

THE  
GOLDEN LAMP;

OR,

Truth in Love

FOR

THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

---

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME SHALL NOT WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT SHALL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE."

*John viii. 12.*

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"Now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

*Ephesians v. 8.*

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—*Matthew v. 16.*

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# THE GOLDEN LAMP.

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## "THE DAY APPROACHING."

THE past year has been one of war and famine, of pestilence and earthquake, of perplexity of nations. All these things have been before, and are but the beginning of those birth-pangs of creation which, under God's mighty working, will issue in a new order of things; namely, an earth "wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Every groan of sorrow, and every cry of pain, sends up the petition, "Thy kingdom come." A groaning world, incurably diseased, earnestly waits "for the manifestation of the sons of God." Creation knows not the meaning of its groans; but the child of faith does. It knows not the remedy; but *we* know that the corruption and bondage in which Satan holds it shall pass away, and it shall come forth into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God.

In the meanwhile, we "ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit . . . groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." *Faith* looks back on a past salvation; but *hope* waits for its still future fulness. To the outward eye the coming glory is still hidden; yet we can say with the apostle, we "see the day approaching."

Amid the darkness and silence of the night, we cry to

our heavenly Seer, "Watchman, what of the night? How far off is the close of this dark night of sin and sorrow?" And the answer, as of old, is heard in Dumah (which signifies *silence*): "The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

There is a morning about to dawn, a morning without clouds, when "the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (*i.e.* its beams); a morning that shall dawn upon this world, such as has never dawned upon it, when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold."

But there is a night coming, a night that will make every other night seem as light, a night which is characterized by the second death, which is the lake of fire. Hence the solemn appeal to the enquirer, "Return, come." "Return unto Me," says God: "return, for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." "Come," says the Son of God, "come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

As waiting saints, we "see the day approaching," and with another year behind us we can still more gladly say, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." We are a year's march nearer home. We are nearer our Saviour's immediate presence; nearer the city of our God; nearer the general assembly and church of the first-born ones enrolled in heaven; nearer the Father and His throne.

But, alas! it is not so to all; and we cannot pass on without a word to any dear unsaved soul whose eyes may rest on these pages. We would ask you the solemn question, "In your case, *nearer what?*" God has not withholden the answer, and we dare not. Nearer the "devouring fire," and the "everlasting burnings" (Isa. xxxiii. 14); nearer the place "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 44); nearer "the lake which burneth

with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. xxi. 8.) Oh, may you give heed to the Lord's earnest entreaty, "Return, come!"

The apostle's words to us who hail the approaching day are these: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. x. 24, 25.)

*"As ye see."* What a word to stir up our hearts to vigilance and watchfulness! How many of the Lord's people are spiritually asleep, and unprepared for the voice of the archangel and the trump of God! Are not our Lord's words painfully true, "While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept"?—slumbering, alas! as Jonah in the hold of the vessel, when he fled from the presence of the Lord. Disobedience will always lead to slumbering of soul; and then the very world can reprove a disobedient prophet.

We are called to be on our watch-tower, like Habakkuk, and so to see the heavenly vision as to "make it plain" to others. Alas that the vision is so little understood by God's witnesses, and therefore such an uncertain sound meets the ear alike of the Church and of the world!

The day is approaching; and we see it to be so, as we watch the red and lowering sky of morning. (Matt. xvi. 3.) There are lurid streaks in the horizon which foretell the coming storm; but the Bible alone teaches us to read our spiritual barometer aright. Let us then remember the admonition to "exhort one another," that so, with girded loins, and lights burning, we be all found truly waiting for our Lord, longing to hear the summons that will call us away from the storm and from the tempest.

The day is approaching; "for the day of the Lord

cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." (Joel ii. 1, 2, 10.) It is a day when false prophets are saying, "Peace; and there is no peace;" for peace can only be found in God; and false prophets, in the Church and in the world, are building up the wall of this world's prosperity with untempered mortar. (Ezek. xiii. 13.)

Again, we are not only to exhort one another, but we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Thus we are a witness to the world that killed the Prince of life, that He is coming again; for as we eat and drink together at our memorial feast, we show forth "the Lord's death until He come." And then will He "destroy those murderers, and burn up their city." (Matt. xxii. 7.) Our worship, rightly understood, is a witness against the world, as well as a season of refreshment for ourselves.

Let us also "provoke one another unto love and to good works"—to love, *first*, among ourselves, and then love to the world, whom God so loved "that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This latter is not the love of fellowship, but a holy, tender compassion, that can weep with Christ over a doomed world, and with Him go forth to seek and to save the lost.

It was thus Paul laboured on among Jew and Gentile, in response to the love of Him, who loved him as a poor, blind, and persecuting Pharisee; and that love enabled him to "endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." (2 Tim. ii. 10.)

Freely we have received, and freely we are to give; and though the world has no claim on us, and may only return evil for our good, yet God has infinite claims on us, and we are called to discharge our debts to God in the form of

love and service to man. Hence the church is God's ambassador to man, sent to call him to repentance, as Jonah was sent to Nineveh.

May the precious time of another year be better re-deemed by us; and may our love and zeal be more manifest, both in the narrower sphere of the flock of God, and also in the wider field of evangelistic labour in the world! Like our Master, let us seek to go about doing good, and healing all who are "oppressed of the devil."

Oh to realize more the oppressions of Satan over lost, ruined sinners on the road to hell and to see the enemy at the back of all the hard words and the unkind actions of those who resist the counsel of God against themselves! If we better understood this we should often detect behind the poor sinner's words the demon's cry, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God?" (Mark v. 7) and should perceive the working of that unclean spirit which, even though his name be Legion, God can exorcise, and He alone.

"The coals of love are coals of fire, the very flame of Jehovah" (as Cant. viii. 6 should be read). Fellow-Christians, let us ponder what this flame of Jehovah's love is. What has it done for us? It loved us when enemies, it loves us now amidst all our lack of love and zeal, and will love us for evermore! Surely many waters have not quenched it, even though all the waters and billows of God went over it; nor could the floods of our sins and transgressions drown it. He loves us, so let us love and "hold fast the confession of the *hope* without wavering; for He is faithful that promised." Let us give heed to the loving invitation to "draw near;" and thus learning more of the heart of our High Priest, we shall prove the fulness of His grace to meet the need of the year upon which we have entered.

H. G.

“OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM.”

1 THESS. iv. 16-18; EPHES. v. 27.

’Twas silence all ! Amazement stopped my breath !  
The floating clouds, converging to a point,  
From the far distance swiftly hastening near,  
Approach the presence of Almighty God !  
Cloud after cloud draws nigh.

As when the starry nebulae,  
Viewed by the crystal lens, resolve to suns,  
So these bright clouds, made brighter still  
By nearer vision, radiant suns disclose,  
More glorious far than the bright orb of day :  
A cloud of suns.

Advancing still, the human form appears  
On each. What can this be ? The human form  
In heaven ! and in the presence of heart-searching  
God !

’Tis even so. Defilement washed away ;  
All sin forgiven. The Holy Lamb of God  
Has borne their punishment. Their blood-washed robes  
Retain no stain. And now they shine  
In purest brilliancy before the throne.

In haste they fall before the feet of Him  
Who gave His life for theirs ; whom, yet unseen,  
They loved.

His voice of mercy long was heard below  
Beseeching them to come. They came at His command.  
And now again His glorious voice was heard,  
Not as of old, in lowly self-abasement,  
But in Imperial Majesty. He spoke :  
The graves gave up their dead ; the sea its prey.  
The living ones, with them, put on their present form  
At His command. Creative power shone out  
Emancipated from decay. Immortal thus  
They shine—the living monuments  
Of wisdom, power, and love unlimited.

With one accord

The vast assemblage of the radiant ones  
Fell low before His feet, prostrate there  
In silent adoration ; every heart entranced  
With gratitude and love. Each bosom swells with wonder  
That one so vile should find reception there  
By Him who knows its history.

