But we are dealing here with the purpose of God and that raises the question of how He has put forth these rights in grace. We can conceive of God putting forth His rights in judgment, and Satan, not knowing the resource of the Creator, doubtless expected this. If God had put forth His rights in that way and carried out His sentence, He could, out of His resources have created another race to take the place of man. This would have displayed His power but what of His purpose of Love? Such a course must have spelled for Him defeat in the best part of His creation. But our God — whose resources none can fully know — is neither arbitrary nor capricious; hence the story of redemption in Christ Jesus in all its sublime dignity of glory, will be the theme which will fill an endless eternity with His praise. In speaking thus of the rights of God, we refer to His just and holy claims on His creature which is His own property. This should be distinguished from the attribute of righteousness which is inherent in the blessed God and is an eternally abiding principle. God put forth His rightful claims in the way of grace in His Son and in view of this, righteousness and grace have been termed synonymous in Romans 3:1-31. This should be carefully guarded however, for in Romans 3:26, both thoughts are expressed. The declaration of His righteousness, is the public declaration of His perfect consistency with Himself in constituting the believing sinner righteous. Moreover, the cross is much more than the putting forth of the Creator's rights on man. When we view that cross as establishing the authority of God, the moral Governor of the universe, we can see righteousness as a divine attribute and, in its operations, it becomes the standard for the whole creation and indeed, in result, everything must come to that measure. The bearing of the cross upon man as distinct from the higher ranks of creation, calls for a few more remarks. God's predilection of the human race is proved by the Incarnation of the Son. The fact that the Word became flesh, passing by the hierarchies of the heavens, shows man at the centre of divine purpose. The stoop of the Son into Manhood proves this both as to purpose, promise, and fulfilment. Then note, creation began in the heavens and ended on earth with man. With redemption and NEW CREATION, it is the other way about. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." In creation the progress is downward. "By him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." In reconciliation the progress is upward and begins with man. Colossians 1:16; Colossians 1:20. Revelation is given to man who, in divine sovereignty, is himself at the centre of God's eternal plan. The circumference takes in the whole wide creation which, as we said, forms the outskirts of that revelation. The death of our Lord is the great central basis upon which all rests for the universe, man included. But the bearing of that death upon man is different from what it is on any other part of the moral creation. It is clear that the unfallen hosts above do not need the blood, as sinners do upon earth and it is just as clear that the fallen hosts of the heavenlies do not get its saving efficacy as sinners do on earth. In connection with this, note the purpose of God was to put Christ, the Son of Man, at the head of all things. This is strewn in Psalm viii, with its quotations in the New Test. See how this works out in the transfer from Godhead to Manhood in our Lord's Person, as taught in Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18. From eternity, the Son is the appointed heir of all things. Between the creation of all things and His taking them up, they became defiled by sin so, He became Man to make purgation. Consequently He takes His place at the head. That place indeed He fills by double right, that is as Creator and Redeemer but the main point is, all things are put under a MAN. Then, as the man is not complete without the woman, the Church is taken from Christ to be presented to Him as Eve was to Adam, so that in the day when God displays Himself

in all the wonders of all His plan and purpose, man, who at the cross expressed the creature's worst, will be seen at the highest point of glory with Christ and in the enjoyment of God's very best. Hallelujah. Surely it is fitting that the Apostolic doxology should come in here. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21.

We would now close this part of our meditation by endeavouring to bring together the two great aspects of the cross we have looked at separately namely, the creature's guilt and God's eternal purpose. So many thoughts flood the mind that care is needed on this, the most profound of all themes. It has been said that the cross will be our lesson book throughout eternity. As we gaze upon it we see the unimpeachable justice of our God combined with the unquenchable desire of His heart to have the creature — whose dreadful guilt came out there — at home with Himself in perfect moral suitability for ever. Heaven called for it; earth needed it; hell demanded it; each from motives peculiar to itself. Heaven, the source of all good; hell the place of all evil, while earth was locked in the dreadful conflict between good and evil. Both heaven and earth have got all they required with an immeasurable excess, which puts the whole creation on an eternally stable foundation — redemption — and floods the throne of God with a new glory which eternity itself will never exhaust. It has glorified God, met our every need and has laid low the combined forces of apostate creation forever. But perhaps the most wonderful thing of all is that the cross has unveiled, in the creation, the great and glorious God. Nothing else could conceivably reveal to the creature the great Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the relationships and affections inherent in Deity, nor the counsels of eternity, with the part each glorious Person in the Holy Trinity takes in relation to each other, in the working out of these counsels.

Creation, providence and government, though bringing out His power, wisdom, authority, and goodness, could not make Him known. God has been revealed in love, light, and glory, so that He might be known in the Son as Father and all that has been revealed, has been made good in the heart of the creature, in a triumph of glory surpassing thought. The cross explains the riddle of the universe — the riddle of suffering, strewing the necessity of creation itself. It explains the permission of sin and the why of the four millenniums of the first man's culture. It has brought his moral history to a close by bringing to light the Second Man and His race that is to abide for eternity. It shows us too how all things serve God's great end, for sin, Satan, death, demons, and hell, must serve Him. There is nothing — there could be nothing — like the cross. It is the complete solution of every moral question; the means by which all wrongs shall be righted and above all — if we may with all reverence say it — the cross explains God. It explains the exigency of His heart to have man before Himself in the holy relationship of sonship, so that the Father's house might be marked by family feelings and the Son firstborn of many brethren — all pervaded by the unction of God the Holy Spirit.

There is yet one tender touch in connection with the peculiar place and calling given to men, as connected with the cross and the purpose of God. We who are subjects of His mercy are called to serve and praise Him as revealed by the Son Who became man to make Him known, while the unfallen angels serve their Creator with the obedience of delight in the relationship and status wherein they were created. In this connection, how wonderful to think that they come under a MAN and will worship God in that MAN. However great and good all this is, it can never equal the

reciprocal joys of those who were saved from earth and sin. Their service and praise is the fruit of the divine nature and as a result of the transfer from Adam fallen to Christ their glorious Head. Here we touch that which passes beyond all creature conception for grandeur of glory. We shall praise Him as being in His own life and nature, but as those who have been down in the pit of sin and death, which nothing but Calvary's depth of suffering and woe could rescue us from. Glory be to God we are not to be in heaven merely as forgiven sinners, great and wonderful as that would be; we are to be there in the nature and life which belongs to the place. No unfallen status or Adamic innocence can match this. The praise of those who have known the depth of sin and proved the mercy of God in their rescue, is a most marvellous supposition. Yet, when we think it is beyond that, in the divine nature and in a new relationship: when we think, I say, that it is from such a height that we look down to the depth, we can have some little idea of the difference of the service and praises proper to redeemed sinners who went so far as to outrage the name and character of God, and crucify His blessed Son.

"And at the moment the burnt offering began, the song of Jehovah began, and the trumpets, accompanied by the instruments of David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded, all the time till the burnt offering was finished. And . . . the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves and worshipped." 2 Chronicles 29:27-29. This pictures our Lord in sacrificial excellence of glory in whom we are accepted, not as the sin offerings which had all to be consumed outside the camp, but as the One who has gone through death and risen again to establish an order which will throb with His life, vibrate with His praise, as being the eternal perpetuation of what came out in the Gospels. It will be the eternal reflection of the Being and nature of God. The marvel of it; the mystery of it; yea, its stupendous height and depth of glory will be the answer, yes, God's glorious answer, to the solemn hour of Calvary. Jesus our Lord, what can we say? for all language fails and thought is lost in holy amazement as we thus contemplate THEE. Hallelujahs and Hosannas; feelings of joy; delight and ecstasy; all fail to rise to what is Thy due. We will thank Thee for all Thou hast given and praise Thee for all Thou hast done, but in the profound sense of Thy infinite and eternal greatness which gives all its lustre to Calvary, we adore Thee for WHO THOU ART.

It might perhaps be thought that a little might have been said on the bearing of the cross in relation to the lake of fire and those who go into everlasting punishment. Perhaps the bitterest pang of all for those who go there will be the thought that they themselves spurned a way of escape. It is a character of things not much dwelt upon and perhaps this is best. Scripture itself indeed says little of it. Turning to our theme, we may now see why that holy life was taken from the earth and how, in the divine resources of wisdom it will be perpetuated for evermore.

02.04. Part 4.

Part 4.

We may now be able to see why the perfect life of our Lord had to come to an end in death. He had taken up life in flesh and blood condition with that end in view. There was the purpose of God to be accomplished and our state to be dealt with and beyond all, He was to enter into His glory that way. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26.) We are far removed here from the current teaching which links our Incarnate Lord with man in his fallen state and then goes on to speak of Him as a great world teacher, citing the sermon on the mount as a beautiful compendium of moral instruction for fallen flesh. To teach that His coming was for the adornment of a fallen race is confessedly black, so black indeed that, but for the mercy of God, it would have destroyed the truth long ago. This Judaising of christendom has led, in the estimate of the masses, to bringing Christ back to flesh and blood and putting man under law. This denies the cross and puts man — like the Galatians — under law and thus continues the testing of man, which the cross had already brought to an end. This teaching not only ignores the cross but sets aside the whole range of divine purpose as revealed in christianity. "Beware that thou bring not my son — the risen one in type — thither again" said Abraham to the servant, when he sent him to call a bride for his son Isaac who in type, had passed through death on the mountain top. Previous to that, Abraham had not only to part with Ishmael — type of man in nature — but had also to take Isaac to the mount and figuratively pass him through death. (Hebrews 11:19.) So Christ whose perfect life met in every way His Father's approval, goes down into death that the eternal plan and purpose of God might be brought to fruition in the establishing of the world of God's glory in resurrection.

How often is the resurrection of our Lord spoken of as the birth of a new creation? Such is the prevailing confusion that there is little sense of the glorious way our God has taken, through His blessed Son, to remove all the disorder. Three passages of Scripture will demonstrate this. "This is he that came by water and blood." His coming into the world and death upon the cross. 1 John 5:6. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour has come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." John 16:20-21. His resurrection. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come . . . by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." His present place in heaven. These three passages show (1). that our Lord was born into this world at Bethlehem and died upon the cross as witnessed by the water and the blood. (2) That His resurrection, seen in the figure of the birth of the man, has inaugurated a New Creation. (3) That He has gone back to heaven in the good of this new system and sustains it in His high priesthood. In connection with the new creation, we need our thoughts widened out from individualism. As soon as Adam's race began to multiply, there was a necessity for administration. It is impossible to have a company without organisation of some kind. In this way we have in the resurrection of our Lord the dawn of a new day and a new world for faith to

enter into and enjoy. It has been well said that in the first creation man came last, but in new creation Man is first, that is, Christ in resurrection. As to full bodily condition, He only is risen but by the operation of the Holy Spirit there is a company on earth united to Him as His body and of such it is said, they are even now risen together with Christ. Colossians 2:12. This links itself with a further development of the purpose and plan of God. There is now a Man in heaven. In the provisional ways of God, man was created for the earth but in the purpose of God, as the fruit of redemption, his eternal home is in heaven. This shows the remarkable way in which grace reaches back beyond the fallen state to lift him out of the original condition and put him in a new heavenly status in the risen Head — the glorified Man. This is a most blessed reality. The place and the state suited for the first order was seen in Adam innocent, the first head. The place and state suited for the new order is seen in Christ risen and glorified in heaven. His place determines ours because of the relationship of life and sonship we have with Him. Glory be to God. Such wonderful blessings are far beyond us for we are creatures and ever will be, but the blessings we are brought into are far beyond creature conception. The blessing of men on earth through the administration of a Man glorified in heaven, is foreseen and richly set forth in the Old Test. Psalms 110:1-7, Psalms 132:1-18, with their quotations in the New Test., give both the present exaltation of Christ and His present administration in those who form His body. Comp. Ephesians 4:1-32. Acts 2:34. Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18. Again and again the typical picture presents the Gospel age in detail. If we take the time between Adam and Enoch; the story of Joseph and his glory in Egypt; the volume of typical instruction contained in the journey of Israel from Egypt to Canaan; all prefigure and speak of the time when heaven's resources would be administered by a MAN in the glory, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit down here. As the sun rays itself forth in the solar system, so Christ in glory is the pledge of security for the whole moral system. His going there put the stamp of finality on the whole divine procedure because by that act, revelation and approach were completed. The One who came out to reveal has gone in, carrying Manhood in His Person in there, in answer to what He revealed. At the risk of being thought tedious, we would endeavour to amplify the transitional blessing at this point, by speaking of life in its moral activity in a three fold way. (1). When on earth our Lord stood alone as the corn of wheat who must abide alone until death. (2). His disciples, though born again, were in the life and status of man in the flesh. (3). By death the Lord laid down the flesh and blood condition and took up life in a new state entirely. This new life He brought His disciples into by association with Himself in resurrection, by breathing on them. Just as He had breathed into Adam and he became a living soul, so the disciples were one with Him in life and status. The Spirit puts it thus. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Hebrews 2:11. The Gospel is not reformation in any possible sense. It reconciles man to God by reconstituting him in his moral being and in that way transferring him from under the original Adamic headship, to the Headship of Christ. "Reconciliation;" "in Christ;" and "new creation" all go together. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature — new creation — old things are passed away; behold, all things are new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself." 2 Corinthians 5:17-18. In this way we reach in thought, the connection between the robes prepared for Aaron and the holy vestments for his sons. It will be recalled here, how the Lord insists on the impossibility of patchwork in the parable of the new garment in Luke 5. New creation is the complete change of texture in our moral being and in no other way could there be the perpetuation of the life of Christ here. In the sons of Aaron we see that God would have a

company separated from the life of flesh, for the service of the sanctuary. In His going on high, Christ took His place as Minister of the sanctuary and in that capacity, His saints are without any disparagement in association with Him as the consecrated company, for the service of God within the Holiest of all. This for us supposes an indwelling Spirit, Who forms us after Christ, so that in the power of intelligent affection we may even now enter in to that sphere of light and life, on the principle of faith, having part with Himself in all that concerns the glory of God. This is put in such a lovely picturesque form by our Lord in Luke 15, that we are able to visualise it. The best robe is to fit us for a scene of holy festivity; a scene of holy joy, which is the fruit of the Father's counsels and to which He gives impetus in the words, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry . . . And they began to be merry." This reminds us of a scene in heaven where the words ring out, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready." Revelation 19:7. Here again, all is "fine linen clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." But the picture in Luke 15:1-32 is beautifully illuminated by the words of Ephesians 1:3-4. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." In Zechariah 3:1-10, the filthy garments had to give place to "Festival-robos." New. Trans. Here in Ephesians we learn that a God of holiness will have those who are the fruit of His own love, in His company, for His pleasure and in perfect moral suitability through the work of His Son. "To himself" as Zechariah 3:5 assures us. The parable also links with the truth of the sanctuary as taught in Hebrews. The fatted calf is the death of our Lord in the character of the peace offering which includes the communion of the worshipper. In that way, we have the truth of the inside as in Hebrews, linked with the grandeur of the revelation at its height as in Ephesians.

Thus far, we have had the place of the believer before God and in the life of Christ. That life is to be seen coming out here,. That is to say, the character of Christ is seen in His people. This is the christian circle where they are portrayed in relationship with one another, reciprocating the grace of Christ, and thus His life is reproduced down here. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Colossians 3:12; Colossians 3:15. This is the description of what was seen coming out in the life of Christ in the Gospels, now seen, in the Epistles, as coming out in a company during His absence. We may be asked, Where is it to be seen? It is to be seen, thank God, in the Church. In spite of all the break-down today, we may still see the beautiful features of Christ, in His people. This is what prevents the world from pandemonium today. Moreover, it pleased God to give a complete expression of it in the Church before He allowed the breakdown to come in. If we read Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37 at one reading, we shall find a beautiful answer, in the saints, to what came out for the pleasure of God as recorded of our Lord in the Gospels.

Then there is the conduct suited to those who are linked up with the testimony of our Lord on the earth. The manner of life suited to those who are heavenly, as being united to a glorified Christ. Sincerity — "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Luke 12:1. Reverence — "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body . . . Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." Luke 12:4-5. Courage — "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God." Luke 12:8. Greed — "Take heed and beware of covetousness." Luke 12:15. Worry and distraction — "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Luke 12:22, Luke 12:30. These are the traits of a heavenly man. They have all been seen in our Lord in this world and the Word says, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to so walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. Thank God there is no lack of power from Himself on high to carry it out. Then what shall we say of our attitude in the place of servants? "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, . . . Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Luke 12:35; Luke 12:37.

Thus far we have traced the way divine power and wisdom have taken to perpetuate in the saints, the wonderful life of our Lord as seen in the Gospels. A word is called for on the dress which the Lord has provided, for the saints to stand in His interests to-day and to thus anticipate the day in which He will appear in judgment. We have already seen how He is coming in judgment, clothed with the garments of vengeance for clothing and clad in zeal as a cloak. Isaiah 59:16. This conflict is not with flesh and blood but with the hosts of evil which have their place in the heavenlies. This is perhaps the highest favour committed to the saints, or indeed, ever committed to man. It is that subtle character of conflict going on in christendom today, in which the enemy has had such success, by attacking our Lord and the whole range of heavenly truth, treasured in the Church to-day. The Epistle to the Ephesians where this conflict is mentioned unfolds, as no other Epistle does, the magnitude of christianity in relation to the counsels of eternity. It shows that the present economy of grace as a faith system goes on to the day of full display when faith shall be no more called for. This is new creation or the resurrection world we have been speaking about. Mirrored forth in that system, our Lord stands, with His Assembly, at the centre of all. He stands in relation to all creation in a glorious triumph of grace. All this is apprehended and enjoyed by the saints to-day, by faith. This is what the enemy is out to oppose and every inch of the ground has to be contested. So, in Ephesians 6:1-24, we have the armour which we need in this conflict, outlined for us. "Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth." Not only are the Messianic rights of Christ in the earth attacked, but His universal authority as Son of Man — His rights both in heaven and on earth. What adds both pathos and solemnity to this conflict is, that christendom, in its leaders, has gone back to the God-defying wickedness of the early centuries and the multitudinous schools of thought of the Gnostics. This same playing with holy things is in evidence amongst those leaders in christendom calling themselves Modernists. The sad feature of it all is that the Gnostics were openly opposed to christianity, but the enemies of the truth to-day are inside, taking the place of giving us new light; delivering us from the traditions of the past, while robbing the people of all the holy things of God. How terrible is the position of church leaders today. The synagogue of Satan is what the professing church has become and the throne of Satan

is set up there. Revelation 2:9; Revelation 2:13-14; Revelation 3:9. In the great hierarchy of the professed body of christendom, men are set up as officials who do not fear to attack the birth, ministry, and atoning work of our Lord, in such a way that the common people, whose guides these men assume to be, are afraid.

It was fore-seeing all this that the Lord has doubtless given back to the Church in these last days, the whole Apostolic testimony. This, in the goodness of our God, has come into the hands of many of the flock of Christ in power, so that a remnant are fitted to stand, in the face of the apostasy of the ages. Laodicea, with all its pretension has come. Some have got the eyesalve to see the situation and to open the door of the heart to give Him His place, Who is so worthy, and consequently, have the joy of supping with Him in the very midst of apostate christendom. It is only the fear of God that delivers from the fear of men and such are delivered from the hereditary class, who claim to be what they are not but are in truth, blind leaders of the blind.

We must remember that this is a moral conflict. It has long raged, including in its arena heaven, earth, and hell. Its present aspect has gone on since Calvary and will continue till the Lord Himself appears. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. This warfare may be visualised in the men who were the servants of Christ in the days of the Acts of the Apostles. Here were men who knew that the race was not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. They were clothed in the armour of light and exposed the hidden things of darkness, pulling down strong holds in such a way, that their enemies were compelled to say, that these men had turned the world upside down. The whole armour of God is thus provided for us that we may stand and, having done all — that is, having conquered — may still stand. There are Truth; Righteousness; Peace; Faith; and Salvation. These are the divine verities provided for this awful conflict and the way they are bound together, so as to become effective, is by PRAYER. This is the power. It has long been said that a man of prayer is a man of power and surely in this way, it is proved. Then it has to be remembered while the clash is on earth, we are made conscious that our real enemies are lords of darkness; spiritual powers of wickedness in the heavenlies.

Needless to remark, all these garments are moral as indicative of certain features which the Spirit produces in those who belong to Christ. Material dress has its place and it is well when dwelling on these abstract realities, that we should not only be clothed with humility but also in modest apparel. We have reached a time when morals have got so low that modesty is little known and that which Scripture designates abomination, is seen in our streets without shame. It is one of the proofs that Laodicea has come and the saddest thing of all is, to see how easily believers fall into such things. But as we close our meditation on fine linen, we may recapitulate and it may be glance at christendom in relation to the truth we have had before us. Our point in part one was the wealth of typical instruction contained in the Old Testament concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. As the centre of the divine volume, He fills both Testaments but in the Old Testament it comes out necessarily in type, figure, symbol, promise and prophecy. Prophecy foretold what history records namely, that the march of events in this world, from Adam, for four millenniums, was towards the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. During much of this period, Messianic songs sounded out in strains of heavenly music, both from men and women, in ecstatic vision, as under the control of

the Holy Spirit. This glorious event was foretold in a threefold way as answering to what we have already seen in the Divine-Human Person of our Lord. (1). God Himself was coming down to deliver. Exodus 3:8; Isaiah 13:3; Isaiah 13:5; Zechariah 14:5; Mark 1:1; Mark 1:3. (2). The seed of the woman; the Son of Abraham; the Son of David; the Prophet like unto Moses that would be heard. Genesis 3:15; Deuteronomy 18:15; Matthew 1:1. (3). These two lines of Messianic prophecy run right through the Old Testament, but combine together in Isaiah 6:9 and Micah 5:1-15, where the Babe of Bethlehem is described as the eternal God whose goings forth have been from eternity. This leads to part two namely, the holy Gospels and the grandeur of the incarnation. Coming then to the holy Gospels we pass from types and pictures and come under the charm of a MAN. If we must have a department, this is the Holiest of all. No other subject is like this. It bows us in humility while we exult in praise. Its simplicity inspires us with confidence but its grandeur with holy amazement. At times there is ecstasy of delight, while at other times it is the silence of holy awe. All is wonderful! His Name is Wonderful. Isaiah 9:6. We worship and adore. Here behold the matchless beauty of that MAN, in the simplicity of obedient service; serving His God faithfully, in unbroken dependence on the one hand, while on the other there is the Majesty, Omnipotence, and Omniscience of God. Putting the two together we have the Divine-Human Person of our Lord in a holy mystery where there is perfect control with perfect submission; command with obedience; endless resource with poverty; supreme power over all in heaven, earth, and hell yet, submitting to the cross. This is the record of the Gospels. This is our Lord, the peerless Lord Jesus Christ. Oh! why do we not adore Him more? Marvel of all marvels, this is the One this world has crucified and, still taking advantage of His wondrous stoop, continues to tarnish His glory. This leads to part three where we have considered the cross in relation to the creature's guilt and, behind it all, the wonder of the cross as the fruit of the eternal purpose and plan of our God. The perfect submission of our Lord to everything that apostate creatures could heap upon Him and along with this, His set purpose to carry everything through for God's glory according to plan and the blessing of the creature whose malignity put Him there. In the light of this, think of the way our blessed Lord is set aside today, both in His incarnation and atoning work. We do not refer here to this deluded world but to christendom — that which calls itself by His Name. Could we have a more melancholy picture than the numbers of church dignitaries, who belittle and ignore the work of the cross, by assuming that the Lord Jesus connected Himself with man in the flesh to lift him up? Perhaps there is nothing more amazing than the way Christ is belittled in christendom. When we think that soon every part of the universe is to vibrate with His praise, from the highest down to every blade of grass, Why is it, we may well ask, that men who stand high in official dignity in that great religious hierarchy called christendom, are not intelligently in the light of His Incarnation and Redemption and leading His praise just now? Instead of that, there is the deplorable sight of many of these men at a loss to know what to do and sadly crying out for a new age. This leads to part four where we saw how God had made good His thoughts in a remnant. There are those today who, in infinite grace, see the perfect beauty of His plan and purpose and can in holy liberty worship and adore. Such have learned the meaning of God's plan and see how, like the key to the lock, it fits into and solves every problem. Surely every sane person would admit that since it is His plan, it must be perfect in every way. Instead of attempting to bring Christ back to this life and eulogising Him as a great Teacher to set up again fallen men, they have learned the racial character of the Gospel which comes from a glorified Christ, to lift them out of the Adamic condition and link them with Christ in glory, as the new Head of a new race, into which thank God,

no fall can ever come. "Hallelujah! Sing unto Jehovah a new song; sing his praise in the congregation of the godly. Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the sons of Zion be joyful in their king. Let them praise his name in the dance; let them sing psalms unto him with the tambour and harp. For Jehovah taketh pleasure in his people; he beautifieth the meek with salvation. Let the godly exult in glory; let them shout for joy upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand." Psalms 149:1, Psalms 149:6. New Trans. So beloved reader, we sought your ear at the beginning of our meditation and now, one word at the close. We have looked together at some of the entrancing scenes of holy Scripture. Things which the Gold; Blue; Purple; Scarlet; and Fine Twined Linen portray. Have we learned something of the wonders of the holy Book of God? It shows us God: man; angels; and devils, as well as heaven; earth; and hell. It shows us the sphere where good and evil rages and man's entrance into the conflict with all its terrible results and terrible consequences for those who refuse salvation from Christ. It shows us where time touches eternity in the past and leads us on through storms and conflict, to where eternity touches time's end in the future. How marvellous and beyond all our creature thoughts is all this! It shows us man's world where the fallen creature grovels under Satan's tyranny, where sin, death, and demons operate and where the creature is engaged with things which must — however great in his estimate — pass away for ever.

Beyond all this, it shows us God in His Own world. That scene where all that is pure and holy obtains and sin and death can never come. Here He displays Himself in the fulness of redemption, grace, and glory, surrounded by those who have been made capable by redemption, to respond to Himself in holy adoration for ever more. The time scene sets forth many wonderful things both on the side of good and the side of evil. Above all, it sets forth GOD. In that scene He is seen today in perfect control of all whether Providence, Government, Long-suffering, Goodness and Truth. Oh! how marvellously does it display Him in redemption, where all His wonders are seen in plan, purpose, and execution in His blessed Son — now being made good by His Spirit. The centre of all the grand legacy which eternity will draw from time's eventful history, will be the abiding miracle of God the Son's becoming flesh, to carry out in the creation, the eternal counsels of the great Godhead. His stoop to Manhood and the cross with the holy grandeur as recorded in the four Gospels — all will abide and form the grand centre of that eternal scene, in the light of the grand fact that Manhood, in Him, has been carried far beyond its originally created condition, to the place marked out for it in the counsels of eternity. His Incarnation and Atoning work will continue to be, as it were, the twin pillars upon which will rest the stupendous fabric, which the great Godhead has built up out of the time history of sin, sorrow, and woe. While, in the time history my reader in our schooling days, let us give ourselves to these heavenly and eternal verities, that we may carry with us into eternity some of the spoils of victory. This has now been made blessedly possible by the constant supply of the mighty power and grace of our God.

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work."

03.00. "Purple"

"Purple"

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen" (Exodus 28:6).

J McBroom

03.01. Part 1

Part 1 The person of our Lord Jesus Christ presents such an infinite variety of beauty and glory that we can never reach its end. And nowhere in the Old Testament is the plenitude of that beauty and glory more in evidence typically than in the complex character of these priestly robes. We are in the company of the same wonderful person here when dealing with the "purple" as when speaking of gold, blue, and scarlet, but the attendant circumstances are very different. If gold is used to delineate the glory of the Son of God and blue the same One as man out of heaven, scarlet and purple speak of His kingly beauty and regal splendour both in connection with the covenant people on the earth and with the wider ranges of creation. Of the latter two the scarlet may have in view His connection with the earthly people and the purple His place over all as Son of Man. It was because of this that we ventured to take the scarlet first, so that we might begin with the smaller and then go on to that which is widest of all.

It is interesting to know that purple may be produced in natural things by mixing scarlet and blue, since it seems to show a strong link of connection between the natural and spiritual orders of creation. By bringing together the place of our Lord as Messiah in Israel with that of the Man out of heaven, we reach all that is necessary for the full mediatorial place of the man Christ Jesus; purple is the figure of this latter, and it combines all that the scarlet and blue adumbrate. The One who created all things is in manhood the appointed heir of all (Hebrews 1:1-14). This shows the universe to be His inheritance, and we know that the power that created all and holds it all in being will be put forth in swaying it, but have to remember that between the one and the other He became a man. It is this grand fact — which is the centre not only of Scripture but of all creation--which calls forth our wonder and praise, because it creates a situation which was called for both by Creator and creature. There was a double necessity for the Son becoming man, one of which existed on His own side — that of the Godhead, and the other on the side of the fallen creature. Man having sinned, was under death and incapable of extricating himself, so that the Son came forth to bear the judgment and remove the power of death; but besides this, though necessarily connected with it, there was a scheme of glory and blessing in the heart of God from before the ages of time which had to be unfolded in the creation. While He came to meet man's need the great end in view was to meet the need of the heart of God. The incarnation of the Son necessarily pledged His death by which both the need of man was met and the purpose of God brought out; this involves the complete solution of the sin question by the consigning of all evil to the lake of fire for ever and the triumph of good in and with the blessed God in a scene of stabilised bliss for evermore. The reign of Christ precedes eternity and is the answer in the present creation on the part of God to the whole sinful history of man, as well as the glory in the present creation of Him who at such cost to Himself brought all that about.

Purple, then, is the pledge that Christ will soon be seen at the centre of the universe, the assembly, His body and bride with Him, as helpmeet, the administrative medium, through which will shine out all that is in Him her glorious Head. If in the truth of the scarlet we just touch the place of the assembly in connection with the divine ways on earth, here we see her place in and

with Christ in relation to the counsels of eternity.

It was in view of this that we ventured to speak of the telescope whereby we might gaze into that expanse which is garnished with the magnificence and splendour of the towers, bulwarks, and palaces of this glorious King; that we might, on the principle of faith, visualise something of the far-reaching extent of that domain in its breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and with adoring hearts rejoice in Him whose power will control the whole of it, and whose love must of necessity be both its life and its law. Our theme, then, is still connected with glory; a glory, blessed be God, secured as all else is by the sufferings of Calvary. We can understand something of the unsullied glory of God in the reciprocation between divine persons of that which belongs to Godhead; we can think, too, of that glory in the creation before sin came in; but how great is the revelation of God's glory which is seen in the removal of our sins and the triumph of His grace in the blessing of the sinner. How blessed to see the One to whom every glory belongs covering Himself and the name and throne of God with fresh glory in His triumph over sin. We can behold Him, too, having part by virtue of deity in that incommunicable glory which all belongs to God at the same time as He shares with us all that glory which He has acquired in carrying out the whole will of God. But if it be necessary for the understanding of God's ways to view the place of our Lord in connection with the house of Israel as distinct from the rest of mankind, it is also incumbent upon us to distinguish between His relation to man and the earth as distinct from the hosts of other and higher intelligences. Different from these in his constitution, and coming upon the scene probably much later, there is yet much that man shares with these ranges of creation, both as to moral obligation and duration of existence. Spirit beings under moral obligation and capable of being affected both by good and evil may be said of each, both taking intelligent account of the working out of the plans of God in His creation. In rank, however, man is much less than the other class and stands in the moral scale at the bottom.

Little is revealed concerning these wonderful hosts of the heavens, whether as to the magnitude of their numbers or the character and conditions of their life. The will of God being of necessity the law of life, wherever moral beings are found, we know they are kept, for every creature of whatever rank must be dependent. Servants of great and dignified rank they are, as seen both in Gabriel and Michael, and with different degrees both of authority and responsibility, classified and numbered for their respective services, they are spoken of as "mighty," "holy," and "elect." Far beyond man in strength, equally beyond him in power of transit, because not confined to a material body, and with interest and attention upon events in distant parts of the creation, they may be said to far excel the frail being who is confined to this planet (see Daniel 4:17; Luke 9:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; and 1 Timothy 5:21).

There are certain features in the constitution of man, however, which go far to make up for this apparent inferiority and serve to bring out the marvellous end for which he was created. Living in a body of clay which binds him to the earth, and of which it forms a part, he is a composite being, both spiritual and physical, which necessitates a range of life in relationships and activities which the higher intelligences could not possibly know. Marvellous workmanship of God in which there is the power to soar in common with other spirit beings right up to God Himself, the great Father of spirits, while in the same personality exists all the emotions of the soul from which springs the natural affections which he has in common with the creature beneath him. Closely connected with this is the wonderful creation of difference of sex and the institution of marriage whereby in the

wisdom of God the race is multiplied and continued upon the earth. This is a most blessed feature of human life to which nothing that we know belonging to the higher orders can compare. High and lofty beings though they be, they yet remain units in their individuality and sphere in the great aggregate of creation, while to mankind is given the sweetness of marital and family relationships upon the earth.

Departure from creature subjection had evidently come about before man was upon the scene, which would have the effect of making two great classes. How long it was before Adam we know not, nor what length of time elapsed between their creation and their fall. The number in proportion to the whole which fell is also hidden. This explains, however, the presence of a tempter to whom the first man succumbed, so that he and his posterity are found, like the fallen part of creation, in apostasy from God. The particular interest of the Deity in man shows itself in a variety of ways; first in the consultation between divine persons about him, before he was made; then in the prohibition laid down, and most wonderful of all in the way that God comes after him immediately after the fall. How blessed it is to hear God speaking that very day of another MAN; One who would deal with the sin question in relation not only to mankind but to the whole creation. Here note the connection between time, space, and all creation on the one hand, and the moral measures which are in the heart of God to be wrought out on the other. It would have been quite easy for God to have brought His man upon the scene at that moment, but other things must come to pass first; things which in their very nature called for a measure of time which must run into thousands of years. The pre-incarnate ages were necessary not only to show to man his hopeless state as a sinner, but to display before the eyes of the creation the wonderful mercy, faithfulness, and loving-kindness of God. These dealings culminated in the incarnation of the Son, which not only verified all the previous interest, but brought out the still greater truth that God had man before Him for blessing long before time began.

Having come among men He is all that man should be. All was perfectly in order; there was nothing to distinguish Him from other men, "Like as the children were partakers of flesh and blood He also took part in the same"; it was the simplicity and beauty of a man with all the sensibilities proper to humanity, in a condition unimpaired by sin. He is the "Son of Man," and as such passed through every stage of human life, from the manger to the cross. In Matthew He is the kingliest of all kings, in Mark the most faithful of all servants, in Luke the most gracious and tender of all men, and in John while these are present He is the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.

Since the birth of Christ was an event that all history anticipated and all prophecy foretold, we dwell a moment on what the Scriptures foresaw concerning Him. We may touch the typical foreshadowings at three different points, namely, what is set forth in certain typical men; a glance at the directions about carrying the golden vessels; and also seek to cull from the rich range of prophetic testimony a few plain statements concerning the Son of Man.

Men who Prefigure Christ as Son of Man The connection with Israel, as already noted, began with Abraham, but the universal place is of necessity linked with the beginning of man's history upon the earth. The words spoken to the serpent is a proof of this, for the woman's seed must in the nature of things embrace the whole race. Adam and Noah are the two outstanding men which in these early ages were made to express something of the wider glories of our Lord: the former is called the figure of Him that was to come and the latter is made ruler over a scene which had been

already purged by judgment. Psalms 8:1-9 stands, as it were, midway in the working out of things between Adam and Christ; it is a commentary on the headship of Adam and dwells on the weakness of the race in comparison with other parts of the creation, but goes on to give a pledge of the One who would make every part of it resplendent with glory. Both Hebrews 2:1-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 show this by bringing out the latent truth of the Psalm, while Ephesians 1:1-23 goes on to the assembly's place with Him at the head of a universe of bliss where all will be amply fulfilled.

Noah, who comes before us in the front rank of the great cloud of witnesses, presents a beautiful type of the Son of Man at the head of all things in administrative government. After he came out of the Ark and offered his sacrifice it is said that the Lord smelled a savour of rest. In that offering which spoke of the excellency of Christ in death Jehovah found His pleasure, and Noah, type of the coming One, takes his place as governor of the whole scene. The fear of him comes upon the animal creation, which shows that the fall had made a change for man in the attitude of the creature beneath him. Mankind continued for some little time as one family which beautifies the whole scene before the breakdown which led eventually to the call of Abraham.

Proceeding with the history, two more outstanding men come before us, namely, David and Nebuchadnezzar. The former of these was a wonderful man, and in some respects goes beyond them all; he made Israel's name to be respected among the nations of the earth; prefigured the glory of Christ as King, Priest, and Prophet in Israel, and went on to give a hint of His place as Head of the heathen. In Nebuchadnezzar we have the first representative of imperialism, type of Him into whose hand is put the kingdom under the whole heaven. It was after the complete failure in the house of David when the glory had departed and Lo-ammi, not my people, had been pronounced, that the Gentile was entrusted with the sword of government. This gives a beautiful inlet to the wonderful wisdom of God in His actings. It was needful that the Gentile should be tried as well as the Jew, and it was necessary before the coming of the Son to give a picture of the kingdom in its cosmopolitan character, so that He who works out His brightest designs by the failure of the creature-takes account of Israel's failure to bring in the Gentile to give the finishing touch to the picture of the kingdom of the Son of Man. Nebuchadnezzar is made a king of kings and put into the place of universal rule. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wherever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

Christ in Universal Splendour Portrayed in the Ritual

Exodus 30 shows the material required for making the sanctuary which speaks of the holy universal order. The cloth and the colours, as well as other elements both for the house itself and the priestly robes, indicate that God would dwell in a scene of holy splendour and be the centre of delight for a redeemed and worshipping people.

These things were useful for the time then present, and though all broke down they served to foreshadow that which in the hand of Christ will be carried through to perfection. The priestly ephod combines in itself a full type of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the priest himself was not in the royal line. Royalty in Israel is bound up with Judah, but Aaron sprang from Levi, so that however expressive his garments the royalty could not be his; another priesthood, however, had

come upon the pages of Scripture centuries before that of Aaron, which combines royalty with all that for which Aaron stood. Mark here the profound beauty and perfect harmony of holy Scripture seen in the combination of the two orders of priesthood which is deeply embedded in these holy garments. Though royalty was beyond the reach of Aaron, the very clothes that he wore spoke of both the Davidic and universal royalty of our Lord. Our Priest, then, is a King not only of Israel, but is Ruler over the whole creation and a King that is eternal without beginning or end of days. (Compare Genesis 14:1-24, Psalms 110:1-7, and Hebrews 7:1-28)

These things may be further demonstrated by reference to the way the golden vessels were carried through the desert by the sons of Levi. We shall mention three of these only, which fell to the lot of the Kohathites: the Ark which belonged to the holiest of all, the table from the holy place, and the brazen altar from the court. The first of these, which prefigures Christ both divine and human, was taken down and covered with the holy veil, then the badgers skins, and outermost of all was the cloth wholly of blue, signifying that the Son of God in passing through this desert scene was all for God and consequently the repelling power of divine holiness was there, while what the eye could take account of was a heavenly man. The table had a covering of blue, then the bread of the presence with the dishes, etc., covered with a cloth of scarlet, and lastly the badgers' skins: all this in connection with Israel, both Godward for His pleasure and in divine administration among men. With the brazen altar it was different. The ark speaks of Him whom death could not hold, who ever delighted in the will of God and set forth the pleasure of His will; the table tells of the law of Jehovah going out to the nations when Israel is before Him for His pleasure; but the altar of burnt offering where sin was dealt with is pre-eminently the Cross. It was covered first with a purple cloth, after which came all the attendant vessels covered with a cloth of badgers' skins. Here the universal bearing of the Cross is prefigured, and like the three liftings up in John's Gospel it rises from Israel and the earth to the whole creation. Surely our souls are stirred at the contemplation of such things to worship and adore. And in proportion as we appreciate them entrance is given into the chambers both of His Messianic and mediatorial glory, so that we may behold the King in His beauty and the land of far distances (Isaiah 33:17). While Israel and the Abrahamic promises are not forgotten, every part of the creation is kept in view. The Son of Man in Prophetic Scriptures

We have travelled this way before in relation to the scarlet and the line of Davidic testimony; here, let us refer to a few of those statements which describe the wider place. Psalms 2:1-12 speaks of the king in Zion, but also of His inheritance among the heathen (Psalms 18:1-50). He is made Head of the heathen, a people He has not known shall serve Him; and Psalms 22:1-31 declares that all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord and all kindreds of the earth shall worship before Him. For the Kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the Governor among the nations. All this links beautifully with the words to Abraham. "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. Kings shall bow down before Him and all nations shall serve Him" (Psalms 72:1-20). But note the astonishment of both kings and nations in Isaiah 52:1-15. Jehovah draws attention to His Servant as extolled and made very high; but the way He took to the glory passes all comprehension and they are dumb. "Kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." His dominion is from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth (Psalms 72:1-20), for there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him (Daniel 7:14). He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the

name of the Lord His God; . . . for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth. (Micah 5:1-15). He shall not faint or be in haste till He have set justice in the earth and the isles shall wait for His law (Isaiah 42:1-25). The blessed One who stood before Pilate is not only King in Zion in view of Israel, but is King over all nations (Revelation 15:1-8). But He who is all this is also the King of glory before whom the everlasting gates lift up their heads and the everlasting hills recede, and to survey in faith the vastness of His dominions we must in thought soar from the planet of our existence and endeavour to see Him in relation to the rank upon rank of heavenly intelligences of whom we know so little that delight to own His blessed sway. Is it not the case that He is the appointed Heir of all things? Is it not true that He has already paid the price and has purchased all? Are we not told that things in heaven as well as things on earth are put into His hands and that the blood of His Cross is applied to both? (Hebrews 1:2; Ephesians 1:8-10; and Hebrews 9:23). If so, we may well seek to catch a glimpse in the faith of our souls of the thrones, dominions, lordships, authorities, principalities, and powers which people those glorious realms, not seeking to go beyond that which is revealed, but using with diligence the Holy Word to learn something of the vastness of that empire and the wonderful intelligences which form its subjects. May we not in this way get an enlarged sense both of the kingdom and the King. We view the planet of our existence as a wonderful place, and well we may, but it need not detract from that for us to endeavour to look out on the vastness of the dominions of the Son of Man, nor will it do so if we remember that by His incarnation and death the King has given proof that the centre of all that vast domain is this same planet. However baffling to our little minds or nebulous our conception of it may be, we can but bow in praise as it engages our thoughts. Nor however much the tendency to be overwhelmed by its magnitude, need we be incredulous, since God the Holy Ghost is the teacher whose office is to glorify the Son. In such ways we are permitted to trace how that all through the ages God was preparing for the coming of His Son. Such men as we have noted, as well as many others, shine brightly in the moral firmament in the light of a coming Saviour, the whole of the divinely established ritual in Israel proclaims His coming, and the divinely chosen words of prophetic testimony puts it before us in detail. For Christ is the end of the law — God's great end in giving it — for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:3).

03.02. Part 2

Part 2 On opening the New Testament, we find ourselves on very different ground. Here type merges into antitype, shadow into substance, and prophecy is turned into history. Here the Holy of Holies of the sacred Book is before us where the richest treasures of inspiration are laid bare, and here, to the delight of adoring hearts, the glories of the Lord shine forth. We have travelled this way before, as the reader will recall, in our previous meditations, and the little gained quickens surely our desire for deeper acquaintance with Himself. "To whom coming," says Peter, "a living stone." Nor need we fear repetition, since the fulness which is before us in these holy pages will be upon our lips for evermore. The words "Son of Man" were often on the lips of our Lord when speaking of Himself, and that even in those incidents of His life which were more definitely connected with the house of Israel. We can feel in proportion as we are taught that this was a necessity, for being a representative people what applied to them applied to all; for this reason we are permitted to see the mediatorial place of the Son in all the great leading landmarks of His history. What has been spoken of as wisdom's seven pillars, viz., His Birth, Baptism, Temptation, Transfiguration, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, bear witness to this in a remarkable way. The Virgin's Son is the Woman's seed, and though coming in connection with Israel (Revelation 12:1-17), is the Man-child brought forth to rule all nations; the baptism in the Jordan, and the Holy Ghost coming upon Him, shows the anointing of the true meat-offering, the anointed Man who was here for the pleasure of God. And so it was with all the others, for who, that is taught of God, cannot see in the temptations and transfiguration of our Lord, as well as in the three later events, that He was standing for God, the representative of Him in the creation?

If we linger a moment over His wondrous pathway we are reminded that He who was the source of all that is morally good and blessed is here covering Himself with fresh glories in the place of man's sin. How utterly incomprehensible all this is to the mind of the man of the world? Here was One whose delight it was to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever. Have we noted sufficiently the moral beauty exhibited in His unfaltering trust and unshaken confidence in God in every circumstance right on to death itself? The best of men become chilled and discouraged through lack of appreciation of their services by their fellows: He was always the same. Surrounded by lack of sympathy and tender sensibilities which produced misunderstanding and even desertion by his friends, malevolent and cruel persecution by enemies, nothing could turn Him aside or diminish the unwearied activities of His goodness in carrying out the will of God. As to demeanour He vaunted not Himself nor was puffed up; so meek and lowly indeed that an Apostle could beseech the saints "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." He who was rich became poor, down even to a bondsman's form, and by the prophetic Spirit we hear Him say, "I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground, for man acquired me as bondman from my youth" (Zechariah 13:5, New Translation). He could say, "I am among you as one that serves"; "My Father worketh hitherto and I work"; "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." But what must have been His feelings in a world where man had departed from God and at his best was living in a show of vanity and appearances? What, we ask, could be the

feelings of One whose holy sensibilities could not be blunted by sin as He beheld man religiously, socially, and politically under the power of sin and death. Able to estimate sin in the light of the divine majesty in all its enormity and beholding the indisputable sway of death over the whole race; surely it was not possible for Him to be other than a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And yet there was a joy, a holy joy, there with which nothing could interfere; a joy which sprang from unbroken communion and heavenly intimacy which belonged to the relationship in which He stood with the Father though He was in a scene of sin and death. He was dependent, sorrowful, made to suffer and despised, but never murmured or was embittered. No despairing words fell from Him like what may be heard from a Moses or an Elijah, a Job or a Jeremiah (Numbers 11:11-14; 1 Kings 19:4; Job 3:3-14; Jeremiah 20:14-18). Paul could say: "I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence," not so with our Lord. It never says He was exercised, doubted, believed, or hoped in the way such words are used of His greatest servants. We have said before that He never had anything to withdraw, but may we not go further and assert that there could be no misunderstanding or wit's end as we speak. Our common vocabulary of think, wish, feel, or long for, could in no wise be applied to Him. Imperfection has its ideals, and every bit of knowledge gained proves ignorance; but in these things as in all else the Man Christ Jesus stood alone. But withal He was a dependent Man and a Man of prayer. In Luke's Gospel He is seen many times praying, and many of the outstanding events of His ministry are connected with His communings with God. At His baptism, at the call of the Apostles, after feeding the 5,000, and before walking on the sea, at His transfiguration, as well as Gethsemane and the Cross. What was the subject of many of these prayers we are not told, and yet there is much we might gather since we read how that His ear was opened morning by morning that He might succour those that were weary. He prayed as none other prayed, using, too, a word all His own, for His prayers like His obedience and service must for ever stand alone. In this world we have kings and subjects, masters and servants, supreme and subordinate, etc., but in our Lord both thoughts combine, there we see supremacy and service, authority and subjection; cut off in the midst of His days, yet continuing through all generations, all of which hangs upon the mystery of the incarnation which must for ever defy the creature's ability to understand. With your permission, then, dear reader, we would before leaving this matchless theme, let the heart loose in all affection after the adored object of its delights. If I go through these holy Gospels hanging on the footsteps of divine love, drawn by the attractions of One whom I have learned to know and to love by my deepest needs; One who is everything to me, whose movements entrance my poor heart, so that my soul adores; One who can say, "Before Abraham was I am," who is marked by majesty, splendour, and wonder; controlling creation, yet stooping to the cries of a frail mortal; equal with the Father but stooping to wash the disciples' feet; here, oh here, my soul rests in the tranquillity of bliss, and with His gracious approval I pillow my weary head upon His blessed breast. Here I taste a love that interests itself in such as me and that will take its own, though poor and ignorant, into confidence with itself in all the holy intimacy which it delights to bestow, keeping nothing back from the inquiring heart of all the interests, plans, and movements of the Godhead, in the working out of the counsels of eternal love. Here there is intimacy but no familiarity; matchless mystery of grace that frail and feeble mortals can be at home with Him who in His own mysterious greatness must be beyond them for evermore. But like Moses, I would still draw near. He beckons me to Himself to dwell in the home of love begetting fullest confidence because of a nature and relationship which permits of no distrust. But there is more, for He makes known His interest in me not merely by

meeting my needs but by communicating His own and the Father's interests, so that I might know the things of the Father and the Son and with an enlarged capacity be able to appreciate the wondrous heavenly favour heaped upon my soul. But still I linger and gaze with adoration upon Himself noting His power over all things, physically in the grandeur of creation, morally in the ranks of created intelligences, and above all His relation to the Father and the Holy Spirit in the carrying out of all the divine plans for time and eternity, knowing that while He is and does all this He has time to think of such as me. He calleth His own sheep by name, notes the town, street, and house where they live; wonder of wonders He creates, upholds, governs, and supplies, but beyond all this He loves. It is because He loves and is love that He does everything else, and it is because of this He interests Himself in me.

We make no apology for this since there is a distinct call for living affections for Christ. Orthodoxy, however good it may be, is not enough; there must be vitality. The well-known saying that one may be as clear as a sunbeam and as cold as an iceberg describes that which is sadly possible because of a mental acquisition of holy things. Surely there is abundant scriptural warrant in the way saints are seen all through the ages giving expression to the joy that filled their souls through occupation with the Lord and what He has revealed of Himself; if in the twilight of God's ways saints are found voicing their appreciation of heaven we who live in the full light of divine revelation may well let ourselves go. "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof." Are we not reminded here of the words of the Lord when asked by the Pharisees to rebuke His disciples for this very thing: "I tell you that if these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." It was a saying of an eminent servant of Christ about Samuel Rutherford: "For an hour at glory's gate commend me to heavenly Master Rutherford."

All that we can ever know of God must come to us by redemption, the person of the Son, His work upon the Cross, and both of these for us, the latter being the means by which we can be brought in to appreciate and take delight in the former so that our hearts may be captivated by and for Himself, even now is a thing worthy of God Himself. Such a life as His must remain for ever blooming in the garden of God in all its holy fragrance; no books, even the world itself could not contain it; thank God the heavens will, for there it will be enshrined upon an ornament carved out as fruit of God's eternal counsels, to be read throughout eternal days. The assembly now being formed is that in which all that Jesus is and has done will be treasured up forever for God's eternal praise.

If the glory of that life is so far beyond us what shall be said of His death where all the accumulated forces of evil are seen at work spending themselves upon the sinless One. Before the Council the charge was, He called Himself the Son of God; before Pilate it was that He claimed to be a King; but with the people it was, "Behold the Man." Ecclesiastically, politically, and socially the world would not have Him. At that very time, however, something infinitely more solemn came to pass, for having taken the place of the sinner's surety there could be no help for Him in God. The Righteous One is abandoned and treated as guilty by His God. In these closing hours we read of the mock robe which is said to be scarlet, purple, and gorgeous; there need be no contradiction, for as we have seen, the first two are closely connected and may well be called gorgeous, but all foreshadows the time when every glory shall be set forth in Him. But think for a moment on the connection between His birth and death. Both were a necessity and each lay outside the common course of mankind. He chose to be born of a virgin; no one else ever had any choice about his

birth; He lived outside the common course of that life which "must needs die," yet gave Himself up to the shameful death of the Cross. The period of His life here must eternally abide before God, ever producing fresh praise in all its imperishable and incomprehensive grandeur but it had to come to an end. His people's state called for relief and God's glory called for a sacrifice, hence the necessity of the sacrifice at Calvary. The presence of Moses and Elijah with Him on the holy mount proved the necessity of the Cross for the securing of their right to be there, but the glory in which He Himself shone on that occasion necessitated death, for on the Mount of Transfiguration He stood anticipatively in the glory of redemption. On His side, too, there was a necessity for death that He might take up the place appointed for man in the counsels of God. He comes upon the scene to walk in the path of responsibility by way of the virgin's womb, but enters the place and condition marked out in the purpose of God by resurrection from the dead. "This is He that came by water and blood." As He said to the two on the way to Emmaus: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:26). In resurrection we see the new state, and what it involved, for, though not yet ascended to heaven, the links are cut with flesh and blood; not only does the world see Him no more, but His friends cannot have Him in the same associations as before. But if He could not be with them in the same order of life as before His love had made a way for them to be with Him in the new conditions in which He now stood beyond death. The forty days are evidently peculiar, since they tell of One who has left this world but not yet gone to heaven; in the wisdom of God they set forth the position of His own for which they would need the presence and power of the Holy Ghost after He had gone on high. This exaltation to the right hand of God is still more wonderful. Who can estimate the changes involved in the ranks of creation by His going there? We should mark well the bearing of this new thing upon man and the earth, for His going there had in view the sending of the Holy Ghost, an event which puts this planet and the beings upon it in a place of immeasurable favour before God. The events of the moment are of such enormous import that heavenly intelligences must stand by; they desire to look into these things, but a divine person is here to Whom is committed the whole range of the interests of Christ. So many important principles are seen at the point we have reached that it is needful to take account of the position. On the side of purpose Christ had appeared in the end of the ages to put away sin, while in the bearing of the divine ways and man's responsibility He had been offered to the world and refused. Before going to the Cross He had pronounced judgment on the world, but before that judgment is carried out and the full public result is seen in the glorious reign of the Son of Man there comes a sudden break in the outward dealings of God with the world. In divine wisdom all public transactions with man and the world cease, and the intervening gap during which the assembly is brought upon the scene begins to run its course.

It is this gap of time when Israel is set aside and under judgment, and the Church, the heavenly company, is being called out, which demands our deepest attention, because in it we have not what is of earth and time but what is heavenly and eternal. The Son of Man, while waiting for the full public answer to all that He has done, is glorified in God. His atoning work had met the sin question in its bearing on the whole creation and paid the price for the redemption of the whole in which way He stamped His claim upon it with a view to putting the whole under His beneficent sway. This will be the full answer to what He has done, and in that way the thoughts of inherited and acquired glory are brought together: what He inherits, as the appointed heir of all, He acquires by His death; all to be taken up in the double claim of personal and redemption rights, but between the Cross and the glory there comes in the gap of which we speak — the present Church-age

during which time He is in a more wonderful place still — glorified in God. Had the public ways of God gone on, judgment must have come upon the guilty world immediately after Christ went on high, but instead, the Holy Ghost comes down, and the Gospel, with the full blessing of God, begins to go out far and wide. The atoning work of His Son had so met the claims of God, and the majesty of His throne, that for the moment judgment would have been out of place, and instead a holy banquet to which all mankind are called, takes its place. This is the Gospel. Heaven rings with joy, and to the world guilty of the Saviour's death the Spirit is sent to bring men into the feast. What a triumph for God, and what a marvellous display of His grace and patience: He meets the creature's worst by His very best at the time of that creature's greatest extremity. At the moment when the world — both Jew and Gentile — had left itself open to unsparing judgment and had incurred the greatest debt, He frankly forgave them both. Nor did it stop at forgiveness merely, for the feast is spread and the dress for the guests provided (see the best robe, Luke 15:1-32); that the fruits of Christ's victory may be seen by the saints being before God vested in the beauty of His Son. This is where the proclamation of the Gospel links with the counsels of eternity, bringing to light the secret that men should be brought into sonship and that the Church should be presented to Christ as His complement, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all, so that when the heir comes into His inheritance the bride is seen associated with Him in all that pertains to His glory in that vast domain. Note, then, the perfect beauty of God's ways combined with all that He ever proposed in counsel as brought out in this divine parenthesis; had His judgment fallen when Christ ascended there could have been no heavenly city and no suitable helpmeet for the Man of His counsels. It had been written long before, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmeet for him"; we can see surely that not merely Adam but Christ was then before Him. All these things converge, so to speak, at one point. Christ's rejection, the end of man's testing, and of his moral history and the judgment of the world in the Cross. In this way room is made for bringing into effect the counsels of eternity, the revelation of heavenly things, and the call of the new heavenly company.

Before passing on to the nature and calling of the Church, a few words are necessary on the truth of deliverance on account of its being the process of experience the soul must pass through before entering properly into these things. Who that is acquainted with the movements of God's testimony during the last century does not know that the conflict of truth raged round the fact of the accomplishment of divine righteousness in the Cross, and the consequent inauguration of a new creation by resurrection. The battle-ground lay chiefly in the Epistle to the Romans. In the most elaborate argument perhaps ever put upon paper the Apostle brings out there the way that divine righteousness had been established in the judicial removal of man in the flesh from the platform of God's dealings and a new order of man seen in a risen Christ now before the face of God forever. Much was made to revolve around the phrase, "Union in Incarnation." The assertion of this in one way or another by many was a denial of man's lost state in Adam and amounted to the averment that in becoming Man the Son had connected Himself morally with a fallen race. We may be thankful that there were those raised up of God who were enabled to put before the saints that which had been before given through the Apostle. It was amply demonstrated from the scriptures by one well-known servant that not only could there be no moral link with man in Adam but there could be no union between Christ and the believer till after redemption was accomplished, by which the sinful state was set aside in judgment.

Conditions have changed since then, but alas, not for the better. The same truth is opposed today though in a different way among those who stood so valiantly for it then. Union with Christ is admitted, but the subjective work of the Spirit is denied or beclouded with the result that the richest blessings are accepted and spoken of as possessed without the necessary state for their enjoyment. It is not uncommon to meet with those who assume to be seated in heavenly places in Christ, and very zealous for the truth in orthodox statements, who show a great deal of activity in the Gospel but yet ignore the Spirit's work and practically deny the new creation. This lack of deliverance from the flesh, and ability to take account of oneself under the Headship of Christ as belonging to a new race, produces a class of Christians that can be outwardly devoted but know nothing of the offence of the Cross. God's richest blessings are slighted, the path of separation unknown, the very birthright of souls is lost and God dishonoured.

We insist, then, that deliverance by the death of Christ is the key to the whole situation: it opens up to the soul another order of things beyond death, while at the same time it enables us to see everything in this world at its true moral value. Where it is refused, no matter how conscientious the person is, there is bound to be confusion, because the person is surrounded with disorder and can see no way out. But now we turn for a few moments to the place of the assembly and those things which are so blessedly reached by the journey of the soul from Adam to Christ.

03.03. Part 3

Part 3 The distinctive place of the Church is set before us in the writings of Paul, and it may help considerably if we point out certain lines of truth which, though not arbitrary, may be of use to make clear the view. First, the place of our Lord in connection with Israel, but refused by them and the blessing made good in a remnant which forms, so to speak, the link between the present position of that nation and the full blessing of a coming day. Matthew, Hebrews, and 1 Peter give these things with the book of the Acts in between as showing the transition of the Israel of God from the place of the guilty nation to a new heavenly calling by companionship with Christ where all the spiritual fulness which was hidden in the types is known and enjoyed. Second, the more general place of the Lord where He is seen in relation to the whole earth. This the Gospels of Luke and John clearly bring out and go on with Paul to His rightful place in the creation. The close connection between Paul and Luke is beautifully seen in the way the latter introduces the new heavenly company in his Gospel and the former the extent of the heavenly calling. John connects with both the above, but is more occupied with the circle of love proper to the Father and the Son and the range of family relationships which are ours in that connection, things which scarcely come within the scope of our present meditation.

Apart, then, from the third line of things which is given chiefly in John, we have the circle of divine interests in regard to the Davidic kingdom which began properly with Abraham, then Christ the Centre of the ways of God in regard to all things. All that is seen in the first is the promise of the second, for just as each of the colours of the rainbow may be seen in one drop of rain so all the variety of glory seen in Israel in the past will ultimately expand and fill the whole creation. Not only does the kingdom and temple with their gorgeous array of grandeur and beauty furnish typical proof of the magnificence of the larger system, but what is seen in the divine ways with men like Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon speaks of the system dimly foreshadowed in the head of gold and reaches out to the holy universal order as described in Psalms 8:1-9, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, Ephesians 1:1-23, and Hebrews 2:1-18.

Having glanced in "Scarlet" at the Church as the vessel of God's ways, in time, we may now look at that same vessel in relation to the counsels of eternity. Here let it be said that one's feeble apprehension of this great theme is most humbling; it must be confessed with shame the want of ability to value and dwell upon that which is the richest and innermost part of divine counsel and the very masterpiece of God. Not to make much of the assembly (viewed in its proper place in Christ) is to slight that which is nearest His heart and for which He not only parted with all that He had but freely gave Himself. We are creatures of extremes, and constantly need to be balanced; may we suggest, that if a little of the time given to dispensational and prophetic truth was devoted to the grand solution of moral questions and the revelation of heavenly and eternal verities which are now brought out in connection with the assembly, in this the Spirit's day, it would be most wholesome both for saints and servants. The ways of God in relation to the dispensations are most blessed to know; the truth, indeed, so hangs together that one cannot be known without the other, and in this way many Bible students are able to correctly place the dispensations and give

the assembly her true place in relation to all the rest; but surely there is much more to be gained than this. If we could see that the assembly as united to Christ gathers up in herself all the deep moral principles of the past, combining with it what will be seen in the future, besides her own unique place in relation to Christ as the vessel of counsel, surely we would give ourselves more to the contemplation of such things. Does anyone ask proof of what is here advanced? Nothing is more simple since all that is in the head is for the body and all that the bridegroom takes up is shared by the bride. Israel will know Him as the glorious Messiah and the nations of the world rejoice before Him as the Son of Man; but, as being His royal consort, the assembly is to know Him in every way in which He is to be known. All, therefore, that the gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine-twined linen adumbrate, speaks of that which those who form the bride of Christ are being educated in today. It will not be doubted by anyone taught of God that heavenly as well as earthly things are laid out before us in the present economy of grace in a way they never were before. Let us therefore take courage and seek through grace to apprehend the favour of the moment. Though surrounded with all the evil of apostate Christendom, it is a time when the secrets of eternity are out, the motives of the Godhead are laid bare, and not only are the counsels of God disclosed, but all that He is in nature, character, and being is brought within the reach of faith with the express purpose of forming a company to be heavenly in character and conduct, though still in a bodily condition which cannot go beyond the earth. Surely there is a moral fitness in all this and a moral necessity for it which lies deeply in the nature of things, and which stamps itself upon the heart as of God, and which is right because He it is that does it.

Here, beloved reader, there is a point that must not be passed over. How often when servants of the Lord have been endeavouring to open out these things have we heard the complaint: "It is far too deep"; or, "It is beyond us; it is over our heads." Surely if such things are given to us of God it is meet that we should seek through grace to understand and appreciate them. But apart altogether from the danger of slighting such things, or they who seek to speak of them, is there not a mistake in the reasoning? We believe there is, and that it lies in the failure to distinguish between the intelligence and the moral consciousness in man. In acquiring knowledge we have to labour and go step by step from that which is elementary to what is advanced, but this is merely a means to an end, for to be effectual that which is taken in by the mind must reach the heart by the conscience (we speak of the children of faith) setting God before the soul in the fulness of revelation and glory. It becomes us, then, to encourage each other; God is training His people for a great and glorious position, and what He has put before us in His Word He can teach us by His Spirit so that even now we may climb the delectable mountains and behold the celestial expanse which lies spread out before the soul's gaze, producing praise and worship to such a great and wonderful God. From this digression we turn to speak of the assembly, and would remark that there are three expressions in the writings of Paul which serve to bring out the calling and relationship of those who form that company in a very blessed way. There is first "The mystery" from which comes the place of the Church as the body of Christ, and following upon that the truth of the bride wherein she is fitted in nature and affection for Himself. All three thoughts hang together, each in turn serving to bring the other into view. The Mystery. — "The truth of the mystery," it has been said, "includes four things: 1st, the revelation of God's counsels concerning Christ as the second Prayer of Manasseh 2nd, the relation of the Church to Him as His body and bride; 3rd, the nature of this union; 4th, what the Head is to the body and to each individual member. In other words, it is the unfolding of the glory of the Head, the grace which has set the

Church in relation to Him in that glory, and what the Head is to the body for its present maintenance while on earth" (Christian Friend, 1892, p. 68). The mystery, then, is not the person of Christ — there we have a mystery which can never be known — nor is it the Church however richly blest in the sovereignty of God. No; it is the grand secret of eternity in which the Church is seen in Christ and Christ in the Church. It is the outcome of divine counsels that the Son should become Man, taking up the whole creation as his inheritance in virtue of the Cross and form through redemption a company which should stand in relationship with Himself as helpmeet and be associated with Him in his royal sway.