Each cloud as it arises

Bends lowly down.

Then all arise :

With one concurring voice, attuned in harmony,  
All shout His praise.

"Worthy the Lamb ! for us who died,  
Who in Thy life-blood washed our sins away ;  
Redeeming us from woes unutterable,  
From sin, from Satan's power, from death, from earth ;  
Hast made us live and reign with Thee  
As kings and priests to God—our Father-God."

Exulting thus they stand

In joyous ecstasy. His fervid smile of love  
Through Royal Majesty beams forth. He speaks,  
"Beloved of my heart ! you now behold  
The day of which I told you. I came,  
And brought you here. I now enjoy  
The costly travail of my soul, so long delayed.  
I now possess the precious recompense  
For which I paid so heavily—my Bride !  
Come then, beloved ones ! rejoice with me ;  
For I am yours, and you are mine  
For all eternity. My Father waits  
For us. He who gave you all to me,  
And me to you, our loving Father-God,  
Longs to behold you, and to share our joy.  
His fond paternal heart, so deeply moved,  
Yearns for His sons and daughters.  
Come all to Him, from whom the whole proceeds,  
To whom the praise is due. Haste we to Him."

R. N.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

FROM NOTES OF ADDRESSES BY T. NEWBERRY.

### THE DIVINE MODEL.

THE time and the occasion when God gave instructions to Moses to make Him a tabernacle was when he had ascended up into the mount to meet with God. (See Exodus xxiv.) Through the teachings and revealings of the Spirit, a heavenly pattern was shown to Moses, accompanied by instructions to make an earthly model according to it. "And look," said Jehovah, "that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." (Exod. xxv. 40. See also Heb. viii. 5; ix. 23.)

In Heb. viii. 2, Christ is styled "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." The earthly tabernacle was a counterpart of the heavenly. It is this that gives the subject its divine interest.

In writing the description of the tabernacle, Moses was guided by the Holy Spirit; thus it was not simply the writing of Moses, but the inspired writing or word of God. We are dependent on Moses for the right words, but on the Spirit of God for the proper understanding of the words which Moses wrote. We must come into the fully-realized presence of God, and there get our souls enriched according to the word spoken by Solomon, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." (Prov. xxiii. 23. See also Isa. lv. 1; Rev. iii. 18.) If a person goes to make purchases, he must be prepared to pay accordingly. So with the truth of God. If we would make it our own, we must be prepared to pay the price. And that price is sometimes a



very high one; our own wills, ideas, party feelings, and prejudices must be surrendered.

God not only spoke by His Spirit to Moses, but He also speaks to us through the Scriptures, if we in spirit are on the mount with God. How wondrously condescending was it of God to take Moses into His confidence! And He has given unto us His Spirit, so that we may have fellowship, through the Scriptures, both with Himself and with Moses in what was then revealed to him. God's purpose in revealing His tabernacle to Moses was not for himself alone, but that he might communicate it to the children of Israel. That which is heard in the ear in the closet is to be proclaimed upon the house-top. (Luke xii. 3.) "Hear the word at My mouth," says God, "and give them warning from Me." (Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7.) *True ministry* is receiving the mind of God from Himself direct, and then communicating it to others in His name.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take My offering." (Exod. xxv. 2.)

*"My offering."* There were several different kinds of offerings; as the wave-offering, the heave-offering, the approach-offering, the peace-offering, the trespass-offering, &c. The offering mentioned here is a *heave-offering* (as rendered in the margin): "Take for Me a *heave-offering*."

A *wave-offering* was an offering made to pass to and fro before God. (See Exod. xxix. 24.) We see something of the meaning of the wave-offering in the following passages: "Jotham became mighty, because he prepared [or established] his ways *before* Jehovah his God." (2 Chron. xxvii. 6.) "Commit thy way *unto* Jehovah," (Ps. xxxvii. 5)

A *heave-offering* refers to that which is brought *for* God, and offered *up to* Him. When Ananias and Sapphira his wife sold a possession, and kept back part of the price

(Acts v.), that was not a *heave-offering*. It was not offered from the heart to God, but was done simply for a name.

The *heave-offering* is beautifully illustrated by the following incident, which occurred in America some few years since. At a missionary meeting, when the customary collection was being made, a poor little boy, who had already put into the plate the small contribution he had to give, was observed looking into the plate very sorrowfully; and on being asked the reason, and whether he wished his money back again, he replied, "I've been thinking I should just like to put myself altogether on the plate." This was a real *heave-offering*—giving himself voluntarily and willingly. "God loveth a *cheerful* giver." (2 Cor. ix. 7; Exod. xxxv. 5; Rom. xii. 8.)

God does not need to become a beggar by asking the rich for their paltry money. It is the *heart* God wants. He says, "Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." (Ps. l. 10.) What He wants is a *heave-offering*. God, so to speak, puts His plate *very high*; those short of stature spiritually cannot reach it. It is only that which comes from the bottom of our hearts that goes into God's treasury-box; not that from the pocket only. God gives us opportunities of proving our heart's wealth. Some hearts are miserably poor—so poor that, after spending what little love they have upon themselves, they have nothing left for God.

God specifies the offerings which He is willing to accept, and which suit His purposes and plans. Those specified in our chapter (v. 3) do not commence with *shittim-wood*, but with *gold*.

In order to understand the types of the tabernacle, we must consider its materials here enumerated as supplying us with a kind of alphabet, by which to learn the spiritual meaning of this part of God's word. Do we want to read

Hebrew, we must of necessity first learn the Hebrew alphabet; and equally so with the types. Many mistakes are made for want of a correct acquaintance with the typical alphabet; and hence to many Christians the types are either a dead letter or an unknown tongue.

Another time we will consider the letters of this alphabet.

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## HOUSES WITHOUT HANDS.

OF these there are at least *five* in Scripture; and since they are all of God's own building, and His free gift to us, we may truly call them "houses without hands." In earthly matters, what is called "house property" is proverbially a burdensome and troublesome form of wealth. A late millionaire of this world "rose up early and sat up late," taking care of and repairing the seven hundred mansions in New York of which he was landlord; such was his laborious care of them. The houses which God builds bring no such cares, but ensure the present and eternal joy and blessing of those who possess and dwell in them.

### I. THE HOUSE OF SAVING MERCY.

Jacob at Bethel tells us of this. Waking from the dream so graciously given him (comp. Job xxxiii. 14-16), he says, "Surely Jehovah is in this place; and I knew it not." "How dreadful (*i.e.* solemn) is this place! this is none other but *the house of God*, and this is the gate of heaven." Jacob had lifted neither hand nor tool to build a house for himself. All that his guilty hands and breath had lately done was to call himself Esau, and put a hairy covering on his smooth skin. There was neither floor, nor walls, nor roof of any visible house at all; but God had that very night revealed Himself to Jacob, and said, "Behold, *I am with thee*, and will keep thee in all places

whither thou goest. . . . *I will not leave thee*, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

In these words there was everything that sinful and helpless Jacob could need to make him a blessed house; all God's riches of grace, and in the form just suited to his need, and all of it *his* for life. Thus the "God of all grace" became Jacob's refuge from Esau, and also his blessed house of abode and supply. Well might Jacob say, "This is the house of God, and the *gate* of heaven."

This "house of saving mercy" has been the experience of every child of God in some form or other. Noah in the ark; the Israelite in the passover-house; Rahab within the scarlet line; and, in richer and plainer New Testament words, "the Church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. i. 1.)

## II. THE HOUSE OF COMMUNION WITH THE SAVIOUR.

This we find in Sol. Song i. 16, 17; ii. 4: "Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green. The beams of our *house* are cedar, and our rafters of fir. . . . He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love." Here the bride is finding all her enjoyment in the Bridegroom, and in His love to her. As at Bethel, there is neither floor, nor walls, nor roof of man's hands to be seen; but she is happy in His love, and sits down under His shadow with great delight.

Nor was this house of communion only *lent* her; the Bridegroom's grace and love had *given* it to her for her enjoyment and blessing as long and as fully as she pleased to abide in it; for chap. ii. 7 should be, "Stir not up, nor awake my love" (*i.e.* rob her not of her house of communion) "until *she* please." How like to John xiv. 23: "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our ABODE with him." This house of communion should be the personal and habitual experience of each one of us.

## III. "THE HOUSE OF GOD: THE CHURCH."

While we thus quote Solomon's Song for the *individual* blessing of each believer, the bride there named represents the Church of God as a whole; and this is another of the "houses without hands." The moment we believed in Christ "we were also baptized by one Spirit into one body," and had to learn how to behave ourselves "*in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God.*"

Oh the importance and value of learning that this "house of God" is of no human forming! As Jesus said, "I will build my Church." And again, Eph. ii.: "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Again: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, . . . ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house." (1 Peter ii. 5.) Inactivity and slumbering is our danger as respects the "house of communion," causing us to lose its joys; but it is a self-willed and self-pleasing activity which so soon and so often shows that we have forgotten how to "behave" ourselves in the church as "the house of God."

We cannot accept anything of man's forming or arranging, whether national or any other kind, as the house of God. The materials of the Church of God are God's living stones, and these stones can only be builded *together* by God's word and by His Spirit. Into such a fellowship, however small in numbers, let us enter with all joy and freedom as into a *house* given us by God to dwell in; but also with all the reverence and obedience to God's voice and will which becomes those who neither formed it, nor entered it by their works, but by His mercy in Christ.

The two pillars, "Jachin and Boaz," stood at the *entrance* of Solomon's temple (see 1 Kings vii. 21), apparently to inspire reverence, and to teach worship to those who entered. How much more should God's mighty workman-

ship of His Church in Christ Jesus cause us to "take off our shoes" and willingly "spend and be spent" in that church for love's sake to Him who has so loved both it and us!

#### IV. OUR HOUSE WHICH IS FROM HEAVEN.

The coming glory also tells of houses without hands. The first of these is *the resurrection body—the body glorious*. Paul tells us of it. (2 Cor. v. 1–10.) Filled with joy in his present ministry of the glorious gospel, he tells us this blessed service was fast wearing out his mortal body; the outward man was perishing, though the inward man—his happy soul—was being renewed day by day. But he willingly bore this outward wasting because of a better body that would soon be his in resurrection.

His present body was but a "house of tabernacle;" *i.e.* a tent, soon to be "dissolved." His resurrection body would be a "building of God, . . . eternal in the heavens." His present body was an "earthly" house; his resurrection body would be a "house not made with *hands*." In his present body he was necessarily "absent from the Lord;" in his resurrection body he would be instantly and for ever "present with the Lord." Hence his longing for the "mortality" of the one to be "swallowed up by the (resurrection) life" of the other, at Jesus' mighty coming again. The present mortal flesh of the believer is linked with his coming resurrection body; therefore the apostle sought that his life in the one should be such, that all its words and deeds might reappear and be rewarded in the other at the glorious morning of the resurrection.

#### V. THE FATHER'S HOUSE,

And its riches for us. As Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a *place* for you. . . . That WHERE I am there ye may be also." Not only shall we have glorious bodies, but we shall share

with Him the PLACE which He has gone to prepare—the marriage abode of Christ and His Church. Verily this also is a “house without hands,” “a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” And neither in that blessed moment, when we pass through its pearly gates,

“Washed in the blood of the Lamb;”

nor,

“When we’ve been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,”

shall we ever think, or feel, or behave, as if any hand of ours had built it, or anything in us had given us any title to be amongst its happy dwellers.

It is Jehovah that gives both “grace and glory” (Ps. lxxxiv. 11); and our joy is that the dwellings, whether of grace now, or of eternal glory soon, are all to the sole and only praise of the Three-one God of our salvation.

There is a contrast, and it is a solemn one indeed! The justice of God and His power will also bring to pass the prison-house of hell. That lake of fire, which is the second death, will receive into it ALL the finally impenitent, and will no more lose a single one that enters it than will the glorious gates of the New Jerusalem; for none who are there can ever pay the debt for which they entered it. The just and holy God, and the Lamb, will fashion its bars and doors, and will close them for ever on its imprisoned ones. This will render them “speechless” as to any complainings, and explains the solemn truth, that the smoke of their torment comes up before the throne along with the “hallelujahs” of the saved. God’s prison-house of eternal punishment is as truly according to His holy character as is the new heavens and new earth of the redeemed. And all mankind must be found in one or the other for ever.

H. D.

## MILK FOR BABES.

"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it."—1 Cor. iii. 2.

THIS scriptural expression is often used, and every one will own that babes, or young believers, have a claim on older Christians, even as children have upon their parents.

The blessed Lord Jesus, the chief Shepherd, is an example, and indeed the perfect pattern, of this kind of care. When the Holy Ghost describes His work, He says, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom" (Isa. xl. 11); and His first command to Peter as an under-shepherd was, "Feed My lambs."

But what do these words, "babe" and "milk," mean in Scripture? and to whom are they applied?

They are both connected with life in Christ, and applied to those who are born of God. They are never used with reference to unregenerate persons, who are dead in sins, and destitute of true desire for God's word. They are figurative expressions—the one, "babe," denoting the first stage in the believer's life, and the other, "milk," the spiritual instruction suited to that stage.

This distinctive title, "babe," does not imply any difference as to God's love, eternal life, relationship, nearness or access to God, or hope of glory; for the babe, equally with the father, is beloved of God, bought with the blood of Christ, a partaker of life, and a child of God. He is therefore as near to God, has equal right and privilege of access, and the same blessed hope of glory, as the most advanced believer.

The growth of a child delights the parent's heart, but



the lack of it causes sadness. So our growth honours and gratifies our heavenly Father, who has provided for and commanded it; while those things which hinder our growth grieve the Holy Ghost.

The blessed Master Himself used the word "babe" on that memorable occasion when He looked on His disciples as those given Him by the Father. He then said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. xi. 25.) The Father had gathered around His Son a few poor fishermen. They were depreciated and even despised by the wise and great of the world; and although immediately surrounding the Lord, they knew but little of His glory and of the things of God. They were *babes*, and over them as such He rejoiced.

The next connection in which this title is found is both humiliating and full of admonition. Paul, when writing to the believers in Corinth, says, "I have fed you with *milk*, and not with meat." Their partiality for different teachers had induced a sectarian spirit, and unfitted them for the reception of fuller instruction in the things of God. They had their favourites, they were carnal, and remained babes.

Beloved young believer, learn from this to take heed to your spirit, to the state of your heart, that there may not be anything in you contrary to the mind of Christ, which will hinder the further entrance of the word of God into your soul, giving you increased light and joy.

The two words we are considering are also found in a similar connection in Heb. v. 11-14.

The apostle Peter employs the same term, "babe," but not, as I judge, to distinguish one stage from another, but as representing the mind and spirit ripe for the reception of God's truth.

Lastly, in 1 John ii. 13, it is used to distinguish young Christians from those more advanced in knowledge. The "little children," or "babes," are said to have known the Father; while the fathers are said to have known Him who is from the beginning, the Son; and the young men are described as having overcome the wicked one. All were forgiven sinners, and all were children of God; and in verses 12 and 28 all are addressed together.