We are told that this mystery was kept secret since the world began, and that it was not made known to the sons of men; it was hid in God, and before time began it was nearest His heart, for it was according to His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord. Between Christ Himself and those who form it there is complete identity of life and nature, and it is that which gives perfect finish to all the dealings of God with mankind. To the Apostle was given the revelation of it with a view to complete the Word of God. All this is seen to fit in with the protracted dealings of God with the world, and shows how that judgment could not immediately follow the crime which put the Son of God on the cross: time must be given for the call of the bride, for the MAN is not to be alone.

Having stepped into the creation by becoming Man, the Son accomplishes redemption and takes up a company which is spoken of as His fulness — the complement of the Man Christ Jesus. No words could duly emphasise this, for indeed it is spoken of as the impelling motive that governed the Creator in bringing the creation into being (Ephesians 3:9-10). "The mystery was the secret of the Creator, hence the whole creation had some reference to it, when the assembly has its place in glory it will be a blessing to the whole creation." Those brought into it had partaken of sinful human nature by virtue of their relation to Adam; that that condition might be put away Christ went to the Cross and in resurrection the Holy Ghost came to form them after Himself, whereby there might be evolved from Him that which should in this special way be eternally suitable to His own heart. The relative importance of this may be seen in Ephesians, where the saints are viewed as the House of God; there, the variety of divine blessing is marked out but the mystery is singled out for special treatment and enlarged upon by the Spirit in the parenthesis of Ephesians 3:1-21. In the latter half of Ephesians 2:1-22 we get the new man, Reconciliation, the Kingdom, the City and Temple, all the necessity of the House in Ephesians 2:22; but the mystery is taken up alone and developed by the Spirit in the following chapter. The Body of Christ. — This is part of "the mystery," and indicates the Church here in the life of Christ her Head. In 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 the body is seen as the Vessel of the Holy Ghost, in Colossians it is seen as the medium through which Christ is set forth, and in Ephesians it is the display of the all-various wisdom of God. In the first of these the saints at Corinth are viewed as a microcosm of the whole, so that what came out in Christ is continued by the Holy Ghost, that through them God might be known in the blessing of men. A sphere of life is opened up which is properly the domain of the Spirit in which the whole Trinity is seen at work; the diversity of gifts are from the same Spirit, the diversity of administrations are from the same Lord, and the diversity of operations from the same God. The chapter goes on to show the working of these things in the assembly, and all in view of the district in which the saints are located in the providence of God. There was, it is well known, the manifestation of other spirits at Corinth, but in Christ's assembly there was the manifestation of God's presence by the Holy Spirit. At Colosse the view is further enlarged. The greatness of Christ

is shown in a full and blessed way, and then carried over into the redemption sphere to show that He, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead, is the Head of the Body. If at Corinth the saints are seen as the vehicle of the Spirit, here it is all the saints on earth for the expression of the sensibilities that are in the head. Like the colours of the sun reflected in the myriads of water drops which compose the rainbow, the moral features of Christ are to be seen in His members, which has in view the triumph of God in the continuation of His Son here, in spite of His refusal by the world.

Coming to Ephesians there are certain peculiarities which call for careful consideration. Here the ground is enlarged so as to take in all creation. It is the prerogative of the Book of God to speak as no other book could, and in this Epistle what is not yet accomplished is spoken of as having come to pass. This is not uncommon in Scripture, as every student of the Word knows (see Romans 8:30 and many other passages). Here the assembly is seen as complete, taking in all the saints between Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47) and the coming of the Lord for His own (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18). This should be noted, for it leaves room for a freedom of language about the assembly both regarding time and space which otherwise we could not understand. Mark well, then, that in this Epistle the assembly is seen in her own place all through the present age, then in her place of glory in millennial scenes, and lastly as the vessel of God's glory in God's eternal day. In the combined view we recall that in Corinthians the Body is seen locally as the vessel of the Spirit, in Colossians it is the whole company in relation to the greatness of Christ; but in Ephesians it is even now the expression to heavenly intelligences of the all-various wisdom of God. In the first we see the supernatural, in the second what is cosmopolitan, and in the third the supramundane. At Corinth it is supernatural because of the manifestations of the Holy Ghost to be seen in them in relation to their life here; at Colosse it is cosmopolitan because the whole Church on earth is in view looked at as risen together with Christ but still on earth; at Ephesus it is supramundane because it is not only risen together with Christ but seated in the heavenlies in Him. Out of this latter, which refers to space, arises the threefold view in regard to time and eternity, viz., the place of the Church to-day, then the position in the age to come, and lastly, the dwelling-place of God in eternity. In Ephesians 3:9, the celestial intelligences read in her now the all-various wisdom of God; in Ephesians 2:7, the exceeding riches of His grace will be seen there in coming ages; but, in Ephesians 3:20-21, she will be the resting-place of the divine glory by Christ Jesus for evermore. The Bride of Christ. — If the truth of the mystery has shown us the Head and the Body, we now come to the Bridegroom and the Bride. The first thing we ask the reader to note is that in the truth of the body it is the singular but here it is the plural. In the former it is ONE; a whole Christ, the body seen in its completeness in the head, but in this we have two, the man and the woman. But if on different ground with the ascended man and His bride before us the truth of the bride depends upon that of the body, and we would make clear the connection. It was said the other day that "possibly the Holy Ghost had waited for these last days before the Lord returns to give greater prominence to this the bride-aspect of the Church." We heartily endorse this, believing that at this moment the Holy Spirit is producing in many bridal affections that nothing can satisfy but the Bridegroom Himself.

We have, it is well known, a number of women in the Old Testament which foreshadow the assembly as the bride of Christ. If we turn to these a moment we shall see that none completes the picture like her who was taken out of Adam to be presented to him. Asenath, the daughter of

Potipherah, and Zipporah the daughter of Jethro, the wives of Joseph and Moses, were lifted by their marriage to the rank of their husbands, a thing which could not be possible in the case of Eve. With her there was equality before the presentation simply because she was part of himself. These other women supply an important part in the type as showing how sinful creatures have been lifted from the dunghill and exalted to such a wonderful position; but with Eve it is the type of the assembly as in the purpose of God taken out of Christ to be presented to Him. Rebekah would not even fit here, for though she was kindred with Isaac and supplies a most important point as to our being one with Christ (Hebrews 2:11), she could not supply that part which the first woman does. As Eve came from Adam when he was in a deep sleep, the assembly is taken from Christ in death to be made a suitable companion for Him. Our Lord stood alone in the Gospels, but by going into death it became possible for the assembly to be taken from Him, so that she owes her existence to Him, but by way of death, and having gone on high He is made "Head over all things to the assembly which is His body" (Ephesians 1:22). The transition is made from the thought of the body to that of the bride in the verse just cited (Ephesians 1:22), and we can clearly see that the figure used goes back to the divine operation upon the man in the garden. We pass in thought from the body to the bride in the verse in Ephesians in much the same order as we reach the man and his wife by the operations of the Lord God in Genesis 2:21-23. The explanatory clause, "The fulness of Him who filleth all in all," transfers us in thought from the assembly as His body to the assembly as His bride. This should be attended to, for it is impossible to connect the idea of union with a single personality. All our members are part of our bodies as one whole, and cannot be rightly spoken of as united to our bodies, but when we come to the assembly as the bride, we are immediately prepared for the truth of Ephesians 5, where the institution of marriage is shown to have had from the beginning Christ and the assembly in view. Such thoughts would not fit in with what we have seen in Corinthians or Colossians, simply because there is no bride equal in rank with the bridegroom, but grasping the thought of the duality of persons in Ephesians 1:22, in relation to Genesis 2:21-22, we immediately see the suitability of Ephesians 5:32 with Genesis 2:24. It is in the latter that union can be rightly spoken of, and we are led with deep delight to see in the light of a glorified Christ that God had before Him from the beginning the procuring of a bride for His Son.

All this is connected with the before-time purposes of God, and is undoubtedly before the mind of the Lord in the parable of the goodly pearl, which we may further connect with His words to the Father in John 17:1-26 : "Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me." In the great parable chapter (Matthew 13:1-58), the Lord sets before us the beauty of the assembly in His eyes — the one pearl of "real price. For this He would part with all that He possessed. In doing so He obtained the whole world (a point which bears on His place as Son of Man), but it was that He might have the pearl for Himself. She is here viewed in the purpose of God in her inherent beauty as fitted for Himself and in the incorruptible blessedness of His life and nature before God.

Both the passage in Matthew 13:1-58 and Ephesians 5:1-33 take account of the state which called for the Cross and the work of His grace in us by the Spirit forming each individual in a new order, so that in the aggregate He might have an helpmeet suited for Himself. During the time He is on high there is the calling out, the sanctifying and cleansing by the washing of water by the word, and the nourishing and cherishing, which produces that unfading youth and beauty in His sight where there is neither spot nor wrinkle. We have the Cross and the motive for it in regard to that

company which is taken out of the "all things" to be the consort of Him into whose hands all things are put.

What a marvellous unfolding of heavenly light and blessing is brought to us in these last days, and to know too that the issue of it all will be the marriage of the Lamb when the glorious nuptials shall be celebrated in a scene of heavenly festivity which passes beyond all words to describe. Here again let us note another threefold description, recalling what we have said about the body; she stands today in the scene of the bridegroom's rejection, espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ; tomorrow she shall be seen in the plenitude of glory identified as the city of gold, the vessel of divine administration, in the sunny days of creation's glory, when all shall adore the King her glorious bridegroom; and, beyond all that, she is seen at the entrance to eternity as a bride adorned for her husband, going on into the calm of an unruffled eternity of bliss, "Where God shall shine in light divine and glory never fading." Shall we ask again the question, Is it possible to make too much of this wonderful masterpiece of God? One said in our hearing lately, "This picture of the Church as the bride of Christ comes into view before the fall brought sin and death into the world. That is to say, the instant creation was completed. God says, as it were, I will tell you the great secret of my heart, I will tell you why I have brought this creation into being. I am going to secure out of it an object to satisfy the heart of Christ."

Thus we can trace her portion in relation to God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in regard to time, the present age and the age to come; then pass on to God's eternal day, and placing ourselves there, in thought, look back over the bridge of time in all its wonders and see her place in the heart of the Deity in the eternal past; all now perfectly effectuated to God's eternal delight. Being the bride of the Lamb she takes her place at the centre of the creation with her glorious bridegroom; today, the display of God's grace and wisdom; tomorrow, of His grace and glory; but in eternity the vessel of His glory alone. "Unto Him be glory in the assembly in Christ Jesus unto all the generations of the age of the ages. Amen."

03.04. Part 4

Part 4 From viewing the centre of "the vast universe of bliss," let us turn for a moment to the circumference. From Christ the king and His royal bride, we are privileged to behold something of the unity and variety of that vast empire, and take some little account of the many families which, it is the purpose of the Father, should fill the heavens and the earth. For using the expression that "We have to remember that the Church is not everything," in a Scripture reading a brother was sharply pulled up and even demanded to withdraw. This, of course, he would not do, and to relieve the tension another came to the rescue with the illustration that a half-sovereign may be much smaller than a crown piece, but is of more value. As to the fittingness of the illustration we offer no opinion, but express unqualified agreement with the statement that the Church is not everything. It must be admitted that our little minds often get so warped with the importance of one thing, so as to lose all sense of due proportion in the whole. So far is the statement, that the Church is everything, from the truth, that it destroys the view of the whole. To belittle any one of the circles of the vast accumulation of the redeemed families and the rank upon rank of heavenly intelligences not only detracts from the place of the assembly, but is positively derogatory to the glory of the King. When we view Israel in Canaan set up in the midst of the nations of the earth, does it not ennoble rather than weaken their position to take full account of every nation that then was there? If we view the sun as centre of the solar system, the planets that revolve around it at the furthest distance are as necessary as those at the nearest place; the same law that governs one governs all, and indeed, the whole is balanced with such nicety that the removal of one would be detrimental to the whole; so it is in the moral system, where the law of love is that which controls all. It does not detract from the relative place of each company in that vast scene of glory to say that the Lord Jesus Christ is the necessity and guarantee of the life of the whole, nor can it possibly lessen His glory to say that every part of it is necessary for the display of what is in Himself.

How all is to be brought about may engage us for a moment, for although Christ is at the right hand of God and all things put in purpose under His feet, it still remains true that we see not yet all things under Him. Such is the certainty of the accomplishment that prophecy may be said to be the face of the historian turned the opposite way. Let us endeavour to see in the space at our disposal how all will be brought to pass. The divine government proceeds from the throne of God, but it is exercised in a different way, from the time that the sword was given to the Gentile than what it had been before, when the throne of David was established and Jehovah sat between the cherubim. At that solemn crisis in the world's history the state of Israel was so bad that they were carried away to Babylon; the glory, symbol of Jehovah's presence departed to heaven, Israel ceased to be owned as the people of God, and the times of the Gentiles began. From that moment till the present, God's holy government, which is certain, has been exercised in an indirect and less public way. Instead of ruling from His place between the cherubim, He controls all from His throne in heaven; an order which must continue, till Christ takes His own throne and the public government is made good in His hands. In all this we trace the divine order in creation where providential

government is constantly in exercise and where the higher intelligences come in as intermediary servants to carry out the mandates of their Creator for the well-being of man upon the earth; an order which vividly displays the goodness, wisdom, and beneficence of the Creator. Now God has put all things into the hands of His Son, the man Christ Jesus, and the world to come is not put under angels so that a change in the divine government of great importance is necessitated. The way this change is brought about by the transfer of the executive of the throne of the majesty of God to the hands of the glorified man, is put before us in the Word and calls both for earnest consideration and our deepest praise.

All this, it need scarcely be said, hangs upon the mystery of the person of Christ. The sending of the Holy Ghost by Him at Pentecost was the beginning of a new thing, which it is essential that we should understand in connection with this change of the divine government of the world. This new thing was, in a spiritual way, and on the principle of faith, the commencement of that world over which Christ is set which is destined to expand till it covers the universe, and which had been constantly spoken of both by promise and prophecy. It exists ever since, but for the moment it is spoken of as "God's administration which is in faith." Here all is set up under the Son of Man. The present world with its nations and kings, senates and armies, etc., is the scene of God's holy government where holy angels are His ministering spirits for carrying out His will. In the glory system all is different. The Lord Jesus Christ who is supreme in administration concerning all the bounty of God, has sent the Spirit in relation not to this world, but in relation to the revelation which He Himself had brought. Angels, high and holy beings, must here stand aside; into these things they desire to look; and, in those who are the called of God, they are to learn something which no creature in past ages could possibly get to know. All this surely accentuates the importance of the present moment and calls for faithful men who, in a time of appalling disorder, stake their all upon the maintenance of the claims of God. The reader will remark that we are not looking merely at the outer framework of the dispensations, nor at the important gap in these which is still running its course, but at the inner lining or moral fulness of the thoughts, plans, and procedure of God which is laid before us in relation to other ages both past and future. Stephen beheld the man in the centre of the glory of God, and from that point right on through the New Testament there is opened up for us the richest unfoldings of God; that we may see Him, our glorious Saviour in the exercise of His lordship, headship, and priesthood, which is the blessed proof to our souls of the place of the anointed man whose administration is not in relation to this world, but to all that which concerns the glory of our God in the creation as purposed by Him before time began. From what has been said it will be seen that certain things are the result of a moral necessity, and Christ's present piece, at the right hand of God being provisional, is one of these (Psalms 110:1-7). While refused His rights He engages Himself there, with other arid deeper things, till the moment when He shall rise to take over the full and universal control of all things. Then the world of blessing, now known in faith, shall come into full view, and the whole scene of the divine government which is now the sphere of angelic service shall pass under His control, they delighting to own His sway and adore His holy name. A moment's consideration of such things gives us to see how all is measured, planned, and timed to fit together for the grand coronation day, when the appointed heir shall come into the inheritance in all the dignity that is His, in full view of a wondering creation. Let us look for a moment at the circumstances connected with the change of the divine government as presented in Revelation 5:1-14.

It is a scene in heaven, the abode of God and the universe in its varied races is represented. The activities of heaven are often mentioned in Scripture, as again and again the veil is drawn aside that we may learn the wondrous doings of God with the earth in connection with the great conflict between good and evil (see Job 1:1-22, 2 Chronicles 18:1-34, and Zechariah 3:1-10). We read of Moses, with Aaron, and his sons, and seventy of the elders, called up "and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" (Exodus 24:9). Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel had each been called to witness the movements of the throne in its varied actions, and at different epochs, in the exercise of the divine government, all of which combined to exhibit the majesty and supremacy of God. This scene surpasses them all for sublimity of grandeur and splendour of majesty. It is a meeting which has in view the assumption of universal government by Him who was slain, and all the attendant circumstances are so ordered that nothing may be wanting that could impart dignity to the scene. The scene on the holy mount had displayed His majesty before the chosen three in the days of His flesh, and after He had ascended, other three, viz., Stephen, Saul, and John, had beheld something of that same majesty. Here He is seen at home, the centre not only of myriads of celestial intelligences, but in the midst of that host for whom He bled and died. There is first the throne and Him that sat upon it, the Holy Lord God Almighty; the seven lamps of fire which are the seven Spirits of God; the four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind, expressive of the character of the divine government; and then the twenty-four elders, the whole redeemed company then brought home to heaven. Justice and judgment are the habitation of the throne, and the rainbow round about speaks of His covenanted faithfulness in the creation: all the great elements we may say of creation, providence, government, and redemption are there. Lightning and thunder speak of judgment, for at that very moment there is gathering together the greatest combination of evil that ever was on earth. But if there is thunder in Revelation 4:1-11 there is singing in Revelation 5:1-14. A sealed book is seen in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, but no man in heaven or earth could open it; it is the title-deeds of the Lamb, and the time is come for Him to assert His rights. When He took the book this was the signal to begin the new song which should travel out to the boundary of creation. What an answer to Calvary is here! Who can ever think of what all this means for Him, seated in the court of heaven, the centre of God's delight, surrounded by hosts of heavenly intelligences and at the same time the object of the delight of redeemed myriads whose presence there made the Cross for Him a necessity?

We would gladly linger over this scene, but our point is the transfer of the action of the throne to Him upon whose shoulder rests the government of creation. From this point on in the book of Revelation the angels are seen carrying out the behests of Him who had prevailed and alone could open the book. "The Son of Man," it has been well said, "is the connecting link between the purpose of God and the wheels of divine providence, as they move on in the accomplishment of all that concerns the glory of God for ever and ever," and the providential judgments which follow whether the seals, trumpets, or vials are all introductory to the coming forth of the King who, having taken the book, controls such judgments. The song in Revelation 5:1-14 which celebrates the Lamb's praise, takes in suffering saints on earth and turns the mind to a class which may be viewed as the last and perhaps most noble of all that grand army of heaven's worthies. Their suffering and death necessitate resurrection and translation which will complete the circles of blessing in the heavens, but the presence of the king Himself is a necessity for the putting things right upon the earth. The fearful state of things there is seen at its height in the combined

resistance of the kings and their armies against the coming One. Judgment, which had hitherto been providential, is now to be direct from the hands of the Lord who appears with eyes as a flame of fire and a sharp sword, for, "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies" (Isaiah 42:13). This judgment, which is Davidic in character, may be said to be the vintage of the earth, but there is still the harvest when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory and all the holy angels with Him. There can be no doubt that the vintage and harvest include all the judgments which are preparatory to the scene of ordered blessing when the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; the judgment of the great white throne, being a thousand years later, is introductory to eternity. Order being effected, the king takes His place in the royal city, which is the centre of His vast empire, and the place from which His administration emanates. As we have shown in "Scarlet," Israel will not be forgotten in that day. All Scripture shows her to be the centre of blessing and glory upon the earth, and the direct link of connection with the city of glory above. Jerusalem, set up as a strong city far beyond anything ever known before, shall have put on her beautiful garments, and the righteous nation shall have become the centre of prosperity and blessing in a scene where all the problems which are disturbing society to-day shall find their complete solution (Psalms 72:1-20).

It is just here that the difference of the Church's place is seen. If Jerusalem is made the centre of the whole earth, the heavenly city is the metropolis of the whole creation. It is an aggregate of intelligent people, a vast corporation which is seen as the crown of all the work of God in His dealings with mankind, a city whose founder and builder is God. The city speaks of centralisation, and has been defined to be "the most perfect realisation and the most convenient representation of society in its maturity." What thinking person can fail to see right from the building of the Cain city, the tendency on the part of man for centralisation. The closing book of the Bible sets before us two cities: one the climax of civilisation, fruit of the industry, ingenuity, and device of man, as having departed from God; the other, the blessed expression of the wisdom, skill, and resource of God. In the vast system around us, where civilisation has risen to such a height, all the revenues of the centuries have come down to us. Nature, science, and history have been explored to supply us with their varied stores, so that a range of knowledge is brought to us far beyond what was considered possible by those gone before. Facilities for pleasure, pride, and idleness, fruit of many inventions; and, legislation for the masses, so that "Rich and increased with goods" is much in evidence. Here is found the accumulated results of the industry of ages, and all the refined capabilities of man's complex being is expanded to their utmost to make the earth a place of rest and satisfaction without God. Respectability, refinement, and "prohibition" are all found in this city; schemes, too, for destroying slums and building garden cities, etc., etc.; but with it all infidelity, godlessness, and opposition to Christ on every hand. In the midst of all this God is working. His eye is on every one and on every element of the situation, and if His blinding judgment seems to be resting on many who lead the van in apostasy, there is, on the other hand, many tens of thousands who love Him and delight to own that they owe their all to Him whose precious blood was shed for their salvation. Note, too, how He makes even the evil to serve Him, for "All things serve His might." Those who are to be in the king's service, in the city of glory, in the glorious administration of divine justice, are being trained for office in the circumstances they are made to pass through today. While all the capabilities of man in the flexibilities of his soul are being stretched to the utmost in the race for life in science, commerce, and politics, there are those who

are being fitted, while passing through the same things, for filling an office in the administration of the city and its glorious king. In that scene the officers of the king will take up positions which call for resource, and the ability to deal with men and circumstances. This resource is developed by a course of training which shows the importance, for the Christian, of the interval between His first confession of Christ, and the moment when he enters his heavenly home. But now look at God's city. There is no brick and slime here. The whole structure is composed of living stones. Its construction has been going on in the hands of a divine architect since the day of Pentecost, and it is prepared against that day when chaos, thank God, shall give place to cosmos, in a creation which will be filled with the light and excellency of Christ to the everlasting delight of God. There is gold, silver, and precious stones in Babylon, but no living stones; these belong to the heavenly system where the city is pure gold, like unto clear glass, and garnished with all manner of precious stones. It is the central part of that mystery in which is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Faith by producing divine instinct, as well as by scriptural intelligence, ever looked forward to it, and every principle brought out in the course of divine dealings down through the ages finds a place there. Sacrifice in regard to righteousness as in Abel, prophecy and translation in Enoch, salvation and government in Noah, all is found there. Again we get headship as represented in Adam, blessing as in Abraham, dwelling as in Moses, and ruling as represented in David. But besides this blessed accumulation of heavenly principles which have been displayed in the ways of God, there is also the witness to His counsels which existed before the world began. Christ Himself the centre of these counsels and the assembly His body and His bride. Here both the counsels of God and His time ways meet, finding in both their consummation and rest, and solving to our adoring hearts the great enigma of the past; explaining, too, the secret of why the creation came about, and the wonderful mystery of His forbearance with all that which so long called in question His honour; all, all is there, because He is there in whom it all centres, and from whom it all sprang, and by whom it shall all be upheld throughout everlasting days to the glory and praise of God.

There is the throne of God and the Lamb, while in the river all is seen as under the influence and power of the Holy Ghost. The rays of the glory will rest upon those brought into the place of nearness, and will pass from them to the varied circles meeting each in perfect suitability with their moral constitution, and the relationship in which they stand. The tree with its twelve manner of fruits for the glorified, and the leaves for the healing of the nations.

We have noted her ministry earthward (see "Gold"), but as the helpmeet of the king her service shall extend to the utmost bound of the creation. The same chapter which speaks of her activity towards the world tells also of the same towards the higher intelligences (see 1 Corinthians 6:1-20), which in the nature of things is a moral necessity. While forming the link between the creation and Him who created it, she is distinct in some sense from it. As sharing with Him for whom it was all created and as the bride of Him who is the centre of God's counsels, she has her place with Him in giving effect to these counsels.

Here, beloved reader, ponder with us a moment this expression of the Purple. See the Son of Man of the Gospels, the Son of Man who is now glorified in God, the Son of Man with a golden crown coming forth to judge, and then behold Him as the man of Ephesians 1:20-23, with His glorious bride at the centre of a universe made glad with His glorious sway. See Him, the God who stooped to this earth and manhood to settle the question of sin, the centre of the Father's counsels, who

hurls from their place every fallen dignity and prostrates every foe, cleansing both the heavens and the earth and bringing in everlasting righteousness, for He must reign till He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power and all enemies under His feet. Should we not then, my reader, delight in the grace which has enabled us to bow and own Him Lord and God now, and seek to apprehend more of the wonderful things of our God who has connected us with His Son as members of His body, soon to be with Him on high to serve and praise Him for evermore.

Having become man He remains that for ever, and at the end of the kingdom age, when all that is connected with time has been brought to a finish and the former things shall have passed away, the assembly is seen as a bride adorned for her husband going on into an eternity of bliss. There in the beauty of the divine nature, for stones and pearls are not required, she shall be the suited dwelling-place of God for His eternal delight and in His eternal day.

Blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel, from eternity to eternity! And let all the people say, Amen! Hallelujah!

04.00. Scarlet.

Scarlet.

James McBroom.

04.01. Part 1

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work " (Exodus 25:6).

Looking closely at those "five words," which contain something of the glories of our Lord, we are reminded of what is said in another place, viz., that the world itself could not contain the books which might be written on such a theme. A Saviour who, on the one hand is God over all, marked by divine righteousness and glory (Gold), and on the other, by Incarnation as the Second Man out of heaven (Blue), comes necessarily before us in regal Majesty and Kingly beauty as the appointed Heir of all things (Purple), and Son of David, King of Israel, that nation's glorious King (Scarlet), while behind all, we are led in the fine twined linen to see Him as loving righteousness and hating iniquity, and exhibiting a life of unstained purity in a world of sin and death, where all had gone their own way and outraged the claims of God.

Much patience is required if we would enter into these things and watching daily at His gates. He delights to be sought after and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him out To be admitted to the place of intimacy inside, to behold the King in His beauty, to have the heart delighted with the sight of Him as Centre of such varied glories is a favour of no ordinary degree, and recalls His own words to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." "We beheld," says Peter, "His majesty on the holy mount." Stephen saw Him in the centre of the glory of God, and since then it is the privilege of every child of faith to look up and see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour, at the right hand of God. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

There are some, alas! who seem to have no taste for these things. There are, it is well-known, certain persons afflicted with a certain defect called colour blindness. Much of the sublime in nature is lost to such. The beauty of the rainbow above, or the richly decorated landscape beneath, which lends a charm to our life here, elevating the heart often above the pressure of mental and moral troubles is unknown to them. What shall be said of those who are morally blind and are content to remain in that condition. The language of repentant Israel, as recorded by the Holy Ghost is, "He hath no form or lordliness, and when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him." Contrast here Psalms 27:4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord . . . to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple." How deplorably sad it must be for those who interest themselves in the things of the Lord sufficient only to secure heaven at the end, but conform to the ways and fashions of the world and fail to catch a glimpse of the beauty of Him who is the fairest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely One. The purple and scarlet of the above verse speak of our Lord in what is magnificent and gorgeous, and combine in Him with the moral and spiritual verities indicated by the other three things, viz., gold, blue, and fine twined linen: He is a heavenly Man in the royalty marked by divine righteousness and stainless purity, and His rule is set before us in the Word as having a two-fold bearing. The first is His place as Son of David, King of Israel, the second, that of Son of Man in universal sway in the creation, and it is

generally agreed that the scarlet refers to the former glory and the purple to the latter. With the one we may connect the thought of the microscope showing the minute perfections of His grace and glory in a little nation on the earth, the people which, in grace, He stooped to link Himself with in the working out of God's ways in time (see the Psalms, particularly Psalms 2:1-12, Psalms 45:1-17, Psalms 72:1-20), and with the other, the telescope opening out the far-reaching extent of His dominions as King of kings and Lord of lords, and as swaying the whole creation of God (see Psalms 8:1-9, and its various quotations in the writings of Paul).

He it is upon whose shoulder the government of all rests. It has often been pointed out that earth's blessing supposes Israel restored and set up in millennial joy under Messiah's glorious sway, with all nations in happy accord', delighting to own their Messiah as Son of Man, their rightful King, whose beneficent sway through the people of His choice will bring contentment and satisfaction to all. This is well put by another. — "Thus the two streams of blessing will flow peacefully around the Lord Jesus, the centre as it were of two concentric circles, which will then expand to His glory and fill the world with blessing. He is the Son of David for the smaller circle and the lower of the two, He is the Son of Man for the larger, all-embracing government, which will then be established under the whole heaven and not only over the land of Judea. The rule of the heavens in His Person will enfold all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, and so ensure righteousness and peace throughout the whole earth" (The Second Coming, W. K., page 111).

These two lines of truth often intersect each other and are continually brought together in the same context, the Spirit beginning with the place of Christ in the nation and going on to His wider glory among all nations. See for example, Psalms 2:1-12, where it is said, "Yet have I set My King on My holy hill of Zion," and then goes on to say, "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance." Nor must we forget that there are times when the Spirit breaks through all mundane limitations and reaches out to His place of rule in the width of the creation. This comes very clearly out in Psalms 8:1-9, and its citations in the New Testament, where the Lord is portrayed at the centre of the universe and His Church associated with Him in the time of His glorious reign.

It will be seen from what has been said that it will be preferable to take the scarlet as depicting the narrowest circle first, and afterwards go on to what is universal. For this, let us prayerfully seek that an entrance may be given into the chambers of His Messianic glory, that He who has the key of David will graciously give admission, and that we may enter into "Things concerning Himself," and be entranced by beholding the King in His beauty in that Temple where every whit utters glory.

Scarlet seems in some way to connect with Israel. It is mentioned in the pledge given to Rahab of her security when Israel would take the City. It is descriptive of national glory in the days of Saul, when the daughters of Israel were clothed in gold and scarlet. And the fact that our Lord is spoken of as clothed in a scarlet robe in that Gospel where He is portrayed as Son of David would seem to indicate its use in Jewish royalty. Its significant rise in the ritual, when along with cedar wood and hyssop it was cast into the burning of the heifer, speaks of the end of all man's glory in the cross (Galatians 6:1-18). The Woman clothed in purple and scarlet (Revelation 17:1-18) indicates, as is well known the daring character of the professing system at the close, assuming the right of Christ both in Israel and among the Gentiles.