There is nothing so important, for young believers in Christ, as right thoughts of God's love. Satan is most desirous to confuse their thoughts, and hinder their confidence in this. When His love is seen and believed, everything is plain. The enemy would check their joy in it, either by a sense of their unworthiness as sinners, or their imperfections as saints, and lead them to seek for some reason in themselves why God should love them, and to judge of and measure His love by their feelings and attainments; whereas God's love is perfect in itself, neither increased by our obedience, nor lessened by our faults. It is perfect: not even the faith which enables us to rest in it adds to its fulness and stability. Its source is God; for "God is love." "Herein is love, not that *we* loved God, but that *He* loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Is it, then, matter of indifference whether we are obedient or disobedient? By no means; because our obedience glorifies and pleases Him, and our disobedience dishonours and grieves Him. Besides, He changes His way of dealing with us according to our conduct. If we are obedient, our heavenly Father approves and honours us; if we sin, He humbles and chastens us. But His love never alters: in love He kisses, and in love He smites.

Again, God's love is neither merited *by* us nor purchased *for* us; no, not even by the death of His own Son. Rather,

He so *loved*, that He gave His only-begotten Son, and delivered Him up to death for us, to purchase, to redeem us for Himself. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Thus He commends His love to us.

See then, dear young Christians, that the proof of God's love towards you was the gift of His only-begotten Son; that the measure of it for *you* is God the Father's love for *Him*, His beloved Son, who said to the Father concerning *you*, "Thou hast loved *them* as Thou hast loved *Me*." Can you measure the Father's love for His Son? Do you think it can ever fail, or ever change, towards Him? Surely not, say you, and rightly say. Then it is immeasurable, unfailing, and unchangeable towards *you*. It is as true of you as it is of Him. Believe this, rest in it, give thanks for it, and seek to meet the claims of such love day by day.

H. H.

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## CHRIST OR SELF?

### A CONTRAST.

CHRIST or self? Which is preferred? Which is loved best? Whose glory is most cared for?

These are home questions, and call for deep searchings of heart. Possibly there is no sin which so often wraps itself in a cloak of devotedness to Christ as self-seeking. It hides itself under all kinds of good names, such as righteous indignation, faithfulness to Christ, resistance of evil, order in the church, holy discipline, and such-like. Let our own name, our own work, our own honour, our own authority, our own position, or something of our own be touched, and at once this sin of self-seeking is roused; and unless detected and judged, it quickly leads us to do or say something which is either unseemly, ungracious, or un-Christlike.

Let us glance at a few points which may help us to detect this subtle sin. We will look at it in the way of

### CONTRAST.

IF SELF BE OUR OBJECT, IT MAY  
LEAD TO :

Determined effort to succeed and excel in everything.

Unwillingness to attempt anything unless there be good hope of success.

Exceeding sensitiveness to a rebuff, or a sneering or disparaging word.

Great painstaking to secure success, and desire that our labour and self-sacrifice should be appreciated.

Little conscience as to means used, if success can be secured.

Self-indulgence in matters which do not cross the object in view, nor affect our own name.

Great sacrifice of our own selves, or of others, *to attain our object.*

No rejoicing in the success of others, unless in some way it reflect honour upon us, or gratify our personal affections.

Envy, jealousy, and desire to detract from and hinder the prominence of others, unless we can surpass them.

Indignation and severity towards sin in God's children, if in any way their failure reflects discredit upon us.

IF CHRIST BE OUR OBJECT, IT  
WILL LEAD TO :

Determined effort to please Him at all costs.

Willingness to try and do anything which He wishes, although conscious of great probability of failure in the effort.

Ability to bear and forgive a rebuff, or sneering or disparaging word.

Great painstaking to please Him ; and even if conscious of doing the thing badly, satisfied that He knows and appreciates the labour, and values it according to the cost, and not according to results.

Tender conscience as to means used, because His approval is the chief desire of the soul.

No self-indulgence in anything that would grieve Him.

Great sacrifice of our own selves, and, if needs be, of the feelings of others, to please Him.

Great rejoicing in the success of others, if only it bring glory to Him.

Desire to help others in their service, and to increase their honour, even if outshone by them, if thereby more fruit be brought to Christ.

Loving, gracious efforts to recover those who in any way turn aside from Christ, because they are dear to Him.

Indifference to their sin, and secret satisfaction in it, if their failure tends to our own aggrandizement.

A readiness to speak of the sins of others, because of a secret desire to exalt ourselves above them.

Harsh judgments, and unkind speaking and hasty, un-Christlike dealings against such as cross us in our path.

In short, Self, and its glory, honour, and fame, the object and idol of the soul, to which everything is sacrificed.

Real sorrow of heart for their sin, because it grieves our LORD, and dishonours His name.

Great care not to expose the sin of others more than faithfulness to CHRIST and to His word requires.

Kind words and Christlike ways towards such as oppose us, and patient waiting upon the LORD to clear our path.

CHRIST, and His glory, honour, and gratification, the ruling desire to which all else is surrendered, however pleasant or valued.

#### RESULTS.

A weary, aching, disappointed heart, which feels it has laboured in the fires for very vanity, and only reaps a harvest "of grief and of desperate sorrow."

A quiet, restful, satisfied spirit, which delights itself in His love, and enjoys His smile, and has a full reward for its labour in His approval.

May this contrast be used by the Spirit of God, as His sharp two-edged sword, to hew this sin in pieces before the Lord!

One word of caution. We must use this sword against *ourselves*, and *not* against our brethren. "Let us not judge one another any more." We may judge actions, but we are not permitted to impute motives. "I, the Lord, search the heart." This is His prerogative; and if we dare to impute motives, we make ourselves transgressors, and sin against the law of love. "Love thinketh no evil . . . believeth all things . . . hopeth all things." Let us search and try our *own* ways, and ask Him to search our hearts, and enable us to put away iniquity far from our tabernacles.

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" "I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE."

## “MY FEET.”

BY THE LATE MRS. HERBERT W. TAYLOR.

“THIS woman.” Who was she? A poor sinner who had found her place at the feet of the Saviour! She loved much, because she was much forgiven. The Lord draws attention to her as a sample of a pardoned debtor, and in so doing contrasts her with Simon. (Luke vii. 44–46.)

Christ was received into *the house* only of the religious professor; but into *the heart* of this sinful woman. As king Saul had taken David to his house, and given him his daughter to wife, yet soon sought to kill him; so here was the mere profession of honouring Jesus, when the heart was far from Him. But with Jonathan it was real heart work; “his soul was knit to David,” and it therefore was no hard thing for him to strip himself and clothe David in royal apparel. Thus it was with this woman; the pardoning grace had *won her heart to Jesus*; and therefore precious ointment and tears she *cannot* keep back from Him; frowns, too, and cruel words, from the proud religious, cannot drive her from the feet of her Lord. So when the *heart* is really occupied with Jesus, nothing is esteemed too great or too costly to lavish on Him, nor is any persecution strong enough to drive us from Him.

We find that in three successive verses (44, 45, 46) the Lord uses the expression, “My feet,” in connection with this woman:—

1st. “She hath washed My feet.”

2nd. “She hath not ceased to kiss My feet.”

3rd. “She hath anointed My feet.”

These speak to us of *service, love, and worship*.

Her washing symbolized the refreshment she gave the

heart of Jesus ; but those blessed feet that trod the weary miles of the Galilean roads, dusty and toil-worn, can no longer be bathed by sinners' tears. They have been pierced for sinners' sins, and now He who loved and suffered is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, far above the heavens. How, then, can I wash His feet ? My beloved fellow-Christian, you may do some menial act of kindness to one of the poorest and lowest of the Lord's little ones ; so insignificant is it, that at the time you scarce recognize it yourself ; but it is done to a member of the body of Christ. The Head sees the service, He prizes it, and in His day that cup of cold water shall in no wise lose its reward. All the mass of outward show of work, which is merely the activity of the flesh, meets with no smile from Jesus. It shall never have His “well done” subscribed to it, for it gives Him no refreshment ; but some little simple act, unseen by human eye, or, if noticed, only reproached, *that* shall be crowned with the divine approbation of Him to whom it is done.

But to pass on. “She hath not ceased to kiss My feet.” Her kiss was the mark of love. It was that love which had been kindled in her breast towards Him when she first heard, with wonder, of the Friend of sinners ; and coming to Him, that love had grown ; and now, sitting at His feet, it burned and glowed within her. Hers was no spasmodic love, but steady and continuous, increasing every hour, for she *ceased not* to kiss His feet. Alas ! alas ! that of some it should have to be said, in saddest contrast, “Thou hast left thy first love.” And now, in this time of our Lord's absence, our love to Christ the Head is most seen in our love to His members here below, for “every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him.”

But the Lord looks for something more than either

service or love: "The *Father* seeketh" worshippers. True worship springs from love, and to be real the heart must be absorbed with the object that attracts it. It was so in this beautiful scene: "She hath anointed My feet." The spikenard flowed freely, it did not come dropping out; but she *poured* it upon His feet. And so it is, from a vessel full and running over, that the sweetest hallelujah ascends before the throne. The heart in which the love of God is shed *abroad* knows how to anoint the feet of Jesus; the heart that is humbled with the sense of abounding grace will be found in the low place where alone the alabaster box can be broken.

In applying all this to ourselves, we do well to learn afresh, though we have known it before, how all true worship, as well as all acceptable service, must spring from a personal love to the blessed Lord. May His heart be gladdened by often finding us at His feet, that we, like this pardoned sinner, may yield Him a richer feast than that spread upon Simon's board.

A THOUSAND joys beyond my scanty thinking,  
A thousand blessings that His grace has brought,  
A thousand streams at which my lips are drinking,  
My heart a song of sweetest praise have taught.

And yet, amid them all, *my* Lord excelleth,  
No beauty like the shining of His face,  
No glory like the sunshine where He dwelleth,  
No riches like the riches of His grace.

The joys were nothing without Him who giveth,  
The blessings nought but for the source above;  
And from the wounded side of Him who liveth,  
Out flow the streams that tell me of His love.

Then, blessed Master, whilst Thy gifts enjoying,  
*Thyself* I'll magnify above them all;  
To spread Thy fame, my time and strength employing,  
I'll haste to meet Thee at Thy homeward call.



## WHAT DOES PENTECOSTAL BLESSING INVOLVE?

LET us first briefly trace what is said of the Spirit in the gospel by John. In chap. iii. regeneration is unfolded, of which our Lord says to Nicodemus, "Art thou a teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?" He calls these "earthly things," and contrasts them with "heavenly things," of which He desired to speak, but for which Nicodemus was not prepared. John iii. seems to express the measure and the limit of Old Testament saints' experience. They had not the spirit of adoption, and they knew God only as "the Almighty," as "Jehovah our God." The Son must come to reveal the Father, and the Spirit must come to breathe the spirit of adoption, before the child could cry, "Abba, Father."

In John iv. the Spirit is spoken of as the "living water," which should be "in him" who drinketh it "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This represents the rising up of the soul to God in communion, and stands in marked contrast with the character of man's communion with God all through the Old Testament. *Then* God came down to man; *now* man rises up to God. *Then* God drew near to the creature; *now* the creature draws near to God. The Spirit is not presented in this scripture (chap. iv.) as the power of regeneration, but as the source and power of communion; and the truth corresponds with the words, "the communion of the Holy Ghost." (2 Cor. xiii. 13.)

The third step in this subject is in chap. vii. 37-39. Here the Spirit is not only a power rising up, but rivers of living water flowing out of the belly of the believer,

indicating the power of service for God in ministering to others. (v. 39.) Service for God there was, under the Old Testament, but it was the result of God's power on the servant, rather than the result of the Spirit dwelling in and flowing out. There we read of the Spirit coming on one and another for some temporary service; but always as a power from without, and never from within. Hence the characteristic difference between Old and New Testament inspiration. Under the one, "the word of the Lord came," and the prophet spake; under the other, Paul, filled with the Spirit writes, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ . . . . to all that be in Rome." In the New there is a deep self-consciousness of union between the writer and the Inspirer; in the Old, a conscious distinction between the two. This distinctive feature stamps its character on all the ministry and service of the present dispensation; and as compared with the past one, this significance cannot be overrated.

We now turn to our Lord's last discourse with His disciples, in which He so fully unfolds this great truth. He there says, "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." (Chap. xvi. 7.) Thus the disciples would even be gainers by the absence of their Lord, because of the coming of the Holy Ghost. The Old Testament saints had the ark and the mercy-seat; but they had no Comforter, no Paraclete, no Advocate ever present with them, to empower them for personal communion with God.

We will enumerate what our Lord describes as the specific features of the presence of the Comforter, which set forth the blessings that exclusively belong to the Pentecostal outpouring, and the bare enumeration will suffice to show how great is our gain.

1st. He is "another Comforter," filling the place of Christ to every individual saint. (Chap. xiv. 16, 17.)

2nd. He is to abide with the believer for ever.

3rd. He is the Spirit of Truth, whom the believer knows, because he knows Christ, "the Truth."

4th. He comes in Christ's name, sent by the Father, and hence enabling us to realize the name and person of Christ. (v. 26.)

5th. He teaches all things, hence raising us above the Old Testament prophets, who prophesied for the future rather than for themselves. (1 Peter i. 11, 12.)

6th. He brings to remembrance Christ's words, and makes His life and words living revelations, thus giving a living Christ to each believer. (v. 26.)

7th. He bears witness of Christ at the right hand of God.

8th. He reproves or convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

9th. He guides into all truth.

10th. He speaks to us of what He hears. Who can fathom the depth of this? The Spirit in the audience-chamber of heaven, witnessing to the soul of what He there hears and sees!

11th. He shows things to come, and thus unfolds the wonders of prophecy, so that we are no longer like those who understood not that of which they wrote.

12th. He receives of Christ's things, and reveals them unto us (xvi. 14), thus making known what eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man to conceive, even those things which God has prepared for them that love Him. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.)

This is our Lord's estimate of *our* gain through the coming and indwelling of the Spirit. We will next turn to the Acts and the Epistles, and we shall see yet further

unfoldings of what the Church of God possesses *now* which the godly Israelite knew nothing of.

In Acts i. 4 we read that the Lord, "being assembled together with them" (the disciples), "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with" (in, *ev*) "the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Pentecost arrives, and suddenly there is a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and tongues of fire rest on each, and all are filled with the Holy Ghost. Then was the Church baptized with the Holy Ghost; the Baptist's words came to pass, and the promise given by Christ was fulfilled.

If we would see what the Church received which Israel had not, let us only compare the apostles, *before* Pentecost, while yet Christ was among them, with the same men after Pentecost, when their Master had gone away. It was not that they could now work miracles—they did that before; it was not that they believed in Christ—they did that before: the difference was this—they had received an inward life and power that made the coward brave, the weak strong, the faltering steps swift as the roe upon the mountain, and trembling hearts bold as the lion.

Let Christian life and service in the Acts bear witness to us of the fruits of Pentecost, and we shall say, What has God wrought and the Spirit effected!

In the epistles to the Romans and Galatians we see what the Pentecostal Spirit is to the individual believer. From Rom. viii. we learn—

First, that the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed us from the bondage of the law of sin and death. Notice the contrast between the triumph of Paul in Phil. i. 21 and the bondage of Old Testament saints, as described in

Heb. ii. 14. Compare the experience of Job or Hezekiah, when expecting death, with that of the believer now, and we shall see how immeasurably God has raised our experience above theirs.

Secondly, we have the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit bears witness that we are children of God, heirs also, and joint-heirs with Christ. In Gal. iv. Paul says that God, who sent forth His Son to redeem, has also sent forth "the Spirit of His Son," that the child of faith might be no more a servant, but a son, "an heir of God through Christ."

Thirdly, the Spirit *helpeth* our infirmities, and *maketh intercession* for us. We too little know what this means. Did we know it more, we should better understand how the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist.

In Ephesians the Spirit is presented in full keeping with the character of that epistle, as connected with the *one body*, and involving a corporate fellowship below with Christ the Head in heaven. This could not possibly exist until Christ had risen from the dead.