There are certain well marked allusions to the supremacy of Christ in the early chapters of Genesis, which we must pass over since they are connected more with that of which the purple speaks. The call of Abraham marks an important epoch, and although it was comparatively late in the history when that event took place, he was made the root of the olive tree of testimony and the one from whom the Nation took its origin. Hence we read in the opening verse of the New Testament, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." Here the genealogy is not traced to Adam as in Luke, the point being, to show our Lord as the true Solomon, Heir to the throne, and the true Isaac, the risen One, who is Heir to the land. The call of Abraham is thus seen as a new departure in the ways of God, and the glorious answer to all the promises is seen in Him who became a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers (Romans 15:1-33). The Kingdom reign is first mentioned in Exodus 15:18, and we cannot fail to see in the events of that period the power that will usher it in. The deliverance from Egypt, the opening of the sea and the leaping of the hills, are grandly expressive, producing the language which celebrated Him as a Man of power. I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.... The Lord is a Man of war: the Lord is His Name. Then the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Stone of Israel, Benjamin (the son of my right hand) who ravens as a wolf, all speak of Him whose name is Immanuel (Genesis 49:1-33). The Star and Sceptre spoken of by Balaam and the greater prophet, mentioned by Moses, tell us distinctly of Him whose authority none would gainsay, and in like manner the Captain of the host of the Lord, who with a drawn sword appeared to Joshua. In all the history it may be clearly seen that God is so ordering and controlling events as to give a clear outline of the Man of His purpose, who, at the end of the ages of probation, would come forth and take up all that had broken down in men's hands in previous times and make all good for God's glory and honour. To those acquainted with the Pentateuch, we may recall that Genesis chiefly foreshadows Christ in the person of certain men. Exodus in the way of certain acts. Leviticus, the wondrous fulness connected with the sacrifice of Christ and the Priesthood for the service of God, while Numbers and Deuteronomy describe a whole system of life and relationships which finds its counterpart in Christ and the Church. The prophetic strain given through Hannah is a bright gleam in a dark day, and brings the King before us in Person. Her faith went far beyond the mere instinct of nature, and got for its answer a Samuel (asked of God) who was raised up to supply the link between the fall of the priesthood and the establishing of the monarchy in David. In this man we come to what is permanent, for although there was breakdown in his house, as in all the rest, all hope continues to centre there because of David's greater Son. This leads to the Psalms, where we get a rich and magnificent strain of prophetic utterances concerning the beauty of the King and the glory of His reign. The prophets dwell, by the same Spirit, on the sufferings of Christ and the glories which were to follow, passing over the long gap of time during which He is on the Father's throne. Their testimony may be said to have in view, Christ upon His own throne and the full blaze of His glory, but for the present He sits upon the throne of His Father, engaged with the deeper things of eternal counsel. Keeping this in view will save us from much which might otherwise be confusing. A King according to God would combine every virtue with a resource that nothing can baffle. Moses who was king in Jeshurun, may illustrate both by type and contrast. He acted in that capacity with a resource which was wonderful and in a way that draws out the words, "Faithful in all God's house." There were times, however, when the circumstances were too much for him and he had to say "Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you" (Numbers 9:8). This could not possibly happen

with the true King. "The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And His delight will be in the fear of Jehovah, and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge the poor and reprove with equity the meek of the earth . . . and righteousness shall be the girdle of His reins and faithfulness the girdle of His loins (Isaiah 11:2-5). With Moses, as with all others, the divine Teacher was at work producing that which in later times He would carry out to fruition. Take that man of God for a moment along with Samuel and David, stars as we say, of the first magnitude. In their service they set forth our Lord as Lawgiver, Judge, and King. Who does not admire the beautiful traits of Christ seen in such men. Their faithfulness was the outcome of God's work in their souls, for, like ourselves, the blessed God had more to do in them than He had to do by them, and being mortal, we can see the element of weakness, and even failure, here and there. At a later day, when the prophet depicts Zion as a city of solemnities and a quiet habitation, it is because the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, for all that the three leaders stood for is combined in Him, with the absence both of weakness and failure.

Here then, we get our knowledge of Him at first hand. No one knows the Son save the Father, and we listen with joy to His communications of Him in those old Testament days. "Behold My Servant whom I uphold, Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth! I will put My Spirit upon Him and He will bring forth judgment to the nations. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break and smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment to truth. He shall not faint nor be in haste till He have set justice in the earth, and the Isles shall wait for His law." How exceedingly precious is all this for this poor, down-trodden world, where unrighteousness and tyranny have so long flourished. But the place of Israel, as symbolised by the scarlet, must be kept in view. Therefore we get, "Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; shout; daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh to thee: He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

But, my reader, there is more, for we are privileged to come into the sacred enclosure and listen with adoring hearts to the communications which passed between the Father and Son concerning the work of grace, the place the Son takes and the unutterable cost to carry all out. In the time of His deep sorrow we hear Him say, "Take Me not away in the midst of My days," and the answer which is given shows the Sufferer to be God over all, — "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou continuest, etc." (Psalms 102:1-28 and Hebrews 1:1-14). And when the cross is seen from the side of man's hatred, the words ring out, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the ends of the earth." See also Isaiah 49:1-26, and the various passages in the New Testament where the Father speaks directly to Him from the unseen world. But such a favour must produce a corresponding result. We can, therefore, hear the language of faith in its communings with God about Him. "His glory is great in Thy salvation; majesty and splendour hast Thou laid upon Him. For Thou hast made Him to be blessings for ever; Thou hast filled Him with joy by Thy countenance" (Psalms 21:1-13). Next note faith's address to Him as seen in the Song of the King. "Thou art fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured into Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. Gird Thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty One, in Thy majesty and Thy splendour; and in Thy splendour ride prosperously

because of truth and meekness and righteousness, and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things" (Psalms 45:1-17). And last of all, note the delightful outburst about Him to others, "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold . . . His eyes are like doves by the water-brooks with milk fitly set," and she goes on with the happy description of His features till able to go no further, she says, "Yea, He is altogether lovely" (Song of Solomon 5:9-16).

It will readily be perceived that a mere carnal kingdom could not suit such a King, nor could He assume the government over man in his sinful condition. The reign of Christ supposes sin put away, the curse removed, the inheritance cleansed, and the whole earth full of His glory. This necessitated the cross with all its tale of woe. Hence we find, interspersed through the prophetic Scriptures and running parallel with what we have already touched, the description of His humiliation, suffering, sorrow, and death. He is described as a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, giving His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hiding not from shame and spitting. This, too, is set forth in a concrete shape, that is to say, not merely by prophetic statement, but by type and shadow. See for example, the offering up of Isaac, the sufferings at the hands of his brethren by Joseph, the sufferings and distresses of David who, though anointed king, was hunted like a partridge on the mountains, and remember that the whole sacrificial system is an adumbration of that death by which the sin question is settled for ever. His sufferings from the nation began with His ministry and ended with His death. The feelings of His heart may be traced in many passages, "Jehovah, how are they increased that trouble Me, many there be that rise up against me." And as the end drew near He has to say, "Yea, Mine own familiar friend in whom I confided, who did eat My bread, hath lifted up his heel against Me" (Psalms 41:9). And in the Psalm of Atonement we learn what passed through His heart in the hour of deepest woe. "For dogs encompassed Me, an assembly of evildoers have surrounded Me, they pierced My hands and My feet." All closed in upon the holy Sufferer in that hour, but beyond all that evil powers could do, we have to take account of Him as forsaken of God. It was then that the whole sin question was settled for the glory of God, never to be raised again while eternity's ages roll.

One passage may engage us a moment because of how it combines the two lines of prophetic testimony glanced at above, viz., the sufferings of Christ and the glories which were to follow. In Isaiah 22:1-25, the Lord comes before us as a nail to be fastened in a sure place. Eliakim, who displaced Shebna, is the figure, and to apprehend the passage we must remember that in Jewish homes, the nail on which the ornaments hung was in a conspicuous place. "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantities from the vessels of cups even to all the vessels of flagons."

Here our adorable Lord is seen, not only as the perfect answer to all the types, shadows, promises, and prophecies which cover the pages of Holy Writ, but the radiant Centre of that glorious constellation of luminaries which shone throughout the ages, illuminating the record of man's history on the earth. Trace the whole line of honoured witnesses, that great galaxy of heavenly orbs which shone in the light of the approaching Sun from Abraham to Malachi: go

through the holy Gospels and see the honourable mention of names like Moses, Joseph, Elijah, Isaiah, Daniel, etc; and last of all, visualise the King and His intimate ministers on the holy mount, and there behold the Nail and all the attendant vessels. All the vessels, not only outstanding ones, but the hidden and obscure? whose lives were lived in relation to God. For all the vessels of small quantities, from vessels of cups to the vessels of flagons were there.

Here comes, in a ,most solemn turn in the chapter, an event which indicates that the Incarnation of the Son of God, however great, is not enough for the divine glory in a world of sin and death. " In that day, saith the Lord of hostel, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed and cut down and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off. Hence we read in another place that He was cut off out of the land of the living (See Isaiah 53:8; Daniel 9:26). But why all this? Clearly because a world of sinners, where death shadows all, can never be made suitable for God. Death must come in, an event which, while proving the guilt of man, makes way for the resurrection platform where the Kingdom is established and where all that is of God rests. What a tremendous shattering of every human hope was the cross. Who can conceive what the disciples felt when Jehovah delivered up His strength to captivity and His glory into the enemy's hand. Can we wonder when one said, "I go a fishing, and others, said, We go with thee" and others in deep concern said, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (John 21:3; Luke 24:21).

04.02. Part 2.

Part 2. But here, as of old, it may be said, we would see Jesus. We turn then from the portrait to the Person Himself with the prayer on our lips, "Lord, show me Thy glory," and with confidence of heart contemplate those spiritually enchanting scenes set before us in the pages of the four evangelists. Here the King stands before us, giving concrete expression to the whole. Every line is filled with life, which gives substance to the shadow, completeness to the mould, and equilibrium to the whole. It has been said that Christ would not have come sooner than He did, and in the combined view of both the purposes and ways of God nothing can be more certain; the pre-christian ages being a necessity, during which the activity of the Godhead is seen working in the fallen race both in grace and government. Behind it all, however, there was the sketching out of an order of life and being which the Incarnation of the Son only could make good. In the birth of Christ all was actualised because every part of truth was perfectly combined in Him. The divine glory and credentials are prominent in John and the human pedigree in connection with the nation in Matthew. Bethlehem, though small, is the place from which He comes, whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity. The glory of the Person is interwoven with the human details and presented in such charming simplicity as to rejoice the heart, while all fits in perfectly with what had been written before. All that Hebrews 1:1-14 predicates of Him is here seen in the Babe who is called Immanuel. The control of affairs is markedly in divine hands, and the Child must be taken to Egypt. Not merely to escape the dragon's power however, but that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." The history of the nation, which was one of failure, had begun from that place: He goes there to identify Himself with that history and put His own perfect stamp upon all. As soon as He is announced by His forerunner and before beginning His public ministry, another king — one who had had long practice on man — comes upon the scene to challenge His royal rights and attempt to allure Him from the path of His moral glory. The one temptation relative to our present theme is that given second by Matthew, and alludes to the holy city and the temple. connecting with His place in Israel both politically and ecclesiastically. But the King, whose right it is to command, knows perfectly how to obey and the evil one is defeated by the Word of God.

Having defeated the strong man He goes forth to spoil his goods. He enters the strong man's palace where he kept his goods in peace, where he had his armour and much spoil, to dispossess and cast him out. That one had early raised up bulwarks between the creature and God, but the Deliverer had come. The King is here in the sphere of man's need on the line of mercy, but it never can be possible to think of mercy toward the spiritual forces of evil. The crushing of Satan meant the deliverance of man in so far as he was prepared to submit himself to the King. For there could be no truce in that conflict nor compromise, since mercy were lost on that which is irreconcilable.

Satan left Him for a season to come back at the end with his last and strongest weapon; Indirectly, however, his murderous opposition is kept up all through the time of the Lord's ministry. The ingenuity of his tactics is seen in a multitude of ways, for not only are evil spirits seen at work, but the very people that the King had come to bless are made the instrument of his attack. When we

reflect that the very elements are stirred up by him to frustrate the work of the King, as in the storm on the lake of Galilee, we get some idea of the determiner! opposition of the evil one.

Demons were commanded to be silent, and on being cast out were found pleading with Him not to be sent into the abyss (Mark 1:34; Mark 3:11; Luke 8:31). Here we have the saddest of all truths, that though Satan may delude man into the foolish device of scepticism it is beyond his power to do that with evil spirits. "The demons even believe and tremble" (James 2:19). The majesty and resource of the King is seen not only in the exposure of every device of Satan, but that all is made to work out for his disgrace and defeat. This is seen all through the history, but nowhere more conspicuous than at the cross, where his last, worst, and vilest attack brings about his downfall for eternity. As we behold the moral scenery of the Gospels the plenitude of His glory shines before us in such a way and in such variety that we feel the difficulty of keeping to the Scarlet. There everything utters glory and blends together, combining what is Personal, Moral, Official, and Creatorial, with the cross at the end, where the glory of Redemption (the door of entrance for us, whereby we may enter in and contemplate them all), shines in full meridian splendour. The unity, variety, and symmetry of what belongs to God and man may be traced in such a way as to anticipate God's eternal day, when He shall dwell with man in a condition of things into which disorder can never come. There, if we may be allowed the expression with all reverence, we see God at His best because He is dispensing grace and mercy in a world of need, and there, too, we see Manhood for the delight of the heart of God, a Sight for all intelligences to behold. Thousands have drawn near to the Ark of the covenant in that holy place, getting their tiny vessels filled and thousands more will follow, but it must ever remain in its own eternal fulness the richest of the rich, the grandest of the grand, the most wonderful of all the wonders of God.

We make no apology then, dear reader, for asking the favour of your company that we may together go by the footsteps of the flock, and enter into the inner chambers of the King, saying to Him, "We will be glad and rejoice in Thee, We will remember Thy love more than wine" (Song of Solomon 1:7). "Where the word of a King is there is power, and who may say unto Him what doest Thou?" Such words could only be used in an absolute sense of our Lord and point forward to His public reign. But the One who is to rule in a scene of righteousness must first rule in grace, and we may well ask as we look forward in the light of the past and present which is most profound. "The shout of a King is among them," was as true in John 7:37, as it will be in the time to come, and of this we have living proof in those who have heard the mighty voice of the Son of God and been made to live. Power is there, but controlled by love, in the sphere of good and evil and on behalf of the creature who had long groaned under the power of the tyrant. His word carries authority, and from the moment He comes upon the scene the axe is laid to the root of the trees ready to cut them down. His being a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief is in relation to the conditions which prevail among men, this being a mark of divine grace towards the race in which His purpose centred, could in no wise affect His dealings with all other parts except that all should be in happy harmony with Himself in His work of grace. Where this was not true the very opposition, because of who He was, was bound to work for its own destruction. All is at His command. The physical, the animal, the spiritual, and the moral. The winds and waves obey, the tree withers away, the unbroken colt carries Him, the fish obey His voice as the sea yields her treasures, the demons quake before Him, and death itself, the king of terrors, surrenders to Him his spoil. No King like this. In Psalms 24:1-10, the question is asked, Who is He? "Who is this King of glory? The Lord,

strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." His word controls the seen and unseen, heaven, earth, and hell, and destruction and death say we have heard the fame thereof with our ears. But see the effect of that word in human hearts. Distressed ones are filled with joy as they behold their loved ones relieved from both disease and death. The nobleman's son (John 4:1-54), the distressed sisters of Bethany (John 11:1-57), and the widow of Luke 8:1-56, show the gladdening rays of the Sun of Righteousness streaming in on sorrowful hearts in anticipation of the day when all tears shall be wiped away. "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof," said the centurion, "but speak the word only and my servant shall be healed." And the soldiers sent to apprehend Him have to say, "Never man spake like this Man." Some would say, "What doest Thou" to their shame, and even a disciple might unwisely intrude to meet with stern rebuke. Other kings hold their subjects under command either by fear or affection. He is Lord of all, and holds the mind and heart of each under His control.

There were those again whose delight it was to bow before Him, owning His sovereignty and drinking in His word. "In the light of the King's countenance there is life and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain (Proverbs 16:15). The woman of Luke 7:1-50, found His words to be like drops of water to a thirsty soul, and the grace of heaven dispensed by Him made her heart like a watered garden. If she learned the grace of forgiveness the woman of Luke 10:1-42, tasted His complacency in the joy of communion. Surely the Person and the communications of the King commanded her whole being and made her oblivious of all else. She knew the light of His countenance, and her faith rejoiced His heart by penetrating into His thoughts and His excellency to such an extent as to anoint Him in view of both the sepulchre and the throne (Matthew 26:1-75 and John 12:1-50).

Take again the words: — "Take away the wicked from before the King" (Proverbs 25:5). Perhaps the most solemn illustration of this is seen in the going out of Judas into the dark of that, for him, morally dark night. The case, too, of those who brought the sinful woman for Him to condemn. The answer of His lips so exposed them that they were shamed out of His presence and all slink away. In Matthew 12:1-50, the King is seen on the line of mercy, the expression of which arouses the animus of the leaders to such an extent as to seek to destroy Him. Silenced by His word and baffled by the work of His goodness they go out and hold a council to put Him to death. While they are on the line of murder He goes on in His work of mercy taking. so to speak, no notice till He bring forth judgment unto victory. The moment is at hand, however, when He will turn His attention to these, when "the Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war, He shall cry, yea, roar: He shall prevail against His enemies." Then shall He say, "I have a long time holden My peace, I have been still and refrained, now will I cry like a travailing woman, I will destroy and devour at once" (Isaiah 42:1-25). In the language of another prophet it shall then be said, "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" (Amos 3:8).

Judah is the royal tribe whose ensign was a lion, and from him Messiah sprang. And when we reflect that lions are emblematical of the majesty and dignity of Israel's throne, we get some sense of the true dignity of the nation as linked up with the Son of David. Judah is a young lion. "From the prey, my son, thou art gone up," says Jacob. "He stoopeth, he layeth himself down as a lion, and as a lioness who will rouse him up." We who live in the light of accomplished redemption with the power of Satan broken at the cross, can see how having spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them, He has gone up. Yes, He that descended into the lower parts of the earth

has ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things (Ephesians 4:1-32). "But who shall rouse Him up?" That shall be the day of the vengeance of our God (Isaiah 60:1-22), when He shall say, "I have sharpened my gleaming sword and my hand shall take hold of judgment, for a fire is kindled in Mine anger that shall burn unto the lowest sheol" (Deuteronomy 32:22; Deuteronomy 32:41). Is there nothing akin to this, it may be asked, in the day of His ministry? Can we not see something of this when His disciples remembered that it had been written of Him, "The zeal of thine house devours Me"? He found in the temple the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers sitting, and having made a scourge of small cords He cast them all out of the temple and said "take these things hence: make not My Father's house a house of merchandise." This second cleansing of the temple, it will be recalled, took place within a few days of His death, and at no time in the history does His supremacy so shine out. If the doings of the last week be carefully studied it will be seen that He is indeed a King against whom there is no rising. "The voice of Jehovah is powerful, the voice of Jehovah is full of majesty, the voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars" (Psalms 29:4-5). But there is another side to His character which is of great importance for us to look at. He is the Lamb as well as the Lion, and it is worthy of note that both these titles come out in the first and last books of Holy Writ. This double presentation of our Lord presents Him either at the top or at the bottom, and while the Lamb is used as typifying His death, it is never so with the Lion, for no wild animal could be used in sacrifice. See Him in John 5:1-47, whose power will sweep the whole domain of death and whose mighty voice commands the tomb, and almost in the same breath hear Him say, "I can of mine self do nothing." If the exigency of the moment demanded stern righteousness He is there, "Jesus Christ the righteous," and if need or suffering, He is there to bind up the broken heart. "I beseech you," says the apostle, "by the meekness of Christ," and His own words were, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest to your souls." The two things come together at His arrest. At one word from Him they all go backward and fall to the ground. and immediately afterwards He submits to all. There is no distraction in that moment, and although Peter's zeal created a scene, He is there to bind up and bring all to order. See Him before the council, spat upon and buffeted, then in Gentile hands mocked and crowned with thorns, and follow on to see Him led as a Lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb. It is this combination of divine power and glory with lowly grace, that submits to all manner of abasement, that entrances the soul; an inscrutable mystery which fills us with speechless amazement and richest adoration.

"There see the Godhead glory shine through that human vail, And willing hear the story of love that's come to heal. My soul in secret follows the footsteps of His love;

I trace the Man of sorrows His boundless grace to prove."

While beholding these two features shining out the difference between them is pressed upon us. The working of miracles in one very obvious sense could be nothing wonderful for Him, nor indeed the checking of evil and deliverance of the creature from sin, disease, and Satan's power. All these things He had been doing in different degrees all along the line. He Himself is to us the greatest miracle of all, and the marvel would be if He did not do such things. But the most wonderful thing of all, and that which is bound to touch the heart most deeply is, that such a Person should be found going through the circumstances of this life patiently and calmly committing Himself to God and doing everything in a way that was well-pleasing to Him. Here, beloved reader, let us ponder

as we behold this sight which is surpassingly lovely; to see such an One commanding the storm or walking on the water produces wonder indeed, because it was done in Manhood's lowly guise, but to see Him smitten, stricken, and afflicted, mocked, and spat upon, surpasses all that creatures can conceive. What could bow the soul in holy and adoring worship like that? It is that which has been called His moral glory, and in which He is seen as the most gracious and accessible of all men. One who never turned any away, whether old or young, but made Himself the servant of all.

04.03. Part 3.

Part 3.

Here we must trace, though in the fewest possible words on account of want of space, the history of His rejection by the people and its connection with that already touched. The first four chapters of Matthew we have seen give the birth, baptism, proclamation, and testing of the King. Next follows the Sermon on the Mount, a discourse incomparable for beauty, simplicity, and grandeur. A King like this must have a kingdom altogether different from anything which had ever been before. It is therefore a description of the character of His kingdom. Those things which are necessary for a nation and kingdom among men, such as wealth, education, and distinction of rank and a standing army are conspicuous by their absence, the reason being that all the requirements of His are stored up in Himself. The Beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-7, are a description of Himself to be produced in His subjects by faith and on the principle of reflection; the whole discourse being a searching exposure of the accredited leaders of religion at that time. The two following chapters (Matthew 8:1-34 and Matthew 9:1-38) give His service, and there we may see the display of the power of the kingdom in such a way as to demonstrate the truth that the King and the kingdom are bound up together and all its requirements are stored up in Himself. He is refused at the end of Matthew 9, and His mighty works which could not be denied are imputed to evil power. Before He accepts their decision He tries them in another way by sending forth the twelve disciples, for what could have been done more for that people than what He has done. They go forth as the ministers of His bounty, equipped by Him to meet every emergency and to demonstrate the power and resource of the King. What a day that must have been and what joy and gladness came into many hearts who, like ourselves, were sharers in the common heritage of woe which sin had brought in. All that was necessary was the glad acknowledgment of the King, but this was not to be. His presence, the description of the kingdom and the display of its power, did not awaken response; the forerunner might mourn, and He Himself pipe, but they would neither lament nor dance and at last, treated as a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber He has to pronounce woe upon the cities in which most of His mighty works were done. This should be carefully pondered for it brings before us one of the most decisive moments in the world's history. Decisive not only for the Jew, but for the nations of the world, and creating the position for the greatest display of wisdom and resource, the richest unfolding of heaven's grace, the position which God takes account of to fulfil the counsels of eternity. In the light of previous testimony however, it will create no surprise since all had been foretold in the prophets, and indeed, it was this that was before Paul in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia when he told the Jews that in condemning their Messiah they were but fulfilling that which their own prophets had written (Acts 13:27).

There are, therefore, three important landmarks around which all this part of the history turns which if taken account of, will serve to simplify matters at the same time as impressing us with the profundity and beauty of all Scripture.

(1) The connection of Matthew 11:1-30 with Isaiah 49:1-26.

(2) The strong link between Matthew 16:1-28 and Isaiah 8:1-22.

(3) The bringing together of Psalms 118:1-29 and Zechariah 11:1-17 with Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-37.

(1) The point at which we have arrived in Matthew 11:1-30 will be found to fit in exactly with the words of Isaiah 49:4, where the blessed Lord speaks by the prophetic Spirit saying, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for naught and in vain. yet surely My judgment is with the Lord and My work with My God . . . Though Israel be not gathered yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." At that moment the answer comes from His God; — "Is it a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I have even given Thee for a light of the nations, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." If the reader will at this point carefully read the words of our Lord in Matthew 11:25-27, he will see that never was there a time when He was more glorious in the eyes of His Father than when Israel made that solemn decision.

(2) Having broken with the nation at the end of Matthew 12:1-50, He formally abandons the testimony and takes wider ground, Matthew 16:20. By charging the disciples to tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ, He connects with Isaiah 8:16-17. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples, and I will wait for Jehovah who hideth His face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for Him." It is at that moment that the disciples are seen as given to Him out of the nation, as shown in the words of the prophet in Matthew 12:18. (See also Hebrews 2:13).

(3) In Matthew 21:1-46 the Lord enters Jerusalem in fulfilment of Zechariah 9, and is acclaimed King in the words both of that prophet and Psalms 118. But in spite of all the leaders would not have Him. The birth of Messiah had been a fresh overture or covenant on the part of God, not only with Israel, but with all nations. Their refusal was bound to affect all the others and the symbolical act of breaking the staff in Zechariah 11:10, signifies the breaking of this covenant with all the peoples. This, in all probability, was accomplished in the solemn words of Matthew 23:1-39, which end with the statement, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." All ended as we know midst the gloom of Calvary, fulfilling that great branch of prophetic testimony which spoke of the sufferings of our precious Lord, bringing with it the shattering of every hope. and producing distress and consternation among those who had been privileged to witness much of the glory and beauty of the King.

We have now to see the use that is made of the people's decision. In the ways of God Christ had been offered and refused, but all had been foreseen their decision in that way making room for the operations of divine love in the purposes of grace. While it was necessary that the trial of man in his responsibility should be completed in that people by the presentation of Him in whom all the promises centred, it was also foreknown that He would be refused. How the blessed God causes all to work for His own glory and the good of the creature may be seen in the way the rejection and ignominious death of Christ is used by Him to bring out the richest and fullest manifestation of His grace. The forces of evil were at work, but to make way in divine wisdom for the hidden purposes of eternity and the deeper glories of the Godhead. The prophets had written of the sufferings of

Christ and the glories to follow? but knew not that a long period which has lasted nineteen centuries would come between the one and the other. The people having forfeited everything He said, "I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their guilt" (Hosea 5:15). See Genesis 42:21 — "We are indeed guilty." He had said before that time while expostulating with them, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before." We know His own place was with the Father, as He said in John 17:1-26. "And now I come to Thee." His going there was in connection with deeper and richer purposes, which has engaged Him since and will continue to do so till the moment now at hand in which Israel, having received at the Lord's hand double for all their sins, shall say, "Come and let us return to Jehovah, He hath torn and He will heal us, He hath smitten and He will bind us up."

It is during this period that a new thing comes to pass. While Christ is on high the Holy Ghost comes to dwell in His people on the earth. consequently the whole counsel of God is brought out. The Church age is undoubtedly the most important time in all the dealings of God with Man because the Holy Ghost, a diving Person, is here to unfold the glory of God and Jesus. This necessitates the opening out of the counsels of God concerning the glory of the Son in the Creation calling out the Assembly as His Body and Bride, which brings into moral display all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, going far beyond anything ever before conceived, showing the dealings of God which began with Genesis to be as yesterday, all being as elevated in character as heaven is above the earth. Such things are far beyond the scope of Israel's blessing and would scarcely be fitting in a paper dealing with the glory of Christ in that people. But besides her place in relation to divine Persons and the counsels of eternity. the Church fills an important part in relation to time and the ways of God. While here in the scene of His holy government she is made the witness of His grace, patience, and faithfulness in such a way that all these great and blessed principles of truth, which had for their centre the earthly people, are now being worked out in her. In this way, it is so important to see that nothing that God had in mind for His earthly people can be said to have failed. Their refusal made room for the call of others, who are brought in and made the recipients of the blessing in such a way as to demonstrate both His faithfulness to His people and the securing of His glory in them. The Lord Jesus Christ had come as Centre of all the counsels of God, and at the same time, the One in whom all His ways were gathered up and centred. His refusal brought about redemption by which He took His place at the right hand of God, and by the Spirit the Assembly was formed to take her place in regard to both the counsels of eternity and the time-ways of God. While the former, which is the deeper and fuller, must be reserved for another time we are compelled to look into the latter because of its connection with the ways of God with Israel and the earth.

We would emphasize this and press upon the reader the importance of giving attention to it since it is the key to open up the whole range of divine dealings. Many can say a great deal about the past and look forward to the great things of the future, describing minutely the moral and political disorders of the day; books, too, constantly coming out, interesting and helpful as far as they go, but not having the key, viz., the place of the Church as the vessel in which the ways of God centre, there is both loss and confusion. The result is that these things are spoken of as if the great gap of time during which Christ is at the right hand of God were a mere hiatus where all is blank. The Church may be spoken of, but in such a vague way that there is no distinct sense of her place as the vessel wherein are deposited the blessings which are proper to the earthly people. The link

between Israel and the Church is the elect remnant given to Christ out of the nation. In that important section of the epistle to the Romans, where the faithfulness of God to that people is seen to agree with His promises, it is said that they are not all Israel who are of Israel. This was also put before them by the Lord Himself in John 8:1-59, when He said, I know that ye are Abraham's seed, and in the same breath, If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham. The generation of faith is thus distinguished from the nation as an election of grace and this is confirmed by figurative teaching. Isaac, the son of the free woman, represents the line of faith, while Ishmael sets forth the nation in unbelief (Galatians 4:22-26). Much confusion exists, for want of attention to this important distinction. While the apostate nation is cut off and, like Cain of old, doomed to wander in the land of and with the mark of a vagabond, the election of grace are brought in and become the true nation, the Israel of God. The people had, as it were, thrown back in His face the Messianic blessings, but He found hearts in which they could be enjoyed, these came into all the blessing of Israel and far more, being given to Him as companions and transferred from Israel and earthly blessing to the Church. Thus we can see how all that belongs to Israel is maintained and carried through for God in the Church during the time that the nation is suffering under His government for the murder of their Messiah.

It is in this light we must view the great apostle when, having brought out the counsels of God in connection with the change of dispensation. he still speaks of himself as standing for the true hope of Israel. It is well worth pondering that the man to whom, above all others, was committed the truth of the heavenly calling does not give up the true hope of those whose blessing is on the earth. After the interview with the elders of Ephesus, where he speaks of himself and his labours in connection with the Gospel, the Kingdom, the Counsels, and the Church of God, he speaks before Agrippa as standing for the hope of the promises made of God to our fathers to which our twelve tribes, serving God day and night, hope to arrive. This, it will be seen, he connects with resurrection as showing the ground of Israel's blessing to be like that of all others, viz., the redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance and the true Israelite never loses sight of the fact that, in His own time, God will bring His people in like all others, as subjects of His mercy. But some one may enquire what are the blessings which belong to Israel which are shared by those who form the Church and carried through in them provisionally for God in view of that people. The answer is that the Kingdom, the new Covenant, the Sanctuary, and the Priesthood, with all the holy adornment belonging to these things are existent today in the presence of the Holy Ghost, things which were spoken of and fore-shadowed in pre-Incarnate days, and in like manner, the great blessings of Salvation, Reconciliation and Eternal life, with all the peace, love and joy which necessarily belongs to such things. These things, and far more, came here in the Person of Christ and was offered to Israel who, being the covenant people, had a certain claim. After all, such things could only reach man by redemption and God took account of Israel's rejection of His Son to bring that about.