The apostle tells the Ephesians that they are all sealed with the Spirit of promise (chap. i. 13), that by (or in) one Spirit they all have access to the Father, and through the Spirit are builded up together a habitation of God. (Chap. ii. 18-22.) This epistle unfolds the mystery of the *one body*, the *one building*, the *one Bride*, all brought about by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This is indeed the great mystery of the Christ of God, of which other ages knew nothing; and yet in many things the tabernacle bore witness to it, and Israel's national history foreshadowed it. How solemn this makes the personal warning, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Lastly, the epistle to the Corinthians unfolds the operations of the same Spirit in the Church on earth, as the Divider and Distributer of the gifts to each member of the body as *He* pleases. (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Thus while exhorted to follow after love, each one was commanded to desire spiritual gifts—gifts for the edification of the body of Christ, so that when “the whole Church come together into one place,” there may be a witness that God is among them of a truth. (Chap. xiv. 1, 23, 25.) This could have no existence till after Pentecost. The Church was then baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, and endued with the power for which they were commanded to wait. (See Luke xxiv. 49.)

One special point in the ministry of John the Baptist was to speak of Christ as the Baptizer. He said, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” (Matt. iii. 11.) All the peculiar glory of the New Testament dispensation centres in the person of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost. The Old Testament saints had the outward and visible glory, and their appointed meeting-place with God; but *we* have the inward invisible power of the Holy Ghost as the indwelling Spirit to lift up our souls into communion with God. Take this away, and the glory has indeed departed; and the saints of the New Testament, far from occupying a place of privilege higher than the Baptist, fall down to the level of the experience of Old Testament saints.

The above will, we trust, show how immeasurable is the gain of the saint now, and how immeasurably greater his responsibilities; and may the remembrance of the one and the sense of the other deepen in all our hearts, to the glory of the grace of God.

H. G.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

*Notes of Addresses by T. Newberry ; continued from p. 11.*

### THE TYPICAL ALPHABET OF THE MATERIALS EMPLOYED.

EXODUS XXV. 3-5.

GOLD is the first letter in this typical alphabet. It always has the same typical meaning ; but, like the letter A, may be variously combined.

Gold stands for things *divine*. It is the purest, most beautiful, valuable, and ornamental of metals. It is God's selected emblem of Himself, because of its purity and durability. It is indestructible by fire, and never tarnishes. If allowed to remain in a crucible at a white heat for twelve months, not an atom would be destroyed ; only the dross would be consumed, and the gold itself refined. Just so with divine things. Affliction is oftentimes the furnace in which God puts His saints to purge and refine them ; therefore do not shun affliction, nor murmur when placed by God in the furnace. Peter tells us "that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, will be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Fear not the furnace ; for if the grace of God be in us, the furnace will purify us, and increase our realizations of grace. It is this that yields the material of which martyrs are made. Persecution never destroys that grace which comes from God. By it many seemingly timid ones have been enabled to remain fearlessly and courageously at the stake, putting to blush many who seemed bold and courageous.

SILVER. This is the next precious metal ; but it is not like the gold, as it becomes tarnished in time. In olden

times silver was the general circulating medium in eastern lands. In the great majority of cases in our version where the word "money" occurs, the word in the original is "silver." Silver therefore stands for that which passes from one to another, and signifies communion, fellowship, intercourse.

Its typical significations can be clearly gathered from the uses to which it was put, and the source from which it came. The following are the purposes for which it was employed in the construction of the tabernacle:

1st. The sockets on which the boards of the tabernacle stood were of silver. There were ninety-six sockets for the boards, and four sockets for the pillars of the veil—one hundred in all. (Exod. xxvi. 18-32; xxxviii. 27.) Each socket was composed of a talent of silver, about 114 lbs. in weight. These hundred talents of silver formed the foundation of the tabernacle.

2nd. The pillars surrounding the court of the tabernacle were united together by connecting-rods of silver, rendered "fillets" in the ordinary version. These silver connecting-rods uniting the pillars sustaining the white linen curtains of the court, beautifully typify the communion of saints.

But whence came the silver of which the sockets and connecting-rods were made? It formed no part of the heave-offering of the people.

Exodus xxx. 11-16, and chap. xxxviii. 25-28, explain this:

God required that when the children of Israel were numbered from twenty years old and above, they were to give each man a ransom for his soul unto Jehovah of half a shekel of silver; the rich were not to give more, nor the poor less. The New Testament interprets this: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Peter i. 18.)



The boards of the tabernacle stood on sockets of silver made of the atonement money, prefiguring redemption through the blood of the Lamb. So God's tabernacle, His Church, now stands on redemption. None can form a part of the spiritual tabernacle of God but those who stand in the redemption wrought out by the precious bloodshedding of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Each board had two tenons (feet or hands), which were fixed in the sockets of silver; so we with both feet stand fixed in redemption, upon the eternal Rock of ages, which neither winds nor storms can move. "Ye also, as lively (or living) stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter ii. 5.)

By combining together the silver sockets, emblematic of redemption, and the silver connecting-rods, the emblems of communion, we have the spiritual and typical import of silver; namely, a common redemption, upon which the communion of saints is founded. May we ever keep this silver bright and untarnished.

**BRASS.** The sockets of the pillars of the court of the tabernacle were made of brass, or rather copper, which is a pure, unmixed metal. The vessels inside the sanctuary were of gold, and those outside, as the altar of burnt-offering, and the laver, were of brass. Brass is an emblem of strength, in its power of endurance. Thus *brass* presents the Lord Jesus to us in His might as a Saviour, the One mighty to save, and as possessing enduring, victorious strength: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. lxiii. 1.) We also read, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) Iron, on the other hand, is the type of overcoming strength; and this strength and courage God gives to those who not only know His will, but seek to do it.

Having considered the *three metals*, we will now turn our attention to the *three colours*, and their significance.

**BLUE.** The meaning of this colour will be very easily seen. It is the colour of the heavens above; *i.e.* heavenly. It has also another meaning, suggested by the Hebrew word for blue, which signifies perfection, completeness, and the two combined give us *heavenly perfection*. We will leave the purple for a moment and take the third colour.

**SCARLET.** The Hebrew term is a remarkable combination of two words, "worm" and "splendour," rendered scarlet; *i.e.* worm-splendour. Scarlet is a dye made from the cochineal insect; it is the splendour of a worm. Scarlet is an emblem of royal dignity. If we apply this to the Lord Jesus Christ, we see His dignity and royal splendour as born of a virgin, of the seed of David (John vii. 42; Ps. cxxxii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 5; and Luke ii. 4, "of the house and lineage of David"), and heir of his throne. On the one hand, His royalty as *Man*, and the dignity of His human birth; and on the other, His wondrous condescension to say of Himself (Ps. xxii. 6), "I am a *worm*, and no man."

**PURPLE.** This colour is made by a combination of blue and scarlet. Thus we have the combination of heavenly perfection with earthly splendour and dignity, showing out the Lord Jesus in His Melchisedec glory—"Priest of the Most High God," Son of God from heaven, as well as Son of David by His earthly birth; the Root as well as the Offspring of David. Purple represents the resurrection-glory of Christ, as the other colours represent His heavenly and His earthly glories.

**FINE LINEN.** This is interpreted in Rev. xix. 8 as "the righteousness of saints," and is an emblem of purity. (Ps. cxxxii. 9.)

"GOATS'-HAIR." This is typical of sinless humanity.

The goat was usually employed as a sin-offering. And from Rom. viii. we learn that Christ was not only the Lamb without blemish, but also was "made in the likeness of sinful flesh."

"RAMS' SKINS DYED RED." (Compare Gen. iii. 21 with Gen. xxxvii. 31.) In the former passage we read of the coats of skins with which God clothed the first who sinned, as soon as they accepted the tidings of redemption through the woman's seed. The latter tells us of the garment dipped in blood. Both typify the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

"BADGERS' SKINS" show the pilgrim character as seen in Jesus of Nazareth.

"SHITTIM WOOD." This is an incorruptible wood, and hence is typical of the humanity of Christ, which could not see corruption. (Compare Acts ii. 24; xiii. 37.)

These typical letters beautifully spell out the titles and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us briefly rehearse them.

*Gold.* Divine.

*Silver.* Redemption, on which the communion of saints is founded.

*Brass or Copper.* Strength, courage; Jesus, mighty to save.

*Blue.* Heavenly perfection.

*Scarlet.* Splendour of a worm; royal dignity of the "house and lineage of David."

*Purple.* Melchisedec glory—"Priest of the most high God."

*Fine Linen.* Righteousness of saints.

*Goats'-hair.* Sin-offering made in the likeness of sinful flesh.

*Rams' skins dyed red.* The redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

*Badgers'-skins.* Pilgrim character—Jesus of Nazareth.

*Shittim wood.* Incorruptible humanity.

## THE GRACIOUS ONES.

PSALM cxlix.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS. BY H. D.

I WOULD call attention to the remarkable threefold expression of saints or "gracious ones" in this psalm.

In the Hebrew Bible there are two different words, which are both translated "saints" in our English version. The one means "holy ones," the other "gracious ones." How precious this is! Towards God we are spoken of as "holy ones," but towards man as "gracious ones." Like the two tables of the law—the first, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength;" the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

"Sing unto Jehovah a new song, and His praise in the congregation" (or assembly) "of saints" (*i.e.* gracious ones). (Ps. cxlix. 1.) Three times in this weighty psalm the words "*sing* to Jehovah" are connected with the "gracious ones." But how can God accept our utterances of praise, unless we are loving our neighbour? Do you remember that he has a complaint against you, and yet are you going to praise God? Let me ask myself, Did I behave well to my servant this morning? Did I treat my wife as I ought? Did my children see anything in me that was not according to Christ? Perhaps I said, "Ring the bell for family worship;" but what was I doing half an hour before? Oh, fellow-saints, the praises must come from those that are right with others! You remember that word in Matt. v.: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Be a

“gracious one” first, and then offer thy gift. God, our God, has linked these two things together! But do not make a mistake; the graciousness towards your neighbour must flow from being true to God, and learning out what He has done for you. David did not say, “Is there any one to whom I may show how kind I am? I am easy; my throne is stable; now I’ll be kind.” Oh, no! but, “*God* has been kind to me; let me show it out; let me take up Mephibosheth; let me be gracious to him, for God has been gracious to me; let me show out the kindness of God to him; let him sit at my table as one of the king’s sons.”

Never pretend to be the “gracious one” without being first the “holy one.” As soon might you expect to get grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles, as to be able to act as the “gracious one,” unless you have first received the grace of God yourself and are abiding in it.

The next time the word occurs in the psalm is in verse 5: “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” We should be filled with love to others, even on our couches. Oh, it is very easy to be gracious with our tongue! but presently, perhaps, we are impatient at the meal-time. Very gracious we may be in preaching the gospel on Sunday; but are we equally the “gracious ones” every day, and every night? Are we the “gracious ones” in the assembly? Do we take care not to sing so as to disturb the communion of others? nor yet to take too much part in the meetings? Are we gracious in every-day life? Are we gracious in the assembly, and on our couches, till presently, as God’s “gracious ones,” we come with Christ to execute vengeance on the nations; “to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all His gracious ones”? (vv. 8, 9.) They suffered, and they shall reign. They represented Christ

below; they shall shine with Him above. They were the patient ones; they shall execute the judgment written. Oh, fellow-saints, if you begin to give up your character of graciousness, He complains of you!

Turn to Romans xii. 19, and see the privilege of the saint as the "gracious one:" "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Avenge not yourselves, or you lose the character of "gracious ones." What is our business then? Not to elbow and push. That one gave me a cold shoulder; I will give him one now. No, no! "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." Thus you will sustain your character as the "gracious one."

I ought to weep over the sinner upon earth, that when he sees me sitting in judgment with Christ he may vindicate me. Sinners will justify Christ in judgment. They will say, "He did nothing but good for us; He wept over us; He died to show God's love to us." Will they ever complain of Paul? No. They will say, "He besought us with tears; he cared for our souls; he has a right to judge us."

Oh, saints of God, if we are not "gracious ones" we fail of our calling! Why, the heir to the British throne wears the motto "I serve." He consents to put upon his brow, "I am only a servant," and thus proclaims his title to reign at a future day. Let this be a reality with us. Let us go down in lowly service; for we shall soon reign. I love to think of "gracious ones" in this psalm; first in the assembly, then upon their couches in the house, and lastly in judgment. "This honour have all His gracious ones."

• Paul, in writing to the Corinthian saints, said, "You

have made a solemn mistake. You have reigned as kings now, instead of waiting for your day of reigning. You go to law, and push and elbow one another. You do not care whether you speak to edification or not in the assembly. I wish I could show you what you will soon be. The least of you will reign by-and-by." Paul puts the reigning character before them to help the gracious character now.

Oh, dear brethren, it is easier to speak about this than to do it! I may be tempted to be cold to a brother in an hour. You and I know what it is to come from our chamber in a gracious spirit, but soon to lose it by something that tries us, and then we need to go to our chamber again to renew our graciousness. A little sunshine heat soon dries it up.

Well may we say to the Lord Jesus—

Give us Thy meek, Thy lowly mind,  
We would obedient be,  
And all our rest and pleasure find  
In fellowship with Thee.

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## THE ONE OFFERING.

HEB. x. 10-14.

If it is necessary that believers should have right, *i.e.* scriptural, thoughts concerning God's love, so is it also essential to the abiding peace of their souls that they perceive and believe the perfection of Christ's one offering on the cross. This is surely proved by the frequency, simplicity, and fulness with which the Holy Ghost presents it to us in the word of God. He has pointed to it by type, from the offering of Abel, down to the last offering before the cross. The same Holy Ghost now dwells in us to instruct us in the value and perfection of Christ's one offering, the antitype of all those types.

Nothing short of perfection could satisfy God, and until believers see Christ's perfectness as theirs through believing, they cannot have settled peace and rest. This said, let us examine the twofold testimony of the Spirit of God; first *by* types, second *to* the antitype.

The term type (from *Túpós*, a blow, an impression, a counterpart) is something very definite. It is more than an illustration, and implies a design on the part of God to foreshadow or represent something else; and we know that by the offerings under the law, *i.e.* the old dispensation, He designed to foreshadow the one offering of His Son made flesh in its varied virtues and comprehensive value.

With respect to the types, we observe a divine order. From the first recorded offering, that of Abel, until the times of Moses, we read only of one kind of offering; *viz.*, the burnt-offering, the ascending-offering.

It is said of Jacob, indeed, that he offered sacrifices (Gen. xlv. 1); but while there was plurality, there is no mention of variety. To the eye of God, and in His estimation, the one offering comprehended all; and to every true believer, whatever may have been the measure of his intelligence, Jehovah imputed the full value of the ante-typical offering of Christ. *Now* also the babe in knowledge has the full value of His one offering: and the father can have no more, although he has fuller intelligence of its value, and consequently fuller, deeper joy in God.

The law was given by Moses, and it entered that the offence might abound. It revealed and defined sin as it had not before been revealed, and to meet that revelation the variety of sacrifices and offerings was introduced in Leviticus. As was the revelation of sin, so also was that of the varied virtues of the offering—burnt-offering, sin-offering, trespass-offering, meat and peace-offerings, &c.



To us, that ritual is only a matter of history; we have nothing to do with it, thanks be to God, except by the shadow to learn more of the substance. Ours is the happy privilege of simple confidence in the one all-comprehensive offering of Christ; so that by one glance of faith at Christ we see all, and by presenting Him to God we present all.