We see in Acts 2:1-47 the Kingdom established in an altogether new way, the King having taken His place on high as the Centre of royal power and authority. From a dispensational point of view it covers a certain geographical area and encloses a mass of people who enjoy the benefit of the King's sway in an outward way, accepting Christianity as a creed and owning the Lordship of Christ in a nominal way. Like Israel of old, the righteous are seen in the midst of a mass of profession, where many are favoured with the light of God. The Kingdom exists, however, as the

great moral security for man and only those who in faith have bowed to the Lord Jesus Christ have entered there and are said to be brought into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love. "I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.... The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name.... The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Exodus 15:1-27). The Covenant prophetically spoken of by Jeremiah is given effect to in the spirit of it in the Gospel today, the preachers being called new covenant ministers (see 2 Corinthians 3:1-18). The terms of it are forgiveness of sins and the law written on the heart, which has in view cleansing from sins and deliverance so that man becomes a reflex of Christ. The cup of the new covenant is in the hands of the Assembly today and used at the greatest of all feasts, the Lord's Supper. This is a thought of priceless value, for it is at that feast that the saints enter into all the blessedness of the sanctuary, taking their part in divine service in the company of the great Priest who is over the service of God. It has often been remarked that when you get the covenant immediately the sanctuary and divine service come into view. In both 2 Corinthians and the epistle to the Hebrews the covenant leads on to the whole range of truth connected with the sanctuary and the service of God. Nor can it be different with the other items of truth already mentioned, for from the moment sin came, faith was ever taught to look forward to the coming age, where God's triumph will be displayed in the removal of sin and the curse and the display of what springs from His own heart of love. Reconciliation may be said to be the great underlying thought of the great day of atonement in Israel. We get there, in no ambiguous terms the assurance that all will be reconciled to the great Godhead in the eternally abiding value of the work of the cross, where all that is connected with breakdown will be so entirely removed that the complacency of God will rest upon all. Surely it needs little application for us to see how thoroughly the soul may enter into and enjoy this to-day with such Scriptures before us as Luke 15:1-32, 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, and Ephesians 1:1-23.

Isaiah speaks of a day of salvation which, like all the great predictions of that prophet, look forward to the day of glory when the glad earth shall ring with the praises of her Creator and Lord; when the creature shall be set free from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. That day has come now according to 2 Corinthians 6:2, bringing with it deliverance from sin, the world, and the power of Satan, and leading on to the blessed knowledge of eternal life in Christ Jesus. This, too, is spoken of in the Psalms as connected with Zion as the habitation of Jehovah, where He will rest forever. "there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Eternal life is preached in the Gospel today and in the latter writings of the New Testament is opened out by the Spirit of God as one of the richest items of truth contained in the whole revelation of God. Thus we can see the beauty, symmetry, and perfection of God's ways and, like the apostle of old, are led to cry out, "O depth of riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways.... For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be rendered to Him? For of Him and through Him and for Him are all things: to Him be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:33-36). The transition from Judaism to Christianity covered a period of forty years, during which time God was graciously bearing with His people and seeking to lead them out of that which was about to be judged and set aside. Both the city and the temple must go and the truth of the Assembly be apprehended as a heavenly thing outside of dispensations, a faith system outside of that which appeals to sight and sense. This transit was carried out in the companions of Christ of whom He says, "Behold I and the children which God has given Me." These were seen in the apostles and all those Jewish Christians who, by identification with the

rejected Messiah, became the foundation of the new thing and are addressed as partakers of a heavenly calling in contrast with what they before stood in as Jews. Peter addresses the same class and though suffering in their outward lives, calls them a kingly priesthood who offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, going on to the great thoughts of a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession, that they might set forth the excellencies of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Thus showing that if they had lost the shell they had come to the kernel, that all that had been sinned away in unbelief by the nation was theirs in a new and divinely stable way.

Surely this indicates the importance of the time when Christ is on high and when all that is soon to be displayed is set forth to faith in the power of the Holy Ghost. Looking back we see the revelation of God coming out in our Lord, looking forward we can see the time for display is near, meantime, all is set forth in testimony, for it is a principle with God to set forth in testimony all that He is going to display. In the linking up of the time-ways of God we may therefore see a unity of thought and feeling amidst much diversity, which characterises all the elect independent altogether of dispensations and His ways with different companies. What marked the faithful in the days before the flood was to walk with God. Well it is for those who do so today. In the exercise of such a blessed privilege it will be marked by much greater light. The communion of these noble worthies of faith and the Old Testament saints in general could not be in the same wealth of truth which we possess to-day since all looked forward to the advent of the Son. Not one of these, however favoured, could know the Father as such, consequently they could not possibly know association with the Son. But if the blessing is different the path is the same. This world of sin and sorrow must ever be the training ground for the children of faith. There sin and death prevail, there everything is in opposition to righteousness, and there the saint learns the treachery of His own heart while learning the goodness and love of the heart of God.

All this shows the great value of the Old Testament for the saints today and since these Scriptures, which are the special portion of the earthly saints, helps us today to a deeper knowledge of our good and gracious God, showing us His grace, patience, and faithfulness, we may well conclude that those precious, heavenly communications in the New Testament, which belong to the Assembly, will serve to educate those of the earthly saints in the knowledge of God both in His nature and character. If we who are called from heaven to heaven find much in the Psalms and kindred Scriptures which meet and help us while passing through the world which, through grace, has become to us a desert, we can well understand that the saints of a coming day will draw much from Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians, and other Scriptures, to deepen their souls in the apprehension of the wealth of the glory of God. "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and song, He also is become my salvation, Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

04.04. Part 4.

Part 4. But we must pursue the line of the scarlet thread a little further for, "Glorious things are spoken of Thee, O city of God." Her past tells an awful tale, but, like Job of old, the end of the Lord shall surpass for excellency of glory. The siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Romans is one of the blackest pages in the history of the race, when that nation, dreadful and terrible, devoured and brake in pieces, when she exceeded herself in blood and butchery and made the nations of the world to tremble at her wild ferocity. It had been foretold by Moses and the prophets and by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and some of the darkest parts of Holy Writ describe it (see Deuteronomy 28:49-68; Zechariah 11:1-17; Luke 21:20-24). They had chosen a murderer instead of their King and now murder and carnage embroil them, they had sold their Messiah for thirty pieces of silver, they themselves are sold it is said, thirty of them for one penny, and the very foundations of society trembled in a cataclysm which threatened to decimate the most important nation of mankind. How solemn to think that the worst is still to come (Matthew 24:21). They cried, His blood be upon us and our children. The first part of this sentence was fulfilled in the above, the rest remains for the great tribulation.

Meantime Christendom, that is, the mere outward profession of Christianity without the reality, is going on to judgment, having rejected the revelation of God in His Son; The judgment of the Gentile and the reinstatement of the Jew is at hand and there are not wanting signs, like the rustling of the mulberry trees, which tell us that great things are at the door. That He who changeth times and seasons, removeth kings and setteth up kings, and has determined beforehand both the times and the bound of their habitations, is moving in view of the fulfilment of His thoughts for the glory of His Son. The League of Nations shaping the revival of the Roman Empire, the coming into the political arena of Egypt, and greatest of all, the raising up of Israel as seen in the vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-28). All begins at the right hand of God and the effect is seen here by those who wait upon the Lord. May we have grace to be like Habakkuk upon the watch-tower.

Israel, the people of God, have long been trodden down and even become accustomed to it, like Issacher, who bowed his shoulder to bear and was a tributary servant. But now they are awakening as from the dead and coming into view as a nation, making their presence felt throughout the civilized world. (The careful reader will not need to be reminded here that this is a sure indication that the translation of the Church to her place in heaven is near at hand). The following words from a leading Zionist are worthy of our consideration, spoken about a quarter of a century ago. "It seemed as if we were witnessing a miracle which affected ourselves and all around us. We felt ourselves part and parcel of a fairy tale, in which we saw our brethren, thousands of years buried, again become flesh and blood. We wanted, in the joy of this reunion, to rehearse the sad history of the hundreds of years in which we have been dead and in our tomb, in a grave which lacked the peace of the grave." This raising up of Israel it will be recalled, connects with the feast of trumpets, which shows that we are in the feasts of the seventh month. In Leviticus 23:1-44, we are shown that after the feasts of the first and third months there is a long period

elapses till we come to the feast of trumpets in the seventh month and the rising of the new Moon for the resurrection of Israel is in view of her taking her place on earth to reflect the glories of the Sun of righteousness, her glorious Messiah. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed on our solemn feast days (Psalms 80:3). The prophet Joel should be read with this, particularly Joel 2:1-32, as showing the intervention of the King at a time when the peoples are saying, where is their God. But before taking the place of blessing she has yet to pass through the fire. The common saying that the darkest hour of all the night is just the hour before daylight is clearly seen here, for the Israel of the Ishmael type comes into evidence with every desire to assert herself by taking her place among the nations, but without her King. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). How clearly this and many other Scriptures are being fulfilled before our eyes. A nation is springing into existence as it were which has been terrible from its beginning, hitherto a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled, with all the marks of youth, energy and virility, and with a determination characteristic only of that people, to play her part in the progress of civilization and in the perfecting of the race. The re-peopling of Palestine by the Jews, the assertion of their national rights, Zionism, which means the claims of the ancient people, her schools and universities, and the proposal to rebuild the temple, all this and much more and unbelief which refused the King is still at work also, and it is impossible that they can be right without their King. The movement is clearly national and political, the effort being to bring about what Scripture speaks of in man's way without Christ. How solemn to see, as taught of God, beneath all the present activity with all its promise and apparent success the beginning of a work which, in its full-blown results, will be the most daring and God-defying combination that has ever been upon the earth. The Lord had long ago to say, "I am come in My Father's name and ye will not receive Me, if another comes in his own name him ye will receive." In the flush of excitement and apparent success they are about to receive a king under whose domination they will reach the lowest and darkest point that it is possible to get; saying in bold defiance, "We have made a covenant with death and with sheol have we made an agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through it shall not come to us." Here we have the fulfilment of the Lord's words in Matthew 12:1-50, for the unclean spirit comes back and takes with him seven other spirits worse than himself and they enter in and dwell there, and the last condition of the nation is worst of all. Then shall their chosen ruler exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and speak monstrous things against the God of gods, and he shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished.... And he will practice in the strongholds and fortresses with a strange god, whoso acknowledgeth him will he increase with glory and he will cause them to rule over the many and shall divide the land to them for reward. It is then that Jehovah whets His glittering sword and His hand takes hold on judgment, saying, I will render vengeance to Mine enemies and will reward them that hate Me, I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood and My sword shall devour flesh (See Isaiah 28:15-18; Daniel 11:36-39; and Deuteronomy 32:41-42).

We may well ask what does it all mean? See the accumulation of Scriptures setting forth the appeals of longsuffering goodness that the poor besotted people might be brought to see and own their God, listen to the plaint of Jehovah in the book of Jeremiah in highly figurative language when He says, "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at My very heart, etc. (Jeremiah 4:19-22), and compare the language of the same blessed Person when, in the days of His flesh, He wept over the infatuated people, saying, If thou hadst but known, etc. (Luke 19:41-44). No, no, nothing can

be right even among the nations of the earth till Israel is in her proper place of blessing, and certainly she can never be there till she owns her glorious Messiah, in whom all her blessing centres. Jehovah has said long, long ago, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it! This also shall be no more until He come whose right it is and I will give it to Him" (Ezekiel 21:27). But there is another side. The melancholy picture of a nation defying the God whose mercy and long-suffering has so long been towards them is lighted up by the believing class, whose unflinching faithfulness and tenacity for the glory of God in relation to the sins of the whole people is a sight for all creation to behold. They are a people terrible indeed from their existence hitherto, and maintaining their distinctive position through every conceivable character of suffering, marked by ability that puts them in the front rank in every pursuit in life: leaders in science, commerce, politics, and many other things, but alas, blind to the goodness of God, and found in the front rank of the great closing apostasy, which forms so to speak, the closing scene in the great drama of the age. In the fearful scenes among the nations which have marked these last days, there has not been wanting men from among the Jews who have led in disorder and lawlessness, introducing anarchy and revolution, with all the fearful accompaniments of those things. From that nation came an Ahithophol and a Judas Iscariot, and from it there is about to arise the Anti-Christ, who surpasses all, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, etc." Under this last leader the bulk of the nation will be found in league with the Gentiles against Jehovah and His Anointed in a carnage which is beyond expression, and compared to which the French Revolution will indeed be an "innocent idyll," and to which no parallel can be found in the world's history.

It is a relief therefore, to turn to that which, amid all the fearful condition of things, is well-pleasing to God Our Lord Jesus Christ came of that nation and took the place of a Jew, and if we bow and adore Him as our Lord and God, let us not forget to honour those men of God who witnessed a good confession, who were the ornaments of their generation and whose life work has left its mark for good on the history of the whole race. Men "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." The suffering and service which lies before this remnant in the closing struggle requires picked men. There is a work to be done for the King and He shall choose His workers. If Gideon has thirty-two thousand men for the battle they must be tested, that all who wish to return to their homes may go. But from the ten thousand who wish to go there must yet be a selection that the three hundred fit for the battle may stand alone (Judges 5:1-31). So it is at the end, when many shall seal their testimony with their blood and in that way enter into heavenly blessing. The King shall select and put His own stamp upon His servants. Happy are they of Abraham's sons who have the stamp of God upon their foreheads and are honoured with the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. Their experiences are detailed for us in many Scriptures, particularly Psalms 9:1-20, Psalms 10:1-18, Psalms 11:1-7, Psalms 12:1-8, Psalms 13:1-6, Psalms 14:1-7, Psalms 15:1-5, Psalms 44:1-26, Psalms 94:1-23, and the closing chapters of Isaiah. This class began, as we have seen, in those given to Christ out of the nation, who were transferred to church position. The same class are in evidence and are preparing, under the work of the King, for reverting to the proper position of Israel and the establishing of the Kingdom in glory upon the earth. In the work of God among the Jews in these last days, large numbers have been brought to own the Lord Jesus Christ as the Centre of the nation's hopes and the cry has

arisen from many, Jehovah has forsaken me and the Lord hath forgotten me. This can never be, listen to His answer. Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? even these may forget, but I will not forget thee. Lo, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands: thy walls are continually before Me.... I will lift up My hands to the nations and set up My standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom and thy daughters shall be carried on their shoulders . . . and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me (Isaiah 49:14-22). The idea that all this is merely dispensational has been the cause of much loss since it ignores many of the exercises of the human heart and much of the grace of the Lord. Listen to the yearnings of His heart on their behalf. "For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth (Isaiah 42:1). All must begin with Him where He is, and the exercises of the moment tell us that occupation with the Church has not dulled His affections for His earthly people, but that He is raising up intercessors and bringing them into communion with Himself to pray for it. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, Jerusalem; all the day and all the night they shall never hold their peace: ye that put Jehovah in remembrance keep not silence and give Him no rest till He establish, till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. In the progress of events the darkness deepens till the great siege and sack of the city, spoken of in Zechariah 14:1-21, will have shattered the hopes and dreams connected with present Jewish activities, and drawn forth the agonising cry, "How long, O Lord." The distress of this time is put in words for us in Psalms 74:1-23, Psalms 79:1-13, and linked with what comes out in the close of Isaiah, "Look down from heaven and behold the habitation of Thy holiness," and then, "Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down . . . wilt Thou restrain Thyself for these things, Lord, wilt Thou hold Thy peace and afflict us very sore."

We would remind ourselves that all this is earthly and in relation to the earthly people. The Church as such, is heavenly in hope and character, and is outside of time and prophetic events as far as related to Israel and the earth. There may, however, be a number of that nation converted before the catching away of the heavenly saints, which will form the link between the present and coming age. This seems quite in accord with the ways of God in His dealings at the change of dispensations and indeed, there seems some indication of it by the present action of the Spirit of God among that people. The Scripture already cited in reference to their raising up seem, too, to indicate something of this, for while many of them come forth to everlasting contempt it is to be noted that others of them come forth to everlasting life, and are found turning many to righteousness, which doubtless refers to those who go forth with the testimony of the coming One. A transitional period marked the Church's beginning, the same may be seen again when she is removed to heaven, when the Jews will come in again to form the link, this time from the Gospel of the glory to that of the kingdom, as was put before their fathers, but with the definite fulfilment in view. The cities of Judah will be visited with this message, for the preachers will be in the midst of their work when the King comes. "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come" (Matthew 10:23). These are they who, amidst unprecedented suffering, stand for the testimony of Jesus and the testimony of Jesus we are told, is the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19:10). This testimony connects for Israel all the fulness of Messianic prophecy with the One whom their fathers despised and crucified, combining in His glorious Person all that belongs to God with every Israelite desire. The mass of the people however, while

crying to Jehovah for deliverance, will in all probability be unable to connect deliverance with the crucified One till they behold Him face to face, but will mercifully find in their Scriptures many portions fitted to give expression to the deep distress through which they are then passing. The dealings of Joseph with his brethren serves to illustrate this period. They came to him in their need and he met it, but while yearning over them he made himself strange to them, holding them at a distance till the time come that he could show himself to them. Like them, these sufferers will be brought through a process of schooling, but maintained in the fiery trial, till at the end they look on Him whom they have pierced. When the appointed moment comes He shall come forth and calm the awful hurricane of persecution raging around them, like as in days of old on the lake of Galilee, bringing salvation to all them that look for Him. Then shall He pay His vows, fulfilling all that He has set Himself to do for His beloved people, and the language of Ruth 3:11, will be fitting, "For the Man will not rest until He has accomplished the matter this day." What a moment will that be when one shall say, What are those wounds in Thy hands? And He will say, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends. The meeting of Joseph and his brethren can but faintly adumbrate this scene, which shows the people face to face with the One whom their fathers had crucified, as the bearer of all the glory yet with the marks of the cross. Is this our glorious King, our long-looked for Deliverer, the One our fathers treated so ill?

"Yes this is He and this is love, love unimagined and unknown.

He left the joys of heaven above, turned from His Kingdom and His throne.

Yea, cast aside His holy crown, a weary wayfarer became.

Bore e'en Jehovah's bitter frown, endured the cross, despised the shame.

Then conquered hell and burst the grave and rose Omnipotent to save."

Then shall the words of Thomas (who it will be remembered, came in after the church period) spring to their lips, "My Lord and my God," (see John 20:19-23; John 20:26-29).

What follows connects itself with the second feast of the seventh month, or rather, the feast of that date when the people, representative of the whole nation, King, Prophet, Priest, and People, shall be bowed in deepest repentance and shall mourn every family apart, the family of the house of David apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart and their wives apart: the family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart and their wives apart: all the families that remain, every family apart and their wives apart. If we recall how these four names were connected at different times in the history with the death of a man we can see how fitting it is that they should be mentioned here as expressive of the nation's deep contrition regarding the death of their Messiah (see Genesis 49:5-7 and 2 Samuel 12:1-14) But who can conceive what the presence of the King will mean. If for Israel richest blessing, what of the scorching judgment meted out to those nations which had been so long concerned in rebellion against the will of the King. We have heard, and perhaps seen, the tumultuous joy of the ringing of bells, the playing of music, and the beating of drums, and whole nations intoxicated with joy at the close of a war which had steeped such nations in blood for years. The second advent will end wars, because He comes in whose Person in the answer to every question and the solution to every problem, to deliver His people and reign supreme. Some little time is necessary however, in the nature of things, that all enemies may effectually be dealt with and order restored. We find in

Jeremiah 31:1-40 the joy of Israel described at that moment when they shall come and sing aloud upon the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness or good things of Jehovah, for corn, and for new wine and for oil, and their soul shall be like a watered garden. Then shall the virgins rejoice in the dance, and the young men and old together? and their mourning shall be turned to gladness, for He will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness and His people will rejoice in His good things. But terrible indeed, must His attitude be towards those nations which were set to resist His coming, when He girds His sword upon His thigh in majesty and splendour, and appears red in His apparel, with garments like him that treadeth the wine vat.

Some time after this comes the entrance of the ten tribes known as Ephraim into the land of their fathers and the blessing of Jehovah, long scattered and lost to view, and not being directly connected with the refusal of Messiah, they had not been in the land when the furnace was heated one seven times more than it had been before. It is God's way to rehearse, as it were, the history of the nation by bringing these out from among the peoples and the countries with a mighty hand, and causing them to pass under the rod as a shepherd with his sheep, and purging them of the rebels and bringing them into the land that they may know Him (Ezekiel 20:1-49). The long-standing breach is healed, as seen in the symbolic act of joining the two sticks (Ezekiel 37:1-28), and they shall be one nation upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King over them all.

Just before the King appeared there had been, in the providential judgments of Revelation 6-19, the break-up of all ordered life among the nations: the complete convulsions of the whole frame-work of society in all its various departments. This had in view divine construction, viz., an entirely new order of things affecting the very land itself. Not only will the social conditions of life be changed, taking in what is social, commercial, and political, but there will be changes by the word of His power which will affect the land both physically and geographically. The Mount of Olives we are told, shall cleave in the midst, half going towards the north and half towards the south, so that a deep valley is formed from east to west, wherein flows those living waters which go to the Dead Sea in the east and to the Mediterranean in the west. The waters have their source in the Sanctuary and are marked by life and healing, so that the part of the land so long known as lying in death and barrenness is now marked by fertility and beauty. The river itself abounds with fish and its banks with trees, both for food and medicine. The mighty power of the King, which was seen in the days of His flesh, is again in evidence and all nature hastens to obey His blessed command now in the day of His glory. The new Temple from which the water flows shall be built on a scale far surpassing anything known before. The glory which the prophet saw reluctantly departing returns again when Jehovah beautifies the house of His magnificence and the latter glory of the house transcends all our greatest thoughts (Haggai 2:7). Jerusalem, the City of the great King, is raised to a height which could be but faintly fore-shadowed in the days of David and Solomon. The resources of the various kingdoms of nature will be brought to it by the Gentiles for beauty and for glory, and her magnificence, as becomes the metropolis of the whole earth, will shine out in an unprecedented way. They of the nations shall flow unto it, and many people shall go and say, come and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob.... For out of Zion shall go forth the law and Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. She is become a strong city. Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, her people are all righteous, for Jehovah is her everlasting light. Great is Jehovah. and greatly to

be praised in the city of our God. Not only did the shaking of the earth precede this, but the shaking of the heavens also, for well we know that there must be a sweeping out of all the hidden forces of evil that are there. The host of the high ones on high must be put down as well as the evil upon the earth, that the whole arena may be made suitable for the King. Such is the general state that it is characterized by the Spirit as new heavens and new earth, not that this will be literally till later, at the introduction of the day of God, for that creation which has witnessed the humiliation of the King must be purged to behold the greatness of His glory. This brings us to the Jerusalem above, through which Israel and Zion receive all their greatness and joins together in beauty, order, and symmetry, the whole grand system which we call a universe of bliss in our Lord Jesus Christ as the glorious Administrator of all.

We have seen that Israel's refusal of the Messiah brought about the call of the Church, that company called the Body of Christ, around which the purposes of eternity revolve and for which creation came to exist, and noted, too, how that divine wisdom makes that same company serviceable for carrying through all His ways in time, so that all that belongs to Israel as the covenant people was carried through these. This is that company that appears in the heavens as the city of gold, fitted to be the medium through her long course of disciplinary education, for the administration of heaven's richest blessing not only to Israel, but to all that dwell upon the earth. Jerusalem on earth is well fitted, after her long course of training, to express Jehovah God to the whole wide earth, but the City above is the Metropolis of the vast universe of God. The new covenant, reconciliation, and eternal life will then be known and enjoyed, but let us note how it comes about. In the course of her training, the nation had been the scene of heavenly visitors, those glorious beings which are His servants in Providential government, now a new thing comes to pass for those, who are the ministers, are the witnesses of redemption. The glorified saints of the Church take the place of the heavenly beings, inasmuch as the lesson to be taught could only be known by those whom Christ had died to redeem. Then, indeed, Jehovah shall hear the heavens and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel, for great shall be the day of Jezreel (Hosea 2:22 and Hosea 1:11). The Church must go in before she comes out, and having no dates, she waits the assembling shout which we know is at the door. She goes into the Father's house just at the time that the Jews are entering the frightful scenes of the great tribulation, and when the fiery trial is over, will come out in the company of her Head to teach Israel all the preciousness of the thoughts of God. This surely is a consummation worthy of our good and gracious God, and surely the education connected with it is well fitted for beings such as we are. While opening out before the adoring hears all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, He deals with us so as to impart to us an appreciation and a capacity for them, which fits the soul for long-suffering with joyfulness. Where in all creation can we find language to give expression to the thoughts which flood the soul at the contemplation of such a climax as this, where the Scarlet of earthly, Jewish glory is seen in all its beauty and majesty centred in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, where every thought of God seen in the honoured witnesses raised up from time to time, but marked by weakness and failure, is carried through to the glory of God and the richest blessing of His people, by Him who became the Son of David.

If, through grace, we are permitted to trace a little the thoughts connected with the Purple we may have to look at this grand climax again, but from a different standpoint. As we said at the

beginning, we may take the telescope of the Spirit and by divine permission, range through the heights and depths of the creation, and with delighted hearts, see every part of it controlled and bearing the stamp of our glorious Head, the Man Christ Jesus, Son of David, Son of Man, Immanuel, God with us. Shall we not then, beloved reader, in the light of all this, set ourselves more for entrance into the deep things of our God and be more fitted to witness here for Him till the coming of our adorable Lord.

05.00. The Spirit of Truth

The Spirit of Truth

J. McBroom.

Contents THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH THE SPIRIT CONTROLLING ALL THINGS IN VIEW OF THE INCARNATION THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE INCARNATION, ATONEMENT AND INAUGURATION OF THE NEW ETERNAL SYSTEM THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE HOUSE OF GOD THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE ASSEMBLY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST THE WEALTH OF GOD THE DEPTH OF GOD'S WISDOM THE DEPTH OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Appendix

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05.000. To the Reader.

To the Reader. This booklet is complement to two others, one, "The Beauty of the Lord," and the other, "The God of Glory." It was felt that after putting out a meditation upon God which necessarily led to the Father, and one on the Son, our glorious Lord, a word was called for on The Spirit. In this way, the three make a meditation upon GOD. In the New Testament we have the revelation of God — Father, Son and Spirit — in the Son. It is there we learn that God is ONE (1 Timothy 2:5) yet THREE (Matthew 28:18-19). One in Essence or Essential Being; Three in Person. In the Old Testament The Lord our God is one Lord (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) in contrast with Polytheism. In the New Testament HE is One in contrast with Tritheism. Revelation may far outstretch our creature thought, but never goes against, or clashes with it. We may apprehend but never comprehend. We learn, therefore, that "God is One," is different in sense from what He is as Three. The former being impersonal and expressive of Him in His Eternal Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence. "Heaven is My throne, earth is My footstool." The latter shows us that within that Essence or Substance there are three Subsistances or Persons in holy and intrinsic relation dwelling together in LOVE. This we also learn is the nature of God from Whom comes the counsels of eternity, and follow on through Scripture to see how each One in the Holy Trinity engages in relation to and with the Others in carrying into effect the one eternal plan.

This, then, is the subject of the three booklets: and the Holy Spirit being the One Who carries out the subjective work in our souls, we may expect to get with Him this rich, deep and blessed fulness of revelation.

J. McBroom.

05.01. THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH by James McBroom

Much is said in Holy Scripture concerning the knowledge of God, and nothing within the range of human thought can equal It. In two former booklets entitled "The God of Glory" and "The Beauty of the Lord," we sought to dwell a little on God the Father in the one, and God the Son in the other. Seeing the Godhead subsists in Trinity, we felt something should be said on God the Holy Spirit, and we ask the reader to accompany us for a little, in a meditation on that blessed Person. It is to Him we are indebted for the Holy Scriptures; the record of the revelation of Who God is; and what He does, so that all we know, or can know is from Him. Moreover, it is by His operation in our souls, we are made capable of availing ourselves of the revelation He has given us. The Holy Trinity is presented as Three in One. This, faith accepts, though it be beyond creature comprehension. There is much we believe even in our creature constitution which we cannot fully understand. While we are anxious to avoid negatives here, it may be said that in applying numerals, it is not three in the same way, or in the same sense as They are One — Three Persons in one Essence. This, though beyond us, is not out of bearing with sense, as are some of the delusions of the present day. But if God is one in Essence, there are within that Essence, or Substance, three Persons, each standing in relation to the other as Father, Son and Spirit. Essence gives us an impersonal thought by which we can understand that He fills all space and permeates the universe with life, glory, and majesty. Ephesians 4:6. "Heaven is My throne." Psalms 11:4. Acts 7:49. As such there is one mind, purpose, will and plan, hence, what is true of One, is true of all Three. This explodes for ever what speculative theology has pre-supposed namely, a conflict within the Godhead. To raise a moral question like that would be equal to saying, that God can be at variance with Himself.

God is a Spirit, infinite, Eternal and unchangeable in His Being; full of power, holiness, justice, mercy, goodness and truth. In His natural attributes there is first His eternity. "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God?" Habakkuk 1:12; Inscrutability. "Even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." Psalms 90:2; Omnipotence. "With God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26. "The blessed and only Potentate." 1 Timothy 6:15; Omnipresence. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me." Psalms 139:7-10. The moral attributes are descriptive of His nature and character and come out fully in the working out of purpose in His time ways among men. Thus Righteousness and Holiness describe His character and spring from His nature which is love. 1 John 4:8-14. This last is absolute and exists eternally as constantly reciprocated within the Godhead. He is also Light, but this is relative as standing in relation to darkness and is the exposure of sin, lawlessness and moral disorder. In the very nature of things, what is true of One, is true of all Three as we have said, yet in the working out of the eternal plan, each takes His Own place in relation to the Others. The Father is He by whom every family in heaven and in earth is named; He worketh all things

after the counsel of His Own will; He is above all, and through all and as to His children, is in you all. Ephesians 3:15; Ephesians 1:11; Ephesians 4:6. The Son creates. John 1:3. Colossians 1:16. Hebrews 1:2; Redeems. Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7. Colossians 1:14; He is also the Judge. John 5:22. By creation He brought in the platform upon which the plan would be wrought out. He became Man to cleanse it and put it on the stable basis of redemption and finally, He will put down all that is offensive and rebellious against God. The Spirit performs the subjective work, working for glory and adornment. His part in creation was to garnish it. Job 26:13. His work in the saints is to array them in the beauty of Christ. Luke 15:22. Colossians 3:12-14. To accomplish this, He uses the word of God. He takes up His abode in the believer and thus becomes the subjective power for spiritual instinct; intuition; inspiration; revelation; and illumination. In this way it is the Holy Spirit which qualifies the saints for service whether for conflict in the kingdom; Levitical service in the testimony; or worship in the sanctuary. He is the power which qualifies for all moral activities whether estimates, values or measures. See Note A. In the counsels of eternity we have a scheme which is the necessity of the divine nature. It is neither dictatorial nor arbitrary. Nor can we say it is the result of a formal agreement between divine Persons. An agreement reached by consultation supposes the probability of a different conclusion. This could not be possible here. God being LOVE in nature, the definite plan is the moral necessity of Who and what He is. Although one in essence, He subsists in three glorious Persons, each having His own day in relation to the eternal plan or purpose. All the time ways of God in the Old Testament had these THREE DAYS IN VIEW. The first is the Spirit's day. It began at Pentecost and will terminate when the Lord takes the Assembly home. Then will begin the day of the Lord, an event which runs right through the millennial age, and which terminates in the beginning of the day of God which is eternity. All the dealings of God in the Old Testament are included in His time ways and while these days displayed Him before the eyes of all creation, in His nature, character and being, He remained hid behind the veil. All therefore was probationary, testing man in his responsibility as an intelligent moral agent, while governmentally providing both the ground and the material for the fulfilment of His purpose. All was preparatory to the fulfilment of these counsels by the incarnation of the Son, Who, by His death at Calvary, His resurrection and ascension, laid the basis for the accomplishment of these counsels and made way for the coming of the Spirit to inaugurate the new day. As we shall see, we are dependent on the Holy Spirit for all we know of God in His word, but through a misunderstanding or a mistranslation of John 16:13, it has been thought that the Spirit tells us nothing about Himself. Competent authorities tell us it ought to read thus, "He shall not speak from Himself." Compare this with John 5:19, "The Son can do nothing of Himself." Both texts show the mutual activities of Father, Son and Spirit. From the above remarks — which were necessary to guard us from Tritheism on the one hand, which is three gods, or Sabellianism on the other hand, which is one god with three different names — we now proceed to dwell on the office and work of the Holy Spirit.

05.02. THE SPIRIT CONTROLLING ALL THINGS IN VIEW OF THE INCARNATION.

THE SPIRIT CONTROLLING ALL THINGS IN VIEW OF THE INCARNATION.

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job 33:4. "Hast Thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Job 10:10-11. Here we are taken back to that consultation in Eden when the Deity held consultation over the creation of man. "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." Zechariah 12:1. All this calls for careful attention, for while we do not read of any other section of the moral creation over which Deity deliberated before, neither do we read of any who were so created, that at a later time, they could be re-created and thus become a new creation in Christ. This must have a distinct place in our thoughts if we are to understand the true character of the Spirit's day, and the blessings proper to it. The first mention of one of the eternal Three, is in Genesis 1:2. The earth was waste and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. This was the beginning of a work which would turn chaos into cosmos; a dreary waste into a scene of splendour. A work which will result in the whole earth being resplendent with glory. But as the material is servant to the moral, it adumbrates His work in the spiritual chaos of the soul of man. In this is seen God's triumph in the recovery of the creature of His predilection, and brings into view His resource in the Son of His love. As created, man was richly endowed with capabilities for great things and it is well to note how these were developed in spite of the seduction and corruption of his moral nature. Certain works were accomplished which involved language, arithmetic, mechanics, etc. Cain built a city and trades began to be practised which called for lines, angles, cubes and squares. This development of primitive man must have been under the hand of his Creator. We are not left to inference here, for we are told that He who endowed him with such capabilities, imparted the strength, wisdom and understanding for their use. Exodus 35:30-35. This is a sample view of man as created and developed under the hand of the Holy Spirit. What he might have become had he remained in obedience none can say, but we do know what he has become as in Christ as a vessel of glory for the delight, satisfaction and praise of God. Having come under the power of sin and Satan through the fall, his gifted qualifications have been used against a beneficent Creator to build up a gigantic system called world. A system governed by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Satan is its god; it hates the Father and the Son; it is already judged; the execution thereof being at the door. In this way, after the fall, Cain built a city and named it after his son Enoch which means dedicated. Here, the trades and commerce began to flourish with music and entertainment as an accompaniment. Nothing can meet the need of the heart of man but God, hence the call for music and the many false charms the enemy gets up — science; politics; travel; or religion with its sensuous musical programmes for his entertainment. Passing over some allusions to the Spirit, we come to a remarkable work of His in the desert of Israel's wanderings. This we select as

showing His control of man both in body and soul. Having heard of the triumph of Israel over the Egyptians, Balak the king of Moab hired Balaam to come and curse for him the people of God. It appears that Balaam was not entirely destitute of the knowledge of God, but sought to make gain by trafficking with evil spirits. The Holy Spirit is seen here both with the testimony and with the people of God; whatever their failure is, no enemy can curse them. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Romans 8:33. Balaam makes an attempt, with the result that he is forced to bless them altogether. The Holy Spirit so controlled both the mind and the vocal organs of the man, that he was compelled, against his will, to bless them. Moreover, such is the beauty of his language and the comprehensive bearing of his words, that his four little parables or poems will compare favourably with the richest strains of prophetic language in the whole book of God. If we take the lovely grandeur of the song of Moses and the people in Exodus 15:1-27; or listen to the felicity of his words in Deuteronomy 32:1-52, Deuteronomy 33:1-29; or the dignity and pathos of the last words of David in 2 Samuel 22:1-51, and again in Psalms 18:1-50; then follow on to the sublime strains of praise, in 2 Samuel 7:18-29; 1 Chronicles 29:10-14, with all their thrill, they do not surpass the language which the Holy Spirit draws from the lips of this wicked man. Nor was it different with Caiaphas, the High Priest. John 11:49-52. With Balaam it was an attempt to mix clean and unclean; holy and unholy, but with Caiaphas we see a man governed by hatred to the Lord Jesus, yet made to utter the precious truth of God. When the people of God are obedient as in the days of Joshua, the Spirit is owned in His proper work, and victory is the result, but where they are disobedient and lapse into open failure, He is engaged with correction and recovery. There is a marked contrast between the books of Joshua and Judges as to this. In the former, they took the land by conquest and the lot of each tribe was assigned to them by their leader Joshua. In the latter, after his death, they not only failed to take their possessions but fell into the sins of the Canaanites and brought upon themselves the sword of divine government. The Spirit of God came upon men again and again from Othniel to Samson. Judges 3:10; Judges 6:34; Judges 11:29; Judges 13:25; Judges 14:6; Judges 15:14. The most remarkable of all these was Samson. Both he and Jephthah were morally far below men like Joseph or Daniel but the Holy Spirit could use them as expressive of their generation. If Israel were low enough to produce a Samson they got lower still to produce an Ahithophel, 2 Samuel 16:20-23. And down to the deepest depth of all to produce a Judas Iscariot.

Pre-eminently thus the Holy Spirit was at work ruling and over-ruling, in every circumstance guiding the march of all history forward towards one grand event — the incarnation of the Son. Whichever way we look at man, he is under the Spirit's control. Physically He controls the beating of the heart, the breathing of the lungs and the circulation of the blood in growth, waste and decay. As to the moral man, He is the power for both thoughts and feelings; temperaments and faculties; emotions and tastes, all are the fruit of His sovereign will and while each one must give an account for every word, thought, and deed, we must never forget that we can originate nothing but are dependent on Him for all. The victory of Abram over the five kings, or of Moses over Pharaoh, or Israel over Amalek were by the Spirit. So also the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, but as history proceeds Israel has to learn that God is holy and no respecter of persons. They fall before Assyria, Babylon and ultimately into the hands of Rome where, through rejecting their Messiah, they are in bondage to this day.

There is however, a brighter side and it is comforting to trace the marks of His work in the men of the covenant, throughout the ages. The Spirit as a divine Person is behind the word faith in Hebrews 11:1-40. It was by His power the exploits of these witnesses were accomplished. The sacrifice of Abel; the communion of Enoch; the building of Noah were all potentially of Him. Abraham the pilgrim and friend of God; Moses the legislator — the meekest man on earth; Joseph the administrator; Joshua the captain; David the king — all was the fruit of sovereign power directed by the Spirit. The same is true of the exploits of the Judges; the beautiful poetic strains of the Psalmists whether David, Solomon, Moses, Asaph, Ethnan or Habakkuk. The Lamentations of Jeremiah; the weeping of captives in Babylon or Rachel weeping for her children. Each and every part had its place in sovereignty of wisdom, holiness and love, all going to show that God the Holy Spirit is immanent in all history, the superintending force in every event whether in the unit or aggregate. At every moment both private thought and public opinion are the fruit of His sovereign will. But besides His place in the sphere of holy government, the Spirit pervades the typical system. The fire of the Altar; the water of the Laver; the oil for cleansing the leper, sanctifying the Levites and consecrating the priests, spoke symbolically of the Spirit. He was the overseer of the ritual on the great day of atonement, as also the feasts of Jehovah. When we recall that it is He who gives the inspired account of the whole range of things in Creation; Providence; Government and Redemption, we get some impression of the Office and work of the Holy Spirit in co-relation with the Father and the Son.

05.03. THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE INCARNATION, ATONEMENT AND INAUGURATION OF THE ...

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE INCARNATION, ATONEMENT AND INAUGURATION OF THE NEW ETERNAL SYSTEM. On the first page of the New Testament, the Holy Spirit comes before us as preparing a body for the Son. In prophetic language the Son had said, "The Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me." Isaiah 48:16. The angel of the Lord said unto Joseph. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 1:20. Previous to that, Gabriel appeared unto the Virgin Mary and said. "And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:31-35. In this the most profound of all miracles, the whole Trinity was engaged, and its repercussion was felt universally in heaven earth and hell. Our Lord was sent, sealed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He began His ministry from the Jordan, associating Himself with a remnant of His people in the Baptism of John. Here for the first time the whole Trinity are manifested and come within the cognisance of human sensibilities. The Son is owned by the Father and the Spirit rested on Him in the form of a dove. Observe in following this out, that He was sent or driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, and having bound the strong man there, He returned in the power of the Spirit to begin His itinerations through the land. Mark 1:12; Luke 4:14. In this service He declared the heart of God. God had been glorified in Him when, for thirty years of private life, the beauty of a man shone under His eye. The words of Psalms 16:1-11, are descriptive of the exercises of that time. He grew up before Jehovah as a tender plant and a root out of dry ground. There was nothing of an external nature to distinguish Him in the eyes of men. Isaiah 53:1-12. In His public service which covered about a tenth of the time spent in private, all was marked by the unction of the Holy Spirit. What He said and what He did, all His words and works were the work of the whole THREE. Matthew 12:28; John 14:10; Acts 10:38. This went on to the cross, where, through the eternal Spirit, He offered Himself without spot to God. Hebrews 9:14. During His ministry, certain ones had been brought back from the dead to life here again but His resurrection was the triumph of good over evil. It was the establishment of a new creation as part of divine purpose, and Scripture shows each member of the Holy Godhead at work in that mighty act. This intimacy and co-working of divine Persons still goes on as seen in His breathing into His disciples and saying Receive the Holy Spirit. His last charge to them was given by the power of the Spirit and also His last promise. John 20:22; Acts 1:2-5. Being now on the verge of the Spirit's day, let us glance back to the outset of God's time ways and note how the march of events was preparing for the coming of the Son which was followed by the coming of the Spirit. Whether we take History, Prophecy, Providence or Government, all was preparing for the accomplishment of His eternal purpose in the Son. His ancient dealings with Israel in the law, both in the moral code and in the ceremonial observances; the typical mysteries of the prophets, priests and kings — all was working towards the point we have now reached. The Son would be seen by the eye of faith, a

Man in heaven in virtue of redemption and the Holy Spirit on earth in relation to the counsels of eternity. In the Gospels, Matthew goes back to Abraham and David, linking up the Son with promise and royalty. Mark presents Him as Jehovah the servant prophet. Luke takes us back to Eden, presenting the Son as the Second Man out of heaven. But John steps over the whole of history into eternity to show the Son is God, come down to fulfil His eternal plan. Hence in this Gospel, man is treated as a lost sinner from the outset. The two basic facts of the Gospel are, the exaltation of Christ in the rights of redemption, and the presence of the Holy Spirit on the earth. As it is said, a Man in heaven above is a new thing in divine dealings and the Spirit here to dwell in the believer a new thing as well. Instead of assuming a body as the Son did, He takes up His abode in the souls of believers and builds them together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2:22. In the Gospel God is working according to pattern and this shows that not only has He been revealed but in the exaltation of Christ He has a complete answer to the revelation. All this should be seen as accomplished in the ascension of Christ from Whom the Holy Spirit came down to continue the work of affecting God's Purpose.

We might speak of the pentecostal gift in many ways but it may be better to put it under three leading heads, namely, the Kingdom of God; the House of God; and the Body of Christ. These three were formed simultaneously by the coming of the Spirit. Believers stand in relation to the first in an individual way: in relation to the second collectively; and relation to the third corporately — Jew and Gentile as a joint-body in Christ. That the heavens do rule, man had to learn in early days (Daniel 4:26), but the kingdom of heaven is the Spirit's domain. The kingdom of God was here in the person of the Son, but before it could be established as the kingdom of heaven the King must Himself have gone there. This is the sphere of divine rule on the earth, where the Lordship of Christ is the bond and from which goes out the Gospel of the glory of Christ. Within that kingdom, God has His dwelling place and, while Christ is Lord in the kingdom, He is Head in the House. John 8:35; Romans 14:9; Hebrews 3:6. Needless to say, we are far from material things here. The kingdom being spiritual, it provides a bulwark for the house and in that way is protective of the holy things of God — the precious things of heaven. Within that House is presented the innermost treasure of all, namely the mystery, or secret, which was hid in God — the truth of the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ. Moreover, it must be seen that the saints form both the Church militant, and the kingdom as a generation of faith. By the Spirit's power they meet and defeat the opposing forces of evil, just as they form the House of God and stand in relation to His testimony in the world. In their relationship to Christ as members of His Body, they stand united to Him in organic union on the one hand, and as members one of another, one Body in Christ on the other.

05.04. THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. The Epistle to the Romans is an elaborate exposition of the Gospel of God. There we are told that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17. In this Epistle there is an answer produced in the saints by the Spirit, corresponding to that which was accomplished in Christ for God at the cross. Here the Blessed Lord died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. 1 Peter 3:18. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we might have full and free forgiveness, but, if we were to be brought into the joy of these things, the Holy Spirit must work in us. The work of the cross goes much deeper than the forgiveness of sins. It goes even to the fallen state in which we stood. It was there in the sinless One, God dealt judicially, and condemned sin in the flesh. This was the end of man's responsible history and it is of solemn moment that we should notice that man's crowning act of guilt brought it about. What the Lord did brought out God's richest act of mercy but man's part brought out sin at its height. There, light and darkness; good and evil; life and death, came into awful conflict. The Lord's part was making atonement by bearing the judgment. Man's part was filling up his own guilt, while the Blessed God was judging and condemning the whole state in the Person of the sinless One — His own beloved Son — and giving to the whole creation a public expression of the awful, sinful, God-defying state of the creature, while the whole guilty state goes down in death and is left there. The resurrection bursts upon the scene and in the risen One, we behold Man in His new estate according to the thought of God from eternity to eternity.

Now while all this is objective and for the apprehension of faith, the Spirit's work is subjective. He came to work in us the deep thoughts of God, based upon the work the Son had accomplished and, as we have said, His work is according to pattern. Christ having set foot on earth, God will tolerate nothing less in testimony, hence the transfer of the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit from Adam to Christ. The cross is the basis of His work in the human heart and the new birth is His work in every dispensation, but the formation of a new company in the nature, calling and relationship of the glorified Man, is that which necessitates that He should take up His abode in the soul. He does not dwell in man as in the flesh — a state already condemned — but in the soul as previously prepared by Him in the divine operation of new birth.

All this calls for careful consideration for, as an intelligent moral agent, man cannot be transferred out of the condition of estrangement from God, and brought into intimate nearness like a mere material object. In the very nature of things soul history and progress in relation to the divine claims must be attended with pain. In the sovereign work of new birth when the Spirit says, "Let there be light," the effect is repentance and produces the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," as a result. Faith as the gift of God is now present and the Gospel is accepted which brings about conversion and the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins. This may come immediately after the initial work of new birth, which is the divine order, or it may well be some time after, and in many cases, where the truth is little known, souls are often left a long time struggling in a condition analogous to that detailed in Romans 7:1-25. This interval may be seen in a case like Cornelius

the centurion, a pious man who prayed to God, to whom was given a vision, followed by a visit from the Apostle Peter. Having received the Gospel he was sealed by the Holy Spirit. Acts 10:1-48. The same thing may be seen in Saul in the three days he was without sight, after the Lord had met him on the Damascus road. Acts 9:1-43. Again, the twelve men at Ephesus who were in the Christian company but had not yet received the Spirit. Acts 19:1-41. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His, or he is not of Him. Romans 8:9. This brings us to the peculiar favour and blessedness of the indwelling Spirit. It is not that souls in the transitional state between new birth and sealing do not belong to Him. The Old Testament saints belong to Him; so also the disciples before the cross, but to be of Him is another matter. This can only be true of those within the baptism of the Holy Spirit. To be in Christ, free from condemnation and blessed with every spiritual blessing, is the portion only of those sealed by the Spirit of God. It is no question of denying that souls may be happy and in the hopes of heaven, for the Lord can meet them where they are, but deliverance from the law, the flesh or sin, cannot be the experience of souls in that state. The pity is that so few seem to enter into what it is to be in the Spirit. Failing to see that God has not only dealt with the sins but with the whole sinful state, many are left struggling with that state in themselves and do not know the way out. Robbed of the holy joy of deliverance in a new relationship of life and peace, pious souls spend their days in bondage to sin, the law and the flesh and the world, not having the holy freedom from these things which is their very birthright. It is here that the verses of Romans 7:1-25, mentioned above call for a few remarks. The exercise is personified in the Apostle and it simplifies matters if we distinguish between the concrete and the abstract. "I am carnal, sold under sin," Romans 7:14, is the expression of one who has light from God. He may, or he may not, have received the Spirit but is in bondage to sin. He is now, so to speak, in the tunnel of introspection which, though dark at this point, leads to further light and eventually to an outlet of brightest sunshine. Next, through a process of reasoning, he is able to distinguish between himself and sin which dwelleth in him. This is a great step. It is really man before he fell in Eden and what he became after. Then the next step is still greater for, through a further process of reasoning, he can identify himself with the good. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Romans 7:22. Apprehending this, he can take account of sin in his nature as a foreign element which is irreconcilable and to which the law applies all its positive and negative commands. The law — which is holy — can only condemn this state. No discipline, education or reformation can help such a state. The law pronounces his condemnation and claims his death. This condemnation and death having been submitted to and borne by his substitute at the cross, he accepts that death as his in the faith of his soul and is now able to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now he sees that although sins law is still in the flesh, he himself is in Christ and free from condemnation. Romans 8:1. This is a needful experience if we are to know the blessedness of the christian calling. It is no imaginary thing, but a blessed reality. The abstract nature of this is to be observed. While appreciating what it is to be in Christ in a status and life which is of God and beyond responsibility, he is conscious that only the grace of God can keep him. "So then I myself with the mind serve God's law, but with the flesh sin's law." Romans 7:25. N.T. This mixed condition that he is in, will go on till the end of the pathway, but though that is so, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2. The uniform working of life in the first Adam ever gravitates downwards in sin to death. The uniform working of the life of Christ the Last Adam was ever upward. In that the believer now is by the Holy Spirit. It is regrettable that many suffer real loss by refusing to face the

exercise of Romans vii. On the other hand, how deplorable it is that it may be mentally acquired in such a way that we may be able to speak of the deep things of God, while our practical condition is morally akin to the man of the world.

Having arrived at the consciousness of being in Christ in holy freedom, we can take account of the ground trodden in relation to the Spirit. Free from the domination of sin and having yielded to the claims of law, we are now, in the words of Romans 6:14, "not under law but under grace." The place of the Spirit in all this is set forth in Romans 8:1-39. The Spirit is mentioned in that chapter no less than seventeen times. As a consequence, there are four statements in the chapter that call for consideration. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Romans 8:9. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1. "If Christ be in you." Romans 8:10. The flesh is descriptive of man's state as a creature. It is that which gives colour to all our thoughts, feelings, tastes and all that goes to make up life. The fall corrupted that, hence all is contaminated. By displacing flesh, the indwelling Spirit becomes our power for everything. So then, if we are in Christ before God for His pleasure, Christ is in us before men for testimony — the indwelling Spirit being the power for all. In the light of this why do we hear so little of the knowledge of the Spirit? It is true that He is here on behalf of the Father and the Son and that He does not make Himself an object. He comes before us in an impersonal way by the use of the neuter pronoun "it" but He is God and we know Him as knowing God. In plain words, all we know of God is directly from Him and by Him. "Ye know Him" was the word of our Lord to His disciples. John 14:17. Hereby we know the Spirit of God — every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God. Now God is Love. The Holy Spirit is God hence, He is Love. "Now I beseech you brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Romans 15:30. How could He shed the love of God abroad in our hearts if He were not love? He is the Spirit of truth, John 14:17. The Spirit of power 2 Timothy 2:7. Do we not gather from the words of the Lord Jesus that the Holy Spirit will tell us more of what He Himself is?" It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." John 16:7. In Him then we have the God of all comfort. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Isaiah 66:13. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort." 2 Corinthians 1:3. Inasmuch as the Spirit is within us, we get made good to us and in us, all that God is, by God the Holy Spirit. But He can sympathise, yea, and intercede for us. "In like manner the Spirit joins also its help to our weaknesses; for we do not know what we should pray for as is fitting, but the Spirit itself makes intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered." Romans 8:26.

Then there is communion of the Holy Spirit. Think of the marvellous condescension He shows to come and dwell in such close proximity with evil, for we have to remind ourselves that, although transferred from Adam to Christ, the law of sin is still in our members. Doubtless, this was the cause of His appearance as cloven tongues of fire at Pentecost. He dwells in us in that which He Himself has formed in us by new birth and here it is, His communion with us. Surely in coming to our side, it is that He may bring us to His, in all the blessed consciousness of divine favour within the sacred enclosure of His own domain, where all things are of God. It is thus as the Spirit He enters into the closest intimacy with us in our spirits. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16. But the Spirit is sensitive. This we can

understand, for distance is measured by nearness even in human relationships. The more refined the sensibilities are, the more susceptible we are to the chilling influences of man and the world. The Spirit can be grieved and may for the moment be inactive but He is also jealous. Love is always jealous. Many are the tragedies that follow it in human life. To the young men it is said, "Love not the world." How could the Holy Spirit go on ungrieved in us if we let our hearts go out to anything in this poor world which is not of God? "I The LORD thy God am a jealous God." Exodus 20:5. The Spirit therefore can be grieved; quenched; lied to and even blasphemed.

Enough has been said we trust of the possession of the Spirit, to impress us with the simplicity and beauty of life lived practically under His sway. Some seem to think that walking in the Spirit — which is walking by faith — is impractical and produces austerity and a tendency to frown upon the enjoyments of daily life. A plea is sometimes made for the young in such words as, Do not be a kill-joy. Nothing could be more deceptive and harmful. Nature's joys are at their best ephemeral and leave us dissatisfied. Well we know they fade and decay but the joys of the Spirit are pure; lasting; heavenly and eternal. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Romans 14:17. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23. This lovely passage falls into three beautiful clusters of Christ-like features, each containing three and all reflecting in a three-fold way. The first three are Godward; the next three manward, the last three personal. Can any one say there is either austerity, legality or mere sentiment in this? On the contrary, it can be said there are no more happy, joyous, genial people in this world. As led by the Spirit of God they are sons of God and true geniality is seen in them with the absence of all levity. Isaiah said, "Woe is me." Isaiah 6:5. Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Luke 5:8. Paul said, "O wretched man that I am." Romans 7:24. It is just there that this holy Person has deigned to take up His abode. Not in what we are as flesh of sin, but in what He has Himself prepared in His initial operation of new birth.

One other passage calls for a word before passing on. Being accused by the Corinthians of unfaithfulness to his promise, the apostle takes occasion by the charge to show on the one hand his own transparency, and on the other to speak of the office of the Spirit in a three-fold way as the anointing, seal, and earnest of all that is yet to come. Christ is the embodiment of all the promises of God. Whoever else may vacillate, there is both stability and security in Him "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Corinthians 1:20-22. In accord with what has been already said, this passage supposes a previous work of the Spirit in the soul. These things come before us in a perfectly orderly way in the cleansing of the leper. Leviticus 14:1-18. Washing with water prefigures new birth. Sprinkling with blood — forgiveness of sins. Anointing with oil — the gift of the Spirit. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Ephesians 2:10. Here we come to spiritual instinct, intuition and intelligence. "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is truth, and is no lie, even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." 1 John 2:27. Spiritual instinct is a most precious reality but it must be regarded with care. It is one thing for a devout soul to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, and not be able to give a text of scripture for it. It is quite another thing for people to act by what they call

the inner light which they lay claim to, while ignoring the word of God. The act of Mary of Bethany when she broke her box of spikenard and anointed her Lord, has earned for her undying fame in the testimony. The Lord Himself vindicated her. But the claim of "Inner light," which we hear so much of today, is a mark of one of the evils of the last days.

"Who also hath sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." It is clear that these different things are brought to pass in our hearts by one and the same act when the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in us. By putting the stamp of God upon us, the Spirit claims our persons for God. "Ye are not your own? for ye have been bought with a price: glorify now then God in your body." 1 Corinthians 6:20, New Trans. "And has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." In this we have a token of the inheritance. Ephesians 1:14. This means we are called to share with our Lord in all that He has acquired. All that range of universal glory and blessing which He takes up by double claim namely, Personal right, and the redemptive acquirement. In this way the Spirit is the pledge and the present enjoyment of the thing pledged, while we await the full result in the redemption of our bodies. He brings into the obedient heart the enjoyment of what is future in communion with the Father and the Son. This leads to the peak of christian blessing, namely, sonship, and associates us with the Son before God in fulness of blessing. This we shall dwell upon in connection with our next point, namely, the House or Dwelling place of God. See note B at the close.

05.05. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE HOUSE OF GOD.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE HOUSE OF GOD.

It has ever been the desire of God to dwell with man and to secure this, redemption must first be accomplished. As before remarked, in the kingdom the saints are seen in their individual settings as subjects, with the name of the Lord as their bond. In the House of God, they are seen as sons. The House of God is the result of His own workmanship. Bearing in mind that we are as far as possible from material things here, the saints are said to be God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, and built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. A man's household is his family and he is known through them. In this way, God, as He has revealed Himself, is known through His sons today. "This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell." Psalms 132:14. From that centre, the voice of God is heard. Acts 13:2-4. 1 Timothy 4:1. Here, no disturbing element can come. God is its centre, there He rests in the blessing of His own, whose delight it is to worship and adore Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's righteousness with glory bright Which with its radiance fills that sphere, E'en Christ, of God the power and light, Our title is that light to share. In establishing that House, the middle wall had to be broken down between Jew and Gentile. All strife being gone, Jew and Gentile are brought nigh in One New Man, and are reconciled to God in one body by the cross; both having access by one Spirit unto the Father. A verse like this intensifies our interest as we dwell upon the Holy Spirit. It is that Person in the Godhead who has brought us out of the darkness and distance of our Adamic state and turned the dark tragedy of Calvary into the greatest triumph of God. This leads on to the city and the Household of God. Ephesians 2:11-22. Then to the building fitly framed together, which groweth into a holy temple in the Lord. Here, in the very heart of the precious things of heaven, we come to the habitation of God; the place where all these treasures are installed; the resting place of all that is of God; the evidences of past victories and the receptacle of much spoil. Well it may be so since — if we may use the language of the typical house — this Palace is not for man but for the Lord God. 1 Chronicles 29:1. Amongst all this wealth, there is one treasure kept as a secret; a mystery hid in God. This is taken up parenthetically in Ephesians 3. To this we shall return when dealing with the Holy Spirit in reference to our corporate relationships. The Epistle to the Ephesians falls into two parts of three chapters each. The last three, being the hortatory part, may be read with the first Epistle to Timothy. The Spirit is mentioned thirteen times, or it may be twelve (see footnote to 1 Timothy 5:9. New Tran), and thus He comes before us six times in each of the two divisions of the Epistle. In 1 Timothy 4:1-14, we are seen in relation to one another and are exhorted to walk worthy of the calling in all lowliness, meekness and longsuffering; using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace; both holding the truth and growing up in it in love. In the next section, 1 Timothy 4:16; 1 Timothy 5:1-21, we are exhorted how to conduct ourselves with regard to those that are without. Having been set before the face of God in richest blessing, we are to walk in love as dear children and reflect His light in the midst of the darkness for we are now made light in the Lord. In the next section, 1 Timothy 5:22-25, 1 Timothy 6:1-9, we are instructed as to our conduct in the home circle — the

sphere of natural affections. Subjection on the part of wives; love on the part of husbands; obedience on the part of children. Then in the business circle faithfulness on the part of servants and righteousness on the part of masters. Lastly from 1 Timothy 6:10, it is the conflict with the spiritual forces of evil, the powers of darkness. In each of these sections we are in the hands of the Spirit and thus have power to stamp the colour and character of heaven on them all. In 1 Timothy God's administration which is in faith is first brought before us and the standard is the gospel of the glory of the blessed God. Believers in the House of God is the theme, and that which binds the whole structure together is the mystery of piety in the incarnation of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The men are to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and reasoning and the women to be marked by modesty of dress in the fear of God. In this way, a proper impression of God will be set forth in testimony. God is One, and the mediator between God and men One, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony to go forth in its own time. The rest of the Epistle gives instruction concerning oversight and ministry with directions concerning the distribution of alms to the needy and dependent. All these details are given us because God desires all to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. He does not want us to give a false impression of Him, for it is through His saints He puts Himself in touch with all. The Holy Spirit speaks of Himself here in this Epistle and, as dwelling in the saints, is the immanent life and power of the whole spiritual structure. The witness of the Spirit, both to the saints and through them, is brought out very plainly in the first Epistle of John. He is mentioned eight times and here we have a holy record of spiritual blessing which includes some of the wealth of heaven in the richest of christian blessing. The saints are viewed in House of God connection as the family of God. Seven times they are said to be born or begotten of God, and having thus the birth-right, their place of intimacy is assured in all the unreserved blessedness of the Father's love. In this circle of holy love there can be no distrust; no distance; no reserve, for the Father has found an outlet for His love in His children and to them in love's own circle He can unfold all that is in His heart. The Epistle opens with the saints being brought into company with the Apostles to enjoy with them communion with the Father and the Son. In that communion it is the delight of the Father to unfold to our hearts His own appreciation of His Son. And correspondingly, the Son delights to make known the Father in His goodness, grace, mercy, and His eternal counsel of love. So intimate is the relationship in both life and nature that we dwell in God. Divine love is our home and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. 1 John 4:16. They are an entirely new generation; they know that they have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren; they know that they know God, because they keep His commandments; they know they are in Him, because they keep His word and in that way, His love is perfected in them. This word dwell or abide reminds us that this is not a temporary retreat but the abiding home of the soul. Then the character of God their Father is seen in them for, not only do they love, they practise righteousness also 1 John 3:10; 1 John 4:7. They know that the Son of God has come and has given them an understanding to know Him that is true, and they are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. They can say, if no one has seen God at any time, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." 1 John 4:14. They have eternal life and they know it. 1 John 5:13. The very first characteristic of that life is to know the Father and His sent One, Jesus Christ. John 17:3. They also know the Holy Spirit. 1 John 4:2. This is not mere speculative theology but the word of God brought home to the heart by the living power of the indwelling Spirit. This is infinitely beyond the critical reasoning of the present day. Nor are the saints ignorant of the power and insidious

working of evil all around them and their liability to fall into it if not constantly kept in the conscious enjoyment of these holy treasures. Although brought abstractly into all this range of blessing, they are yet in a bodily condition which is liable to both weakness and wilfulness. It is well to hold truth in balance and for that, let us look for a moment at the other aspect of our position.

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Answer. "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." (of distances) Isaiah 33:14-17. That is the heavenly land. Observe in reference to this, Moses, Aaron and his two sons with seventy of the elders of Israel were called up to meet Jehovah in the mount. Moses alone was brought near in the cloud and the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud. Exodus 24:9-18. Does this not teach us something of what it is to be brought to dwell in God? If sin is in question, God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:29. Does this bring home to us the necessity of the Cross where that fire fell upon the Holy One, judging and condemning our sinful state? So efficacious has that work been, that God has cleared us from all that was offensive to Himself. Consequently, He now brings us before Himself holy and without blame for His pleasure, fitted, not only to dwell in the love of God but in the God who is Love. But dwelling in God is by dwelling in love. Care is needed here lest we wander into the by-paths of imagination and, like the mystic, lose ourselves in the ecstasy of folly. The mystic is self-engrossed being occupied with his wants, wishes and desires. The intelligent believer is occupied with Christ and perfectly satisfied, his heart being filled with peace and joy as the result of being occupied with the object set before him by the Holy Spirit. There can be no real intimacy apart from the fulfilment of this condition, namely, he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. We rise then from the ways, work and counsels of God to God Himself. Beyond this we cannot get now, but in the company of the Holy Spirit we come forward into time on the way to an eternity of bliss where we shall ever dwell with and in God. But it is not only what we get in all this but what God has got for Himself in the fulfilment of His own eternal plan, in the triumph of that grace which has secured for Himself the creature of His choice. But does it follow that every believer who has received the Spirit dwells in God? The Corinthians and Galatians are an example of the opposite. Even in this Epistle of John, if any man sin, or, if our heart condemn us. When we are dwelling in God, there is no inner conflict going on between the flesh and the Spirit. All is rest, peace and joy. And hereby we know that He abideth or dwelleth in us, by the Spirit which He has given us. 1 John 3:24. But note. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us OF his Spirit." 1 John 4:13. In the first of these passages the believer dwelling in God is the effect of obedience and is put first — all resting on the gift of the Spirit. In the second, while showing the same mutuality of dwelling as the result of communion in nature and the circle of love in the activities of life, there is the addition of that little word OF in 1 John 4:13, which is important as raising the question of the Being and relationship of God and the Three who form the Holy Trinity. It is as if God gave us part of Himself. No man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him. 1 Corinthians 2:11. We all know there is a mysterious depth in a man known only to himself. But if that is so, what shall we say of God? If we are conscious of the impossibility of intruding into the inner enclosure of the being of a fellow mortal, what shall be said of God? To illustrate this, someone has said, "I could not give you my spirit if I would, neither would I give you my spirit if I

could. Why? Because you would know too much about me." This is exactly what God has done. He has given us His Spirit, His own Spirit, part of Himself that we may know Him. He desires to be known not only in His works, words, ways, covenants, purposes and counsels but Himself in all that He is in the deep moral fulness of love and glory. The Spirit which He has given us searcheth all things, yea, the deep things or rather the depths of God. 1 Corinthians 2:10. Nature in its ruined state cannot intrude here, nor creature capacity at its best understand the things of God. Into the inner consciousness of the depths of movements, tastes, joys and feelings of Him who created this vast universe and upholds it in all its unity, none dare venture. But when we learn that not only would He have us there, but He has undertaken, through His Son, to remove every hindrance that sin had occasioned and take us right into His own company in moral suitability to Himself; creating a capacity in us to know Him in the depths of His Being; to rejoice in Him and adore Him for ever more — what can we say? "I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." Psalms 104:33. This raises another question which calls for a word here. In the light of all this blessing, how far can it be said that the saints partake of Deity? Some have erred by failing to distinguish between the Essential Being and the Moral Nature of God. As begotten of God we have His life — eternal life; His nature — eternal love. We are made His righteousness in Christ and are partakers of His holiness, but if we partook of Deity we would cease to be creatures, and He would cease to be God.

It is here we learn the importance of having right thoughts of the incarnation. The distance between the creature and the Creator was twofold. First as a creature; then as fallen into sin. By becoming Man, the Son removed the first, bridging the distance. As to the second, He removed that also by His death, so that we might share the glory with Himself in proper conditions, according to God. In Him, Sonship and eternal relationship was brought into Manhood, and made available for us by His atoning work upon the cross. Here, let it be said, we behold Him in a three-fold way. First, what He is in Deity — the glory we are going to behold. Second, what He is in Manhood as risen and glorified — to Whom we are united by His Spirit from on high. Third, what He is as a Divine-Human-Person — with Whom we are associated, as by adoption, before God for His pleasure. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Galatians 4:6. In connection with the office and work of the Spirit in the company, we turn to John 14:16. The operations of the Spirit in the soul individually, had been brought out by our Lord in John 2:1-25; John 4:1-54; John 7:1-53. Just before His betrayal and apprehension, the Lord gathered His own around Himself, and in view of His departure and the break up it would cause, instructed them on the necessity of His going away and the coming of the Spirit as a consequence. He assures them that the coming of the Spirit was a necessity for them that they might have a capacity to take in and be led into the meaning of all that the Lord had said and done while He was among them. The result would be, they would be brought into a greater degree of intimacy with Himself than was possible while He was with them. In the most tender way, the Lord was detaching them from Judaism, the earth and earthly things by attaching them firmly to Himself as exalted in heaven, Part with Him there in a new faith system, every part of which would be instinct with life in the power of God the Spirit Who would be in them, making good what the Lord had taught them, thus creating a new capacity to fit them for the work that, as His disciples, lay before them. It was needful for them, as well as for Him, that He should go, for if He did not go the Comforter would not come. They were to learn that there was something beyond miracles, which would lead them to rejoice in the moral depths of His teaching. They were to be

enlightened within by God the Spirit Whose immanence would flood their innermost being with the knowledge of God.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:15-17. It is as if He said, My being here with you can but be transient; He shall be with you for ever: all the things you have heard and seen during My ministry here ye cannot apprehend or appreciate for want of capacity, but when He is come He shall give you to understand, that never were creatures favoured like you have been. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26. Here we have illumination, on the ground of which they could say after He had gone — but not before — "We beheld His glory, the glory as of an only-begotten with a Father, full of grace and truth." The words, "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you," includes the inspired record of the Gospels and the opening up of the holy grandeur of all they had been taught. He had spoken of Himself as the Son; Son of God; Son of Man; Son of David. The Tabernacle, the Temple, the Law, the Testimony, all figured in His ministry. His parables explored the moral world and His miracles the world of nature — all was marked by a combination of depth and simplicity, that only the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth could unfold. But what of the present time? If the Spirit alone can teach us the meaning of His life and service here, who shall tell us of where He is now and what He is doing? Peter asked Him, "Lord, whither goest thou?" John 13:36. Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" John 14:5. The Spirit is the answer to all this. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from with the Father, he shall bear witness concerning me; and ye too bear witness, because ye are with me from the beginning." John 15:26-27. New Tran. When He left them at His ascension, they stood bewildered till two men in white clothing said to them, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Acts 1:11. Sometime later Peter wrote of Him, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Peter 3:22. How did Peter know this? Flesh and blood could not reveal it. It was revealed by the Spirit, Who had come according to promise, that our Lord's whereabouts, His official glories and activities might be known by us, and that, by the same blessed Spirit, we might have the joy of communion with Him where He now is. We are told that Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and for ever. Hebrews 13:8. The Holy Spirit makes Him known to us as He was 'yesterday' in the Gospels. John 14:26. He also shows us where He is and what He is doing 'today'. John 15:26. This comes out in the Epistles. Thirdly, the Spirit shows us things to come. John 16:13. This is what the Lord will do 'tomorrow'. Thus we have in these three chapters the work of the Spirit concerning our Lord past, present, and future. At the present moment, He is gone far above all heavens; He has been made Lord; Head; Priest, and is coming again to put down all evil and establish the rule of God over every part of creation. We know Him as He is now. The Lord of Glory; the Head of every man; the Head of the Body the Assembly; the great Priest over the House of God; the Minister of the Sanctuary; the Mediator of the better covenant. And well we know that He is about to come forth and call His own home to be with Himself for ever. But John 16 goes further and shows the coming of the Spirit to His people as a vessel prepared by the Lord Himself to receive Him — with the

bearing of His pressure on the world and its prince. While He comes to the disciples, the first effect of His presence is to bring demonstration to the world of its guilt in the death of the Lord Jesus. After telling them that it was profitable for them that He should go away, He used the words to you twice. As dwelling in them, He would bring demonstration to the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. "Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16:9-11. It is not to be taken that the activities of the Holy Spirit were in any way towards the world or its prince. His presence here in the Assembly, in the working out of the plan of the Godhead, is a challenge to a system which refused the Son; and that challenge works out in a threefold way. Observe that He names the three factors, sin, righteousness and judgment twice. The second time He qualifies these three things by bringing in three other actors in the arena; Himself; the world, and Satan. He had before said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." John 12:31. Here, that solemn sentence in its eternal, irrevocable character is confirmed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The very thing which appeared to be a complete victory for the world and its god, is seen to be their complete overthrow. The sin here is, they believe not on Him. This the sin, beyond all other sins — the sin of hating the Father and the Son. John 15:22-24. Righteousness here is what is right. What could be more fitting, in the nature of things, than His exaltation to the Father's right hand? And note here, it is an act of His own volition, "I go to my Father." Judgment can be the only result, for this world, led on by the Devil, joined issue with God over the Son incarnate and this is the result for both to all eternity.

Following this, the Lord opens out the work of the Spirit as come down from the Father and the Son, in His normal working in the company. Three things the Lord outlines here. First, "He shall guide you into all the truth." This must be taken as the new faith system established in resurrection, of which all scripture speaks. Directly, or indirectly, all scripture has in view a new creation into which sin and death can never come. Whether it be history, prophecy, typology, or doctrine, the words employed and the things concerned are from the Holy Spirit. Mental activity has wrought much mischief by intruding into the mysteries of the faith but ignoring the guide. Is there any wonder that the flock is robbed of food? The saints are starved and the precious things of heaven undervalued or unknown. "He shall guide you into all truth," might be illustrated by the Epistle to the Hebrews. Chapters one to two present the Person of our Lord, first in His Deity and then in His Manhood. In three and four we get the House, the Word, and the Throne. In chapters five to seven, the new Priest. In chapter eight — the new covenant; in nine — the new sanctuary; in ten — the new worshipping company. This is all an answer to the typical system set up by the same Spirit in an earlier day, as taught us in Exodus and Leviticus. The second thing the Spirit would do would be to show them things to come. He alone can unlock the chambers of the Old Testament, dispensational, Messianic or moral, and link all together as leading sectors in the great circle of truth. How could the different ages or dispensations be known apart from Him? Who could have known the parenthetic gap in the ages, in which Israel is cut off and the Assembly brought in as the vessel of eternal purpose? Or who could have understood the seventy weeks of Daniel apart from Him? In the book of the Acts, He has linked up the past dispensation with the present, and in the book of Revelation, He has linked up the present with the future. In that book too, He shows the connecting link with eternity — God's eternal day. In this way, "He shall show you things to come." "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." This is the third and last point here of the ministry of the Spirit and it leads from the things to the Persons and

Their relations in trinity, both in essential Being and in co-equality of interests. We shall leave that till we have dealt with the office and work of the Spirit in our corporate relationship. This brings in the truth of the Mystery — the Assembly as the Body of Christ; the secret which was hid in God but is now made known unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

05.06. THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE ASSEMBLY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE ASSEMBLY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST. In approaching this part of the truth, it is necessary to keep in mind what we have seen as to being "In Christ." Nothing of an inferior nature could be united to Him, and the saints stand in the same constitutional and organic connection with Him, as the human body to the moral being within it. So close indeed is this link, that the Church is included in the term "The Christ." "As the body is one — the human body — and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ." 1 Corinthians 12:12. cf. Genesis 5:2, where both the man and the woman are called Adam. " For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Corinthians 12:13. There may be an obscure allusion here to the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper as some have thought, but the truth itself clearly stated is that work of the Spirit in which there can be no failure, where all is of God. We have already seen the Headship of Christ in a racial way, but this is much more intimate, showing the Assembly substantially and organically the expression of Christ the Head of His Body. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. But, while that is true, we do not get the Head of the Body here. The Epistle being corrective, the Body of Christ is presented here in its local setting and is thus but a microcosm of the whole. It is seen as the vessel of the Spirit in view of ministry, hence, His sovereignty is asserted. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11.

We have already seen in Ephesians 2:1-22, the saints as the family of God and His dwelling place too. God being there, all His treasures are there — the precious things of heaven. This simply means, that the blessings spoken of are wrought into the hearts of His own by the Spirit. From all the blessings enumerated there, the Spirit selects one, namely, the Body, and in a long parenthesis occupying the whole of Ephesians 3:1-21, opens it out as the secret, or Mystery, which had been hid in God through the ages. Remark that the Body is not exactly the Mystery here, nor is it the Lord Himself; it is Christ and the saints as one organic entity. In this chapter, Paul speaks of the administration which had been given to him, towards the saints. By revelation the Mystery had been made known to him, which in other generations had not been made known to the sons of men. It was that the nations should be joint-heirs, and a joint-body, and joint-partakers of His promises in Christ Jesus, by the Gospel, of which he had become minister. Note here that the Gospel, namely, that by which we have made the transfer from Adam to Christ as taught in Romans 8:1-39, is the way in to this wonderful blessing, spoken of here as the Mystery and explained to be Jew and Gentile one body in Christ. To Paul was committed both the ministry of the Gospel and the ministry of the Mystery. Colossians 1:23-26. The Gospel contains the unsearchable riches of the Christ. Ephesians 3:8. The Mystery, that in which God has set forth His manifold wisdom, before the heavenly intelligences, is the Church, the Body of Christ. This we are told was the motive for creation. Ephesians 3:9-10. The Mystery was hidden throughout the ages in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, in order that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God. That is,

the variegated or many coloured wisdom of God, according to the purpose of the ages, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. This truth the Apostle tells us, completes the word of God. Colossians 1:25. Not only that part of truth which must come out before the inspired volume could be closed, but that sector in the great circle of revealed truth which gives completeness to the whole. Creation; Government; Providence; History; Prophecy; Typology; things moral and spiritual; all were known, but like the keystone to an arch, the Mystery being made known gave completion, symmetry, beauty and order to all. It will be said that in the life and death of our Lord, God was fully revealed. True, but He said to His own, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." John 16:12. The Spirit's coming not only gave them capacity to understand but also expanded the truth to the unfolding of the whole counsel of God. But the Assembly, in virtue of being the Body of Christ, is also His Bride. This takes our thoughts back to the beginning and shows the link between the beginning and the end of Revelation. Adam was alone and it was not good, so the LORD God made for him a help meet. But before she could be presented to him, she must be taken out of him. For that the deep sleep — which so aptly prefigures the death of Christ — was a necessity. In taking up the inheritance which God gave him, she was associated with him in his dominion. This leads to the institution of marriage which gives the true thought of union. Two persons are united together in holy wedlock, but in the body it is no question of being united. Each member is part of the one Body and in proper healthy conditions, all work together in perfect unity. Speaking of this in Ephesians 5:1-33, the Apostle says this is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. The administration of the Mystery works out in various ways. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians it is viewed as the vessel of the Spirit locally: He distributing gift, according to His sovereign will, for the manifestation of Himself in the Church as come together, before they had the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Colossians, it is the Body universally as composed of all saints in the baptism of the Spirit at any time on earth. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, it is the whole vast Assembly as composed of all the saints from Pentecost till the coming of the Lord. In Corinthians, the truth was given as a correction of clericalism on the one side or radicalism on the other. In the wisdom of God He permitted this disorder and so has furnished us with this corrective instruction for all time. In Colossians, this truth was given to counteract the dreams of the Gnostics, a class which rose up early in opposition to the truth. In Ephesians, apart from anything which called for correction, we have a treatise on the eternal counsel of God. In Colossians, the Head and the Body form one entity but in Ephesians, as we have seen, we pass from the thought of the Body to that of the Bride, that is, two entities.

Now we see the place the Holy Spirit had in all this. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians He is mentioned twenty-four times, and ten of them are in 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Spirit is mentioned thirteen times. In the Epistle to the Colossians, the Spirit is mentioned only once. This will readily be understood if we reflect that the divine side of our Lord's Person is in view in Colossians. In Ephesians, it is the risen glorified Man that is in view but in Colossians it is God the Son, the Creator. While the Spirit gives the Subject, and the inspired account, He wisely and Divinely stands aside that we may be led into the knowledge of the greatness and glory of Christ. For much the same reason the Spirit is not mentioned in the Book of Leviticus. As the Bride of Christ, the Assembly is now being prepared for the marriage. Christ gave Himself for it. He will yet present it to Himself not having spot or wrinkle. Not a mark either of defilement or old age but holy and without blemish. This is the same word as in Ephesians 1:4.

The actual presentation is shown us in Revelation 19:7-9. Here we have the marriage of the Lamb. After this, John is called to view the Bride the Lamb's wife. Revelation 21:9. Here, the figure is changed and he beholds a city descending from God out of heaven, having the glory of God. We have here the climax of the work of the Spirit in that vast throng; a company in which each Person of the Godhead will take a peculiar delight, because this company stands in relation to the Son. In thus company, He who was the Man of sorrows but is now the Man of joy, will see of the travail of His soul, and will be satisfied. The last view we get of the Bride, is when she comes down from God out of heaven, a thousand years later. Revelation 21:2. Here the figure is changed again and when called to see the holy city, John sees her prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Previously, she had come out for display and administration which goes on throughout the Millennial age, but here she is all for Himself. "Thine eye in that bright glorious day, shall with supreme delight, Thy fair and glorious Bride survey, unblemished in Thy sight." Display having been ended, the new Adam and the new Eve go on into an eternity of bliss. Revelation 21:1-5. Meanwhile the Spirit is forming in devoted hearts bridal affections for Christ, which cause them to join with Him in saying, "Come, Lord Jesus." "And the Spirit and the Bride say Come." Revelation 22:17.

We now turn to the special and peculiar work of the Spirit as we are promised in John 16:1-33. "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." John 16:14. His glory — that is, the glory of the Son — is great in God's salvation. Psalms 21:1-13. It is the work of the Spirit to show us that glory. But here in John 16:15, we are led in beyond that to His glory within the sacred circle of the Holy Trinity. In seeking an answer to the question, What are the "things that are mine?" we must distinguish between Godhead and Manhood in the Person of our Lord, and view Him abstractly on the divine side as co-equal with the Father and co-possessor of all things. In His official capacity as Administrator, all things are given by the Father into His hands and all things are put under His feet. In order, that this may be carried out, all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. But here we distinguish between the glory of His Person and the offices He fills; the difference between delegated authority and proprietorship, and this leads to the wealth of God. Oh, the depth of wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God! The material universe being the product of His power, is a witness of His wealth, wisdom and knowledge. Look then a moment at these things.

05.07. THE WEALTH OF GOD.

THE WEALTH OF GOD. The heavenly bodies in their numbers, distances, and rapidity of movement; the sea and all that swim therein and the ships that float on its surface; the land with all its rivers, lakes, mountains and hills. Then there is man, with all his monumental works of ingenuity, device and splendour; all are His. A remarkable text comes before us here. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 1 Corinthians 3:22-23. We are His both in body and in soul. "All souls are mine." Ezekiel 18:4. "Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:20. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Psalms 50:10. As to material wealth, according to man's estimate, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts." Haggai 2:8. In the light of this, where is the millionaire today or the man who pulls down his barns to build greater saying, "There will I bestow my goods?" Can we wonder when the true provider says to him "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." And what of the man clothed in fine linen and purple, who fared sumptuously every day, while the afflicted beggar lay at his gate seeking the crumbs. The love of money is the root of all evil and it has filled the earth with wars, famines and many other evils which have turned the fair creation of God into an inferno of diabolical intrigue, despite the graciousness and beneficent goodness of God, the author and provider of all. But if greed and selfishness mark us in nature with material things, it is not so with the things of the Spirit. The moment a person gets converted he becomes anxious for others to share with him in the good things. These things are heavenly, spiritual and eternal as elements of the life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; reciprocated between them long before creation; native to Deity; inherent in the divine nature and subsisting in incorruptible and unfading beauty. But while love and glory ever flowed evenly there, we can understand that the Incarnation would give as it were, renewed impetus to that love. For instance, there was no call for the Father's voice to be heard in pre-incarnate days saying, "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." The love, joy and peace that ever was there, continued in undisturbed delight both causeless and innate but now, when the Son has stooped to Manhood, there is a fresh cause, a new motive, and a ground for comparison. The Son is the channel through which all that is native to Godhead flows to man. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." Then, He is the object of His Father's love in His path of obedience. This love, He shares with His disciples. There is now a company on earth sharing the Father's love through Him Who was its ineffable Object in His own rights but came near to men to make it available for them. Although this was divinely perfect and of surpassing beauty, it had an end in view. The end in view being the Cross there is thus yet a fresh impetus given to the Father's love. "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life." Loved as the darling of the Father's heart in eternity; loved as the devoted and dependent Man on earth; loved more deeply still at the Cross — He brings His own in to share with Him the inner intimacies of that same love. This is a deep that knows no sounding; an ocean without a shore. It fills and satisfies the heart while ever leading us on to new wonders and fresh glories. Our God is a giving God. He gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not. Jehovah of hosts said to Israel, "Prove me

now herewith, if I open not to you the windows of heaven and pour you out such a blessing that ye will not be able to contain it." Malachi 3:10. This is superabundance of blessing. "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you," said the Son, and, the Holy Spirit distributes to every man severally as He will. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Such thoughts are suggested by the words, "He shall take of the things that are mine, and show them unto you." It is not merely a question of ink and paper, but the soul being led through the various departments of Godhead wealth, into the innermost knowledge of all that God is and has, that good, better, and best, may be valued by us in the power of the Spirit of God. This produces a holy discrimination which fills the soul with delight; calling each one to see the tinsel of this passing show of vanity in the world, and leading us to the deepest praise, worship and adoration. It is here the Giver begins to get. What He gets, yea, what He seeks, is the overflow, and surely we can say, "Of thine own have we given thee."

05.08. THE DEPTH OF GOD'S WISDOM.

THE DEPTH OF GOD'S WISDOM. When the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written, the world had reached a very advanced state of wisdom. But it was the wisdom of men who were ignorant of the wisdom of God, and in their blindness, crucified the Lord of Glory. There were many schools of philosophy, not only among the Jews but also in Greece and Rome. In this state of ferment, this new company — the Assembly — had its beginning, and like a mighty wave swept aside decadent Judaism, Roman imperialism, and Grecian philosophy. As these powers began to wane in apostolic days, a new school arose which spread over the whole ground of the testimony from Syria to Gaul. This was a class that sought to mix certain parts of Christianity with the reasonings of the schools of Greece, Rome and Judaism as well. Their knowledge of divine revelation was speculative and they were known as Gnostics, or in other words — the people who know. To such people, the preaching of the cross was foolishness. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Bring in faith and philosophy must go. Put the prefix con before science and you get conscience, which takes us from intellectual to moral ground; from speculative dreaming, to stand before divine holiness as naked sinners. What then?" Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Isaiah 6:5. So the apostle writes by the Spirit, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Corinthians 2:7-8. Moses was schooled in all the wisdom of Egypt but when he had become great he refused its rank, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to have the temporary pleasures of sin. He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. Hebrews 11:24-26. Yet, before he could begin the work of his life, he must spend forty years in the backside of the desert, educated by God Himself. Joseph is also a fine example of this. He was destined to teach the statesmen of Egypt how to rule and, in preparation for this, he had to be sold for a bondman. "They afflicted his feet with fetters; his soul came into irons." Psalms 105:18. New Trans. Daniel and his companions refused Babylon's food and were ten times better than all the scribes and magicians in learning and skill, so that in matters of knowledge and wisdom, the king found them better than all others who were in his land. In this way, wisdom is justified of all her children. "Thus saith Jehovah: let not the wise glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty glory in his might; let not the rich glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah, who exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah." Jeremiah 9:23-24. But with our God, His wisdom is controlled by His love in everything. That order is seen in the symmetry, order and beauty of the creation. Everything created reflects Him, so that the whole earth is filled with His glory; The apple tree produces apples and not oranges; wheat produces wheat and not barley. So it is in the moral sphere. If good for good may be seen on earth, evil for good is of the pit, but good for evil is of God, and from heaven. How exquisitely blended is all this. His wisdom ever waketh; He not only plans and works for our good, but He actually takes account of and uses

the creature's worst act for that creature's blessing. Many examples of this might be given, but one will suffice. The crucifixion of His Son was man's worst act but God used it to bring in for man His very best. By it, God in righteousness and holy love comes out in forgiveness and richest blessing to the culprit. We see a beautiful picture of this in Genesis 37:1-36, where, the sons of Israel, in treachery to their brother, put him in the very place where he would be their greatest benefactor. What more can we say? By His wisdom, our Lord — who is God over all — met, and silenced all opposition, condemning the leaders of the people from their own lips. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things that thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." Proverbs 3:13-18. Wisdom hath builded her house and she invites all to her feast. Proverbs 9:1. But there are conditions. "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright. With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself unsavoury." 2 Samuel 22:26-27. To be initiated into wisdom's secrets (Job 11:1-20), and endowed with her treasures we must be trustworthy. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you," Matthew 7:6. Wisdom longs to divulge her secrets and share her treasures with us, but can we be trusted to appreciate and value them? "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." Proverbs 8:20-21. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Romans 11:33.

05.09. THE DEPTH OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

THE DEPTH OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Like His wealth and wisdom, this is infinite. He both knows and fore-knows; He is both Prescient and Omniscient. His knowledge is linked with His Omnipresence as related to the dimensions of space — above; beneath; around; and with the three variants of time — past; present; and future. This also links with His Omnipotence, for to know what will take place at a future time necessitates that all is under His control. He telleth the number of the stars and numbers the hairs of our heads. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge shall he not know?" Psalms 94:9-10. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Romans 8:29. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13. But see how it works out in God incarnate — the Man of the Gospels. He saw Nathanael under the fig tree, John 1:48. "Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," John 21:17. He knew the movements of heaven, earth and hell. Luke 10:18; Luke 16:23-31. His eye was upon the fish in the sea and He sent one to Peter with the money in its mouth to meet the pressing need, Matthew 17:27. "For the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." 1 Chronicles 28:9. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, etc." Matthew 15:19. He foreknows and foretells. He told them that Jerusalem would fall to the Romans in desolation, distress and wrath. Luke 21:20-24. This came to pass forty years after the Cross. Many other things did He foretell which are about to be fulfilled. Here again is a depth that knows no sounding.

It raises this question, How far do we know God? We are to grow by the true knowledge of God. What solemnly concerns us, is not abstract truth, nor a range of speculative dogma, but the thoughts of God. He shows Himself to us, not only that we may know, but, what is more than this, that we may do, and above all that we may be. No part of truth has quite accomplished God's end when we have understood it only. Every divine impression is meant to form us like Himself that we may live in conscious conformity to His will. He has given us of His Spirit that we might know; that everything that could cause unrest might be removed; that every moral question might be settled; and that we might be in holy intimacy with Himself. This links the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God with His love; and as responsive to that love, we are made conscious that every blessed feature of His character and attributes comes under the sway of that love which is the nature of God; and like the thimble in the ocean, we dwell in God because we dwell in love. In this way, we have much more than the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God. We might go on indeed to speak of the depth of His justice, holiness, goodness and truth, and we see them all focused for expression, in the ministry of our Lord. Enough has been said surely to challenge our hearts, as to how far we have been led, under the control of the Holy Spirit, to gaze into the invisible, yea, into the depths of God. "All, all within, beneath, around, above, speak but of Thee and tell me what I am, the happiest of the happy, O Thou peerless One!" Pause a moment here. It is said that if the

sun were a hollow body, the earth could traverse its circuit within its depth, with an immensity of space between itself and the inner surface of the great luminary. But all illustrations fail here, since all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

One more scriptural illustration may be cited because of its significance, for beauty and adornment in the physical scenery and its rich and manifold instruction in the moral sphere. The heavens have been garnished in all their deep grandeur of gorgeous adornment by His Spirit. The same blessed Person who stamps the beauty of the Lord our God upon His saints. Job 26:13; Psalms 90:17; Psalms 149:4. The rainbow — which is mentioned four times in scripture — is part of this garnishing. It forms a link between the material and the moral and in this way, it is an evidence of divine glory. Its appearance is a welcome announcement that the storm is past and creation may again bask in the clear sunshine. So we sing of Calvary — "The storm that bowed Thy blessed head, is hushed forever now." Four times then is the rainbow mentioned in scripture and it proclaims the DEPTH of the faithfulness of God. "And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth, and it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." Genesis 9:11-15. In its unity and variety of colour? the Rainbow adumbrates the manifold wisdom of God. The word translated manifold is many-coloured or variegated. Thus we have in the various tints, seen in combination, that which sets forth the glory of God and the wisdom of God. Seven is the perfect number and all seven colours are combined in the rainbow. They are, Crimson; Amber; Gold; Emerald; Blue; Purple; and Violet. This is the perfection of beauty. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined." Psalms 50:2, The word translated here as " beauty " is sometimes translated "glory." Thus for the words translated, "Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness," we have "Worship Jehovah in holy splendour." Psalms 29:2. New Tran. Science has told us that the seven colours can be reduced to three, thus constituting a perfect picture of the glorious Trinity from Whom everything emanates. The various glories suggested by these colours, were manifested by the Son in Incarnation and now, by the Spirit, are to be made known, through the Assembly, to the principalities and powers in heavenly places. This leads to the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. As before said, three Godward; three manward; and three personal. Surely these are graces to decorate ourselves with; garments of undecaying beauty to be dressed in; things indeed against which there is no law. See Note E. The Rainbow.

Now all this is seen in fuller relief in the Epistle of James 3:13-18. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." This is the wisdom that knows not God and crucified the Lord of glory. " or where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without

hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Here then we have the answer to the colours of the Rainbow as set forth in the moral realm. As the combination of colours in the Rainbow bespeaks the beauty and adorning of the material creation in the hands of the Holy Spirit, so we have here in detail the varied tints of moral colouring, in the moral realm which, by the operations of that same Spirit, reflect the wisdom of God as revealed in grace, glory and eternal counsel by, or through the Assembly, to the unseen ranges of heavenly intelligences above.

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? On the top of high places by the way, at the cross-paths she taketh her stand. Beside the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors, she crieth aloud. Unto you, men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man: O ye simple, understand prudence; and ye foolish, understand sense. Hear, for I will speak excellent things, and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my palate shall meditate truth, and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing tortuous or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold: for wisdom is better than rubies, and all things that may be desired are not equal to it." Proverbs 8:1-11. New Trans.

Someone will say, All this is beautiful, but where can it be seen? It is admitted that failure abounds on every hand, but nevertheless, there are those who in simplicity and obscurity respond to God in sweet appreciation of what He has done for them and in them, and what He is to them in Christ by the Spirit. To deny this is to ignore the Spirit's work so blessedly in evidence today in many. It also ignores the truth that, whatever the failure, at any moment in the history of the testimony, God secures an answer to all that He has given, by the Spirit. For this, obedience is called for. "To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Samuel 15:22. Neither is there any vacillating or uncertainty. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." John 7:17.

Obedience leads to delight, and as taught by the Spirit there is enrichment. This has often transported simple, unlettered men beyond the greatest thinkers of the day who have refused the teaching of the Spirit. Moreover, growth in the knowledge of scripture leads to advance in the knowledge of God and this is growth which widens the outlook on life. Since the books of nature and revelation are from the same blessed Source, the individual, however simple and unlearned, acquires a working knowledge of things, and an outlook on life, which leaves far behind leaders of thought who limit themselves to the passing things of the day. He that created the universe and combines the whole sphere of nature, upholds and rules public opinion as well, but He has also inspired and given us a written revelation of Himself. This is the circle of truth of which, as the Spirit of truth, He is the guardian, and into which He delights to lead us. O depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! And now a word as promised on the subject of the blessing of sons. By associating us with Himself before the Father in His own calling, life, and acceptance, the Son, as firstborn among many brethren, has brought us into the highest of all blessings. He has connected this, the House and family character, as so blessedly put before us in the Epistle to the Ephesians, with the House of God, where all its spiritual wealth is brought before us. With this in mind, we pass from the treasures of John 16:1-33, "The things that are mine," into the sacred enclosure of John 17:1-26, and with holy and sacred feelings, listen to the words which flow from

our adorable Lord, concerning the most sacred of all the treasures of God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here the Son, standing in time, gazes back into a past eternity and forward into a coming eternity of bliss, crystalising all in one eternal NOW, (John 17:5, John 17:24). On the verge of that dark hour which must forever stand alone in the history of this world, He speaks (surveying all that He has accomplished and as anticipating death and resurrection John 17:4) of what He has given them John 17:8; John 17:14; John 17:22; of what He is going to do for them John 17:2; John 17:19; of what He desires for them John 17:17; and above all, of that oneness of life and nature which was theirs John 17:23, which was seen for a time in practical expression in Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37. If this outward unity has broken down — He would in His love bring them right home and in such a way, that the world that had hated them on His account would yet see them in the same glory with Himself, and loved with the same love wherewith He was loved by the Father. All this is surpassed by the desire that what, as creatures, we can never share, we might behold — His own eternal glory in co-equality with the Father and the Spirit in all that constitutes Deity in its holy relationships, and all brought into manifestation in Him, a Man. The meetness, preciousness and mutuality of it floods the soul with speechless delight as, by the Spirit, we sit before Him. Note the connection with the THINGS that are mine in John 14:1-31 with what is here in John 17:1-26. "I do not demand concerning the world, but concerning those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine (and all that is mine is thine, and (all) that is thine mine,) and I am glorified in them." John 17:9-10. The mutuality of possession supplies the double motive for all being kept while in the world. Though His, they belong also to the Father and both His and the Father's glory are concerned in their being kept. No petition of His can be denied and so they shall be kept by the guardianship of the Holy Spirit — that blessed one who supplies us with the grand doxology of Jude 1:24-25. "But to Him that is able to keep you without stumbling, and to set (you) with exultation blameless before His glory, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, (be) glory, majesty, might, and authority, from before the whole age, and now, and to all the ages. Amen." New Trans. The holy domain of the Spirit is thus opened up before the heart, where all things are of God and where Christ is everything and in all. This is the Spirit's realm, these the Spirit's things, and all made known by Spirit chosen words. "But we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things which have been freely given to us of God: which things we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating spiritual things by spiritual means." 1 Corinthians 2:12-13. In this way the youngest and the most simple are led on and are at home with the oldest and the most deeply taught; all finding themselves at home in that which is heavenly and eternal, apart altogether from that which is earthly and natural, as belonging to a new creation in Christ Jesus. With this, the highest and the richest of all blessing in view, the great Apostle can only pray. "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father (of our Lord Jesus Christ) of whom every family in (the) heavens and on earth is named, in order that he may give you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man; that the Christ may dwell, through faith, in your hearts, being rooted and founded in love, in order that ye may be fully able to apprehend with all the saints what (is) the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge: that ye may be filled (even) to all the fulness of God." Ephesians 3:14-19. New Trans. A word of caution is called for. The corruption of the best is the worst corruption of all. In Christianity we have God's very best. The fatted calf; the best robe; the Holiest of all. These, in figurative speech show this. But the simple literary statements of Holy Scripture, concerning the

Father and the Son, and the counsels of God concerning the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son, and the coming of the Spirit — all show the depth and fulness of divine revelation and the wealth of blessing for man today. The House of God — the domain of the Spirit — and a new creation in Christ Jesus entered into by faith are clearly the marks of the Spirit's day. All this is beyond human nature, and the moment we touch the super-natural there is danger. Foreseeing this, the Lord has given us a written revelation in His word of Himself and of His doings. Thus the believer is protected from every hostile element by the word of God, the gift of the Spirit, and divinely bequeathed faith. By these the believer can be preserved from many rocks and shoals which have been the cause of many sad and melancholy wrecks. Unhappily with some, natural temperament has been allowed to play a part, but happy are they who, through communion with the Lord, have recourse to a self-knowledge which distrusts self and all human ability. Critical minds would level all down to man's thoughts, exclude the Spirit and dishonour God and thus the blessing is lost. This is the leaven that has been at work till the outer systems have become an inflated mass. Then again, there is the sensational or sentimental temperament, which is a danger in the other extreme. It is by these things that Mysticism, Pantheism and many other wild and fantastic theories have deluded their victims and many well-meaning souls have been deceived. Both classes may be seen in the Sadducees and the Pharisees or Rationalists and Ritualists. The former is the modernist of today, and the latter is seen in the resurrection by Satanic power of the ancient pagan mysteries, seen today in such things as Millennial Dawn; Christian Science; Spiritism, etc.

Well indeed it is for those who know the blessedness of being in Christ, a new creation, and enjoying the wealth, wisdom and knowledge of God by dwelling in Him. "And we have known and have believed the love which God has to us. God is love, and he that abides in love abides in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16. New Trans. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit (be) with you all."

Amen.

J. McBroom

05.10. Notes

Note A. The babes or young converts of 1 John 2:13; 1 John 2:18-27, are an example of instinct by the Holy Spirit. They have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. In this way they are fitted to meet the apostasy whether of Judaism or Christianity. The intuition of the Spirit is seen in Mary when she broke her box of ointment and anointed her Lord for His burial. The inspiration of the Spirit is seen in the recording of Holy Scriptures; in the addresses of the Apostles to their persecutors; and in their words of salvation to the multitudes. Revelation must be distinguished from inspiration though both are by the Holy Spirit. In the former we have what is positive and from God; in the latter the Spirit's record of history which includes both good and evil in recording the words and works of nature and the doings of evil men. Illumination is a beautiful word, describing how the Spirit enlightens our souls by His communications, so that the believer in His hands, becomes a reflex of Christ here among men. Luke 11:35-36, Php 2:15, 1 John 2:6.

Nature in its different departments of order and beauty is the work of the Holy Spirit. The seasons come and go; suitable food is provided for all; time for labour and for rest; strength and energy expended — rest and recuperation in return, but all in view of the moral realm, God, Christ and new creation and eternity. His control of the moral and physical realms in combination, is a theme for reflection and profound thanksgiving. In our natural conditions it is said, "In Him we live and move and have our being." He controls the heart, the circulation of the blood, the lungs to breathe and the brain to think. Here we pass from the physical to the mental and moral. Thought, with its flights in a fraction of a second to the ends of the earth and even to heaven or to hell, is a mysterious continuance. The Spirit is the power of our thoughts but we are responsible for reactions. Here we must distinguish carefully, for He who searches the depth of God, penetrates in us to the dividing of the soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. He is the power of speech but we must guard the tongue. One man may rob or kill another and he is indebted to the Holy Spirit for strength to do it but the deed is from a motive, springing from an evil source, which calls into action the pangs of a guilty conscience.

Note B. The Kingdom. The kingdom of God and of Heaven is a sphere on earth where the rule of God is maintained. It is not heaven nor in heaven as some have thought. Since it had to be set up here by the Spirit, it must be different from the rule of the heavens spoken of by the prophet, Daniel 4:26, which is true from the beginning of time. Romans 14:17 explains it. Negatively — it is not meat and drink, i.e., not concerned with temporal things. Positively — it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It is a sphere of good and blessing where grace reigns through righteousness in contrast with the world where sin reigns. Three things mark it. The Lordship of Christ; the will of God which is salvation, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Thus the whole Trinity is at work on behalf of guilty man. The saints are subjects of divine grace and fitted to stand as good soldiers of Jesus Christ in the conflict which rages with the fallen hosts who have their head-quarters in the heavenlies. They are also consistent with the testimony of God's grace which is the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God. In fidelity to their Lord, the rejected King, they stand for His inheritance during His absence and are provided with the whole armour of God, in a power

that is not carnal but mighty through God. It is true that this kingdom is spoken of as a lodging place for mere christian profession, and by the working of man's mind, to the exclusion of the Spirit, it has become an inflated mass. Luke 13:18-21. But it must be remembered that, though people get much of the light and beneficence of heaven in this land by a nominal profession of christianity, the real entrance into the kingdom of God is by being born again. John 3:5. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3. It began at Pentecost and goes on till all things are brought into subjection to God by the Man of His purpose; all enemies put down and even death itself destroyed. 1 Corinthians 15:2-28. The kingdom is confined to the Assembly during the reign of grace but when that company is summoned to be at home with the Lord, the testimony will pass into other hands by the resumption of divine dealings with Israel the covenant people. Judgments of various kinds both providential and governmental shall then be executed, in view of the kingdom being established on the earth in full regal display. Matthew 13:30; Matthew 13:41; Matthew 13:48. Matthew 25:31-46. The kingdom today is a bulwark for the House of God and all the treasures that are there — the precious things of heaven. As the warriors in Israel stood for the protection of the Tabernacle, the Priests, the Levites and the wives and children, so the church militant stands in the conflict for the maintenance of all that is of God. The place of the Holy Spirit in all this can be gathered from the place where the conflict is described and the way He is mentioned there twice. "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." Ephesians 6:17-19.

Note C. The House of God.

It is important to see that the House of God is presented in a twofold way. First, as God's own workmanship by which He prepares a dwelling place for Himself by the Spirit. Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 2:22, This is seen in such scriptures as Matthew 16:18. 1 Peter 2:5. "This is my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it." Psalms 132:14. Secondly, it is seen here in relation to man's responsibility and his workmanship where failure has come in. 1 Corinthians 3:9-17. This, like the wheat and tares of the kingdom, shows the way man has intruded into the holy things of God, ignoring the Spirit with the result that all is lowered and debased. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. 1 Corinthians 3:17. Judgment must begin at the House of God. 1 Peter 4:17. We are dealing however with the dwelling place of God as composed of all within the baptism of the Spirit, built of living stone, and instinct with life — the life of the family of God. It is protected by the kingdom as a bulwark and within its compartments or chambers are installed the precious things of heaven. We have looked at these heavenly treasures in Ephesians 2:1-22, Ephesians 3:1-21, as wrought into the souls of the saints by the Spirit, for the pleasure of God. The beauty and felicity of typical language greatly helps us here, for the Palace is not for man but for the LORD God. Note the men who had charge of the treasure and what the treasures are as combining together to express the assemblage of glories that combine and shine in the Person of Christ. There were chief men among the brethren. One was a wise counsellor, others were princes of the sanctuary and others again, princes of God. 1 Chronicles 24:5; 1 Chronicles 26:14. New Tran. Such men would be entrusted with the manifold mysteries of God. cf. 1 Corinthians 4:1. They had charge of the chambers or storehouses and all the treasures of the House of God.

These consisted of the vessels of service; the fine flour; the wine; the oil; the frankincense with the spices. Then above all this there were the dedicated things 1 Chronicles 27:27-30; 1 Chronicles 26:24-28. These dedicated things were the evidences of past victories, the spoils won in battle and set apart for God and the glory of His dwelling place. But if the pattern of heavenly things was set up in a panorama of splendour and glory, what shall be said of the things themselves that are set up in a glory that excels? The new order of things we are brought into today is heavenly and eternal. It is a faith system, and no one can read the Epistles of the New Testament intelligently without coming into contact with the princes of God to whom were entrusted the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices. Nor can one fail to see as taught of God, that these things bespeak the features of the Man, Christ Jesus, in a scene of undecaying and incorruptible splendour, permeated by the Spirit of God and where Christ is ALL and in ALL. And, by the Holy Spirit, these features are inwrought in the saints today.

Note D. The Body of Christ. The truth of the Body of Christ leads into the innermost treasures of the House and heart of God. Unlike the Kingdom and the House, it does not admit on the part of man either responsibility or break-down. Both the Kingdom and the House form part of the time ways of God and will go on in this world after the Church is taken to her home in heaven, but the mystery hid in God throughout the ages — fruit of God's eternal purpose — the Church, the Body of Christ, is unique and stands alone. It is of Himself in such a way as to be substantially and organically, Christ. "So also is the Christ." 1 Corinthians 12:12. New Tran. The Church as the Bride of Christ is a further thought and nothing inferior to Him can be united to Him. How then is this grand conception of our God brought into effect? and how can those who were far from God and living in sin be brought near, so near as to be part of Christ Himself? The answer is, that as Eve was taken out of Adam when he was in a deep sleep, so the Church is taken out of Christ in death by the Holy Spirit, who undertakes the subjective work of God. As we have seen, this blessed Person formed the body prepared for the Son in which He glorified God in Redemption. The same blessed Spirit also forms His Body the Church. This is done by forming in the believer a new moral being which, in the language of Scripture is "Christ formed in you." Galatians 4:19; Galatians 1:15-16; Galatians 2:20. From this is developed the truth that the Church is the Bride of Christ. It is not as members of His Body that we, His saints are united to Him. As such we are in Him, part of Himself. It was as taken out of Adam that Eve was united to him. So, to be united to Christ supposes the nuptial bond which unites the Bride to the Bridegroom as the fulness or complement of Him who fills all in all. Hence it is that when we come to Ephesians 5, where marriage is spoken of, the Spirit passes from what the Church is as His Body, to what she is as His bride — the object of His heart.

Note E. The Rainbow.

It is interesting and instructive to note the connection of the Rainbow with the rain drops, as seen in the waterworks of nature. It illustrates the various glories of Christ as reflected by His saints on earth. Jehovah said to His servant Job, "Hath the rain a father?" as if to show that the mighty God fathers even a drop of rain. Millions of tons of water rise from the oceans each day by evaporation and are held in vapours in the clouds, till nature's ruler has need for them to water His garden. These clouds carry it as vapour, till it is transformed to liquid again, to be poured out on the earth as from God's bottles in view of combining with the sunshine to bring forth bread for the sower.

The result is that countless myriads of drops of water are held in the clouds in such a way that when the sun shines forth, they become reflectors of His substance. It is not that one drop sparkles with one colour of the sun and other drops with other colours but that each drop becomes a microscopic picture of the whole so that all the colours of the great governing centre are reflected, that we who cannot look into the sun with the naked eye, may behold his beauty on the principle of reflection. Here then we have the beauty of moral design. As the saints share in the light of the Son of God holding the Head, His life circulates through their souls in such a way as to constitute them reflectors of His glory, so that the aggregate becomes like a beautiful Rainbow expression of the Heavenly One. See how this is put before us by the Spirit, in Colossians 3:1-25, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Colossians 3:12-13. The source of these seven graces is Christ and if we put them on, they are bound to make their presence seen and felt, so that like the rain drops reflecting the sun's colours, we are reflectors of Him. But such things might be more or less imitated by an amiable disposition, so it is added. "To all these (add) LOVE which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ preside in your hearts, to which also you have been called in one body, and be thankful." Colossians 3:14-15. New Trans. In this way the saints are brought into the Kingdom of the Son of God's Love, and decorated by the Spirit with inwrought tapestry of skilful work as forming the House of God; the beauties and graces of Christ so wrought in them by the Spirit, that they reflect Him here. Thus they are the actual possessors of the precious things of heaven. May the Lord Himself graciously help us to value them rightly, for His Name's Sake.

S. Some Glories of Christ

Some Glories of Christ As typified in the Ark of the Covenant and its Contents (Exodus 25:1-40).

James McBroom.

(Extracted from Scripture Truth, 1912, Vol. 4, page 246.) Our Lord Jesus Christ and His glories are of commanding interest to His saints, and the unceasing activities of the Holy Spirit are to keep Him before us, and, than Himself, nothing can be so precious to our souls that have learned His love through His atoning death. The Book of God has Him as its centre and object, but nowhere is the holy grandeur of His glory seen more strikingly than in the tabernacle and its furniture. Here, as it is said of the temple, "every whit utters glory" (Psalms 29:1-11). The divine and human, official and sacrificial, dispensational and moral co-mingle; everywhere we turn the manifold glories of Christ are disclosed. The Ark.

Exodus 25:1-40 gives the order of the house as in the mind of God, and the ark comes first. It is the vessel which with its appendages formed the throne of God in Israel, the place where His glory dwelt (Psalms 80:1). From the character of the instruction it is clear that what is immediately in view is the journey from the desert to Canaan. The rings and staves speak of its passage through the wilderness to its place in the purpose of God. From this point of view it connects with our wilderness journey and looks forward to the coming day of glory.

Every Israelite had an interest in the ark, for, carried on the shoulders of the Levites, it took the lead in the desert to find a place for the host of Israel, and as it passed into the bed of the Jordan the waters of the overflowing river rolled back, like the band of John 18:6 at the presence of Jehovah. "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back" (Psalms 114:5). It was thus that a way was made for God's people to pass over. The diligent reader of Scripture will follow its course from its being carried round Jericho to Shiloh (Joshua 18:1-28), and from there to the lamentable time when it was taken by the Philistines, then to Bethshemesh, the house of Abinadab in the hill country, and so on till it was eventually put into the place prepared for it by Solomon (2 Chronicles 35:3), and it will be noted that at all times the majesty of God surrounded it. Its history terminates in mystery, for we hear no more of it after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

Let us dwell a little on the beauties of the Lord as presented by the Spirit in this vessel, for it may indeed be said that it is the highest figure of Him in Holy Scripture. Here we are taught something of our Lord Jesus Christ as the One who binds together the moral universe of God, giving effect on the part of God to the counsels of the Godhead. A brief comparison of the three articles which were set in the outer apartment may help to make this clear. In these we learn how He associates His people with Himself in the maintenance of what is suitable to God in (1) worship, (2) true witness, and (3) administration, as seen in the golden altar, the lampstand, and the table. But inside stood the mystic vessel which gives us Christ absolutely alone in the majesty of His being as the sustainer of all the glory of God. In the Gospels, which may answer to the inner apartment,

we have that which is true in Him, but in the Epistles, which give the outer, we have "that which is true in Him and in you." In the former He, "the corn of wheat," stands alone; in the latter, through His glorious redemption, others are brought into blessing for God's glory, and while ever remaining alone in His glory as God, He is also the Firstborn among many brethren. In the gold and wood the adoring heart sees Deity and humanity. "The Word became flesh." The distance between God and man was bridged by incarnation, though for its complete removal the cross had to come in. God and man are brought together; in One who, being God, could unfold all the deep perfections of His love, while maintaining the claims of His throne, and as perfect man could glorify God in the place of man's responsibility and bruise the serpent's head. With holy reverence we may behold this divine reality. Not a vision, not a phantom, not an apparition, but "Jesus Christ come in flesh" (1 John 4:2-3). The mystery of mysteries! The miracle of all miracles! "God manifest in flesh." Can we be surprised at anything in the presence of this; before it holy angels bow, rendering their homage and praise; they are His obedient servants, whether in the day of His sojourn here or in His ascended glory now. But there is reserved for man as redeemed by Him a more exalted note of praise than even they can raise, "the high praises of God" (Psalms 149:1-9). The Tables of Stone.

There were three things in the ark (Hebrews 9:4): the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant. The latter only are in view in our chapter (Exodus 25:1-40). Rich and precious as is the instruction connected with the two former things, yet we must note that all the glory of the throne is based upon the tables of the covenant. They spoke of Christ; for all that constitutes the glory of that throne — the being, nature, and character of God, the eternal unchanging principles of His will, as expressed in the tables of stone, find their true and proper resting-place and expression in Christ. In Psalms 40:1-17 the Lord comes into view saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea Thy law is within My heart." This is the true answer to the tables of stone in the ark. And when we remember that these same tables are spoken of in 2 Corinthians 3:1-18 as a ministration of death we see the infinite moral distance that lay between Christ as man and the whole human race. That which was to man, even under divine culture, a ministration of death, was in Him the delight of His heart and the very sustenance of His being. But the divine thought was to possess the heart of man, and the beautiful moral connection between Christ and His people is shown in Hebrews 10:1-39. There the Apostle speaks of the "will of God," in regard to the death of Christ, and in regard to our sanctification. "By the which will we are sanctified," the end in view being, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Hebrews 10:7; Hebrews 10:9-10; Hebrews 10:16). God will have men who in heart and mind shall delight in the law of the Lord. They shall take character from Christ. (See also 2 Corinthians 3:3, where instead of the law it is Christ written in the heart, and also Romans 8:4) The Pot of Manna.

Now the question arises: What special importance attaches to the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that they should also have a place in the ark? The manna was Israel's food, "spiritual food" from heaven, typical of the heavenly grace given of God to sustain His people in their pilgrimage through this wilderness world. It speaks of the life of the Man Christ Jesus. We may fail to appreciate the wonderful grace of that pathway wherein was the perfect combination and exhibition of "every beautiful grace," yet blessed it is to see that God has decreed that it should be treasured up before Him for ever. Psalms 16, given by the Spirit of Christ in David, shows the dependence, obedience, and devotedness of that path, and as it cannot be confined to the days of

His ministry it shows the whole course covering the eighteen hidden years not mentioned in the Gospels. Finding His little band of followers among the poor of the people, the subject of angelic ministry, dependent on a poor and sinful woman for a drink. "Foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests," but He, "the Son of Man, had nowhere to lay His head." Everything bespoke His complete dependence. And if we look for a moment at the other side of His life as brought out by the need of others: He commanded the resources of creation, multiplied the bread to feed His rejectors, readjusted the distorted conditions of humanity so that disease in every variety was displaced.

Add to this that, in His teaching, not only was the whole of the Scriptures open before Him as their Author, but Nature also unfolded to Him her treasures. The various kingdoms of nature contributed (Matthew 13:1-58 and Luke 12:1-59), the family also (Luke 15:1-32) and the unseen world (Luke 16:1-31). All this, though it may carry us beyond the thought of manna, furnishes an answer to the question Why was it in the ark. A true-living Man, stamping His own heavenly character on all, meets us at every turn, and though He is in changed circumstances, still He remains in His own eternal sameness, and in Him the witness of those thirty-three years shall be perpetuated through all eternity. The hidden manna of Revelation 1:17 is doubtless an allusion to Christ in this way, and is connected with reward, confidence, and communion.

Aaron's Rod.

Aaron's rod recalls a crisis in the history of the people which necessitated a divine intervention. "Men of renown envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord." They refused in type the priesthood and royalty of Christ and brought on themselves the judgment of God. In the laying-up of the rods and the budding of Aaron's the truth of resurrection as the turning point of all God's ways comes to light. This may account for its being in the ark. It is by resurrection that Christ is marked out Son of God with power, and the priesthood which before stood on expiation, is now established on resurrection, and we learn that God's new creation rests not merely on the blood of Christ but on His glorious resurrection as the firstfruits for God. The Mercy Seat. The ark with its contents was covered by the mercy seat which formed a lid, and with it, all one piece, was the cherubim of beaten work called the "cherubim of glory" between which and above the mercy seat sat the cloud of glory, symbol of Jehovah's presence. Everything spoke of glory having for its basis the testimony contained inside the ark. The point in this chapter is evidently the glory of Christ and not the atonement, for this latter we have to go to Leviticus 16, where the blood is put upon the mercy seat. Here it is the meeting place. "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee." "God was in Christ . . . reconciling the world to Himself," putting Himself in touch with man in Him. What a comment on the Gospels is Hebrews 1 "God . . . spoken in Son." In Him we get the revelation of God. That which no prophet knew of He speaks out. Being in heaven, He could speak of heavenly things.

Nowhere could anything be found to surpass what He unfolds in the Gospel of John (though this may go beyond the type we are considering). He calls His disciples friends in the intimacy of divine love, and makes known the divine communications to them (John 15:1-27). But John 17:1-26 exceeds all, for there He draws aside the veil and show us what engaged the Father and the Son in the eternal past, then looks ahead and shows the coming display of His own glory, and His people loved by the Father in the same circle of love with Himself. All this anticipates the cross,

and just as the mercy seat of Exodus 25:1-40 — place of divine communication — had in view the blood-sprinkled mercy seat of Leviticus 16:1-34 — place of atonement — so all the heavenly revelations of love and glory which came out during the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ had in view the cross and new creation. Romans 3:1-31 is the answer to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, a risen Saviour has gone in in the rights of redemption, and the eye of faith sees Him even now as the One who bears the glory (Zechariah 6:13). "A Lamb as it had been slain." Wondrous thought! The Saviour, bearing the marks of the conflict is in the centre of the glory. Nor is it in the mercy seat alone that the distinction between incarnation and redemption is seen, it may be traced also in the cherubim. The Veil. From Exodus 26:31 we learn that in the holy veil there were cherubim, and the Spirit of God in Hebrews 10:20 speaks of this veil as "His flesh" — thus signifying that all that these wondrous mystic figures represent was set forth in the earth life of the Lord Jesus. The cherubim stood in relation to the tables of testimony which formed the basis of God's direct government in Israel, and through them to all the earth. They speak of the activities of the throne, as seen in Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4, where the four heads of creation set forth the intelligence, power, stability, and rapidity of the judgment of the throne, or rather of Him who sits thereon. All this awe-inspiring grandeur which shines in the infinite God — set before us here in figures to suit our creature capacity — has been set forth in grace in the Man Christ Jesus.

We may note briefly a few instances of this coming out in the Gospels.

INTELLIGENCE. "Before Philip called thee . . . I saw thee." "But Jesus . . . knew what was in man." "We speak that we do know." (John 1:48; John 2:24-25; John 3:11. Also 1 Chronicles 28:9; Jeremiah 3:24; Revelation 5:6.)

POWER and MAJESTY as seen in the lion comes out both in the moral and material spheres. "Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him." "And He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." "Whom seek ye? . . . they went backward, and fell to the ground." "And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. . . and there was a great calm." (Mark 1:25; John 11:43; John 18:4-6; Mark 4:39; Isaiah 40:28.)

STABILITY. It is in Mark we have the perfect Servant, working long after sunset and away in the morning before daybreak to a solitary place to pray. "He set His face to go to Jerusalem." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day." (Mark 1:32-35; Luke 9:51; John 9:4.)

RAPIDITY OF JUDGMENT is seen in the cleansing of the temple and the cursing of the fig tree (Matthew 21:12-13; Matthew 21:19-20).

All this and much more, which the diligent may trace out, comes out in the life of our Lord here; in Him we see the glory of the throne shine out. "Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.... Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."

S. The Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement Leviticus 16:1-34

James McBroom.

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It is important to take account of the place this precious chapter has in the Book of Leviticus; whether we regard it historically in its bearing on the congregation of Israel, in covenant relationship with Jehovah, or in its typical character as shadowing forth the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God had delivered Israel from their enemies and brought them to Himself; He had come down to dwell among them in the tent which Moses had reared up according to His directions. In His mercy He had established a system of sacrifice whereby the uncleanness and transgressions of the people might be met provisionally, and in a way consistent with His holiness, so that He might dwell among them. The uncleanness, transgressions, and sins of the people made blood-shedding and death a necessity (Leviticus 16:16). Sins and transgressions were met by the offerings and their laws detailed in Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, and in Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33 instruction is given in regard to the uncleanness of the flesh. Both are in view in Leviticus 16:1-34.

Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20 give the history of that which was the immediate occasion for the ordinance of the day of Atonement: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me" (Leviticus 10:1-3). But it was impossible that God, who is love, and whose love is the mightiest force in the universe, could be limited to one class of men to the exclusion of the rest of mankind; hence, while dealing with Israel in relation to the circumstances of the moment, He gives, in His matchless wisdom, a figurative representation of how the whole question of man's relationship with God would be taken up and settled in Christ in divine righteousness, for His own eternal satisfaction, and the good and blessing of men. The great theme of the chapter is Christ and His work, for it is true, here as elsewhere, that "Christ is the end of the law," the spirit and substance of it all is found in Him. What He is sacrificially in all His peerless excellence comes first and gives the foundation for all else. But two things claim our attention. First, Aaron's garments, then the distinction between the priestly family and congregation. The linen garments mean holiness and purity. It is no question here of outward display; all these garments set forth in figure what Christ is as come to take up the question of sin, all in Him is in perfect moral accord with the purity and holiness of the throne of God; and although we know Him now in the garments of glory and beauty (see Exodus 28:1-43), "crowned with glory and honour," yet this could only be as the result of what is prefigured in the holy linen garments and the work connected therewith. The Holy Ghost unfolds these things for us in Christ in Hebrews 9:1-28. We see Him there wearing the holy linen garments, as the antitype of Aaron in the solemn work of atonement (Hebrews 9:11-12).

Then in Hebrews 9:24 we see Him as He now appears in the presence of God for us. These words clearly indicate the robes of glory and beauty, as it was in these that the names of the people were set. The distinction between the priestly family and the nation is doubtless intended to show the distinction between the heavenly saints and the earthly saints, the former, the church composed of His brethren (Hebrews 2:11-12), are associated with Christ in the sanctuary and have boldness to enter the holiest, whither He has entered, while the earthly company, Israel, await His coming out (Hebrews 9:28). In the purpose of God, those who form the church are made holy and without blame before Him in love and in relation to Christ, are brought into the distinctive relationship of His body and His bride, and are now being educated for the day of display (John 16:14-15; Ephesians 3:14-21). In the sacrificial work the sin-offering came first (Leviticus 16:11-14). After it was slain the blood was taken into the holiest and sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat. The priest could only enter the holiest enveloped in a cloud of incense, which was symbolic of the fragrance of Christ. Without this he would have died, for no flesh could stand there. The glory of God is secured for Him in His creation in the blood of Christ as sin-offering. The blood of the burnt-offering was not to be taken in. We have here, in figure, a twofold declaration of the truth that God has carried out His own sentence upon man. "For the life of the flesh is in blood," and the blood sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat was witness that life had been given up. The judgment of God has fallen vicariously upon Christ, and if the life is gone the man whose life it was goes too. The only One who ever lived upon the earth who had not forfeited His life and upon whom death had no claim has died, and in that death God has carried out His own judgment, for His own glory, in the removal by judgment of sinful man, so that he can not again have any standing before Him for ever. In the case of the animal whose blood was carried in, the carcass was taken out, "without the camp," and burned (Leviticus 16:11-15 and Leviticus 16:27; Hebrews 13:11-12). In this we have the truth, clearly prefigured that sinful man, in whichever way he may be viewed — learned or ignorant, rich or poor — has come under the consuming judgment of God in the death of Christ, who alone could sustain that judgment. There was also on the part of man that which made death a moral necessity. The creature in which God's highest thoughts were centred lived in enmity (Romans 8:7), and it was impossible for Christ to connect Himself with man in such a condition. Clearly "no act of power could e'er atone." But Christ came in the purpose of God to die that the confusion might be removed, consistent with the being of God, and that in His resurrection a new creation might be brought into being where no disorder can come.

We may be conscious that this cuts right across all the lofty dreams of poor fallen man, but being what he is, a lost sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, nothing else is possible. But many believers while trusting in Christ have not learnt the truth of the cross as the immovable basis of divine righteousness from which all blessing flows, and they do not see that it introduces into a new order of life on the other side of death with relationships and affections which all centre in Christ our risen Head. To refuse this side of the truth is to slight God's most cherished thoughts and works in the attempt to connect Christianity with man and his world instead of with the risen Christ.

There is that in the work of Christ and His adorable Person which is beyond description. Human conception and language are of necessity limited; hence, no type can fully show the truth. Christ is before us in the animals of sacrifice, and also in Aaron and his going in to accomplish the work, and still most of all He is seen in the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat — the living, triumphant Saviour in glory — "redemption which is in Christ Jesus." But mark the contrast: "For it is not possible that

the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God." Aaron went in to accomplish the work, which in its bearing was efficacious for ONE YEAR, But at the cross the work was accomplished, and the stamp of divine approval put upon it, and His going in is the result of having obtained eternal redemption. In the case of the people, though the act of atonement was identical with that of the priestly house, yet there are certain differences which are of interest. The goat, though of a lower order of sacrifice, is duplicated. On one upon which the Lord's lot fell is connected the great truth of propitiation; the other, called the scapegoat, was for the people, and sets before us substitution.

These blessed truths — so largely developed in the New Testament, in which Christ has glorified God in regard to sin, and also borne away the sins of the believer — have often been dwelt upon. But there is a hint here by the Spirit of God as to the difference between the church and Israel which may yield profit. As already noted, the bullock is the highest order of sacrifice and indicates the fullest measure of communion with the death of Christ on the part of those who form the assembly. This truth, involving the counsels of God in regard to the heavens and the earth, shows us that the divine intention is that the church should apprehend the cross in its relation to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit; to men, angels, and devils, to the universe at large; to apprehend that wondrous, amazing scene, where we get the full moral display of God in a way creation never could display Him, where the great problem of the universe is solved — the question of good and evil — to the everlasting glory of God. What wondrous thoughts fill our hearts as in silent adoration we gaze on that cross!

Though this may show the moral distinction between the two, there is also a dispensational touch of great beauty in the ways of our God. The place of association and nearness peculiar to the church is known and enjoyed by faith during the moment of the long-suffering of God with the world. Not so with the earthly company; for when He — the true Aaron — comes out, it is then the scapegoat aspect is seen: sin is taken away and they are brought into the enjoyment of forgiveness and righteousness in virtue of that wondrous work so long before accomplished at the cross. This is the time of which prophets have spoken and psalmist has sung, when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me . . . said the Lord," and the time when Jehovah says "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel" (Jeremiah 31:34; Hosea 2:21-22; Psalms 96:1-13, Psalms 97:1-12, Psalms 98:1-9, Psalms 99:1-9, Psalms 100:1-5). The work of propitiation and cleansing being past, Aaron put off the holy linen garments and washed his flesh in water, and proceeded to offer the burnt-offering for himself and the burnt-offering for the people, significant of the divine acceptance of the work of that day. This was a sweet savour as it was burnt on the altar, and with it the fat of the sin-offering, whose carcass had been burned without the camp, there was signified the complete identification of the two, and that He who "was made sin" is, in the internal excellencies of His being, the same One who is acceptable to God as a sweet-smelling savour (Ephesians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21). It may be remarked that though there are different families in the divine order of blessing all are brought into supreme happiness for the glory and praise of God. Then the praises of the Lamb shall vibrate through the vast extent of creation "unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;" and then shall He "see of the travail of His soul and shall be

satisfied."

"Oh 'tis His due — that worthy One Tastes now the fruit of love's blest ways;

Eternal is His joy in us, Eternal is our song of praise."

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