The mummery of modern ritualism is mimicry of Judaism, without the sanction from God which Judaism originally had—this is its folly; while parts of it contradict the word of God and dishonour the sacrifice of Christ—this is its enormity, its wickedness. Beware of it, beloved believing reader; it betrays ignorance of dispensational differences, and also of the falseness of the idea of a state religion or a national church.

God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth, not here only, nor there alone, but everywhere. We may well be thankful to assemble within walls under cover and at set times; still, even when so gathered, if we worship aright, it is as being by faith and in spirit in the heavenlies, in the heavenly courts, where indeed the great High Priest, the only Priest over His brethren, leads divine worship. This we could do if necessary, and with equal acceptance in the sight of God, in the open field.

We have seen that by the typical sacrifices and offerings the Holy Ghost pointed to the "one offering" of Christ in its different aspects and results. These had their day; but we hear one saying, in the spirit of prophecy by David, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened" (or digged): "burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will." This very Scripture is quoted

by the Holy Ghost, and applied to Christ on purpose to prove the excellence of His sacrifice for sin. There is this important and explanatory change made in this passage. Instead of, "Mine ears hast thou opened," it is, "A body hast thou prepared me." It was by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once (once for all) that the mighty deed was effected. He came to do the will of God; He delighted to do it; it was His meat. That *will* required that "He should lay down His life, and take it again." "By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once*." See then, dear Christian reader, that as by faith you are linked to that one offering which accomplished the will of God, and reconciled you to Him, you *are* sanctified. (Heb. x. 10.)

Again, in verses 11-15, He contrasts the posture and action of the typical priests and Christ. They *stood daily* ministering and *repeating* their sacrifice, because imperfect; but Christ, when He had made *one* sacrifice for sin, *sat* down, not needing to rise again for the purpose of offering for sin; "for by His one offering He hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified," the one offering both sanctified and perfected for ever every one who is by faith connected with it. In Eph. v. 2, Paul, taught by the Holy Ghost, says, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it an offering and a sacrifice" (victim) "to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Yes, dear reader, whatever (to speak as men) that sacrifice involved of cost, pain, and sorrow, it was and is gratifying to God, and we are accepted in Him; and that offering in its virtue, savour, and value, is imputed to, and reckoned to the account of, the one who trusts it, although his faith may be the weakest, and his intelligence of its value the smallest.

Of old the offerer and the offering were accepted together—it *for* him, and he *in* it; so now the truster in

Christ and Christ the trusted One are accepted together. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, who gave Himself *for* us." God, by one act, has eternally accepted you in Him, in Christ; for He changeth not. Of His gift of Christ for us, and His calling of us to Christ, He will not repent. In both these acts He is "without repentance (a change of mind)." Here then, beloved, rest, and keep your daily sabbath with God by faith in His Son and in His accomplished work. And should you fail in your walk; should sin defile your conscience, and so disturb your rest of soul, the remedy is at hand. Confess fully, *definitely*, believingly, and you will find the Comforter ready to fulfil His ministry; viz., the repeated presentation to your soul of Christ in that offering which once for all covered all your sins, and answers fully for you in the presence of the Father. "Little children, sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." For "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jealously watch that nothing comes between your soul and this, between you and Christ, but Christ only between your soul and God. No, nothing; not your obedience any more than your sin. Obedience may be, indeed should be, the *purpose* of your life, but not the *rest* of your soul.

Make His one offering also your shield against the fiery darts of Satan; present Christ to him, direct him to Christ respecting you; that is, refer him with his every charge to Christ. If it is true, Christ is your shield; if false, He will refute it, and give you peace. Thus live your life as he lived his who said, "The life that I live in the flesh" (the body) "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me;" in a word, make Christ your all.

H. H.

## CHRIST "GAVE HIMSELF FOR US."

### A WORD TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

THERE are at least seven heart-stirring reasons given us in the word of God *why* Christ "gave Himself for us."

1st. *That He might deliver us from "the wrath to come."* (1 Thess. i. 10.) In His wonderful and amazing pity it pleased God to bruise His well-beloved Son instead of us. He spared Him not, but gave Him up "a ransom for us all." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And that blessed Lord, in the riches of His grace, shrank not back, but gave HIMSELF to bear our sins in His own body on the tree. What a claim upon our hearts' affections! What a debt of love and gratitude we owe!

"Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands our souls, our lives, our all!"

2nd. *That we might "have everlasting life."* (John iii. 16.) It was not enough for Him to save us from hell; He must also give us life, eternal life, His own life. It would have been wonderful mercy, had He simply saved us from punishment, and left us to grovel on here below, struggling with sin and evil for ever. But this suited not His heart. In abounding grace He has made us *one* with Himself—partakers of the divine nature. We are born again—born out of His death, born of God, a new creation in Christ Jesus. What glory! what honour! raised far above angels, principalities, and powers, and called unto His eternal glory!

3rd. *"That He might bring us to God."* (1 Peter ii. 24.) No longer "strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." Brought nigh by the blood of Christ; "accepted in the Beloved."

"So near, so very near to God,  
We could not nearer be!"

Dear child of God, you *have been* brought nigh by the blood of Christ; but if you are not watchful you will lose the joy and blessedness of this nearness. There is so much to draw us away from the presence of our God, so much that tends to drag us down to earth, that we continually need the exhortation to "draw near to Him." We need habitually to use our liberty of access, and by that "new and living way, which Christ has consecrated for us" to enter in within the veil; to sit down there and commune with our Father and our God. The way is open through that precious blood, and our great High Priest is ever ready to bring us in. "Through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Yea, more, our Father is looking out for us: as David said to Mephibosheth, "Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually," so *He* has prepared a place for us at His table; and lame though we be, yea, lame on both our feet, we still are welcome, and He loves to see us sit down, eat, drink, and be merry; He *misses* us when we are not there; and the Lord Jesus is grieved if we fail to take advantage of His grace.

4th. "*That He might deliver us from this present evil world.*" (Gal. i. 4.) It is nothing short of this that He seeks. For this He gave Himself—HIMSELF! Oh, what a price! This is His desire concerning us. He longs to see us come out and be separate, and not touch the unclean thing. He has severed us from other people that we should be His; and He loves to see us turn away from the world, its pleasures, its glory, and its attractions, to find our full and satisfying portion in Himself.

Dear young believer, do heed His word—His gracious, loving counsel. We who are older in His ways have proved the wretchedness and folly of eating Satan's dainty

and tempting meats. We know that they are indeed deceitful meats, and must be vomited up again (Prov. xxiii.); they only cause sorrow and disappointment, and bring leanness and misery upon the soul. We long to save you from the anguish we have brought upon ourselves, and therefore entreat you to "avoid" each forbidden pleasure; "pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Go eat of Christ's bread, and drink of the wine which He has mingled; yea, "drink of the river of His pleasures," and that will satisfy your soul, and give you strength and joy.

5th. "*That He might redeem us from all iniquity.*" (Titus ii. 14.) Not only redeem us from hell, but from all lawlessness and self-pleasing. He has bought us back from the *power* of sin, as well as from its punishment, and is able and willing to make us more than conquerors over all the evil that is in us. He can *heal* our diseases—our pride, our self-will, our folly—as well as forgive our sins. There is nothing too hard for Him; He is waiting to give us the victory, and to write His law in our hearts, and cause us to keep His judgments, and do them.

6th. "*That He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*" (Titus ii. 14.) How He loves us! He wants us for *Himself*—a peculiar people, intent on pleasing Him, zealous of good works. He would have each of us feel, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*," that He might win *me* (my affections) in such a measure, that it may be the one joy and delight of my heart, to live to Him, to sacrifice all for Him, to obey Him in everything. For this He died! This is His desire, the earnest longing of His heart concerning us; and shall we, can we be careless or indifferent as to how we respond to such love as His? Surely our hearts would humbly say—

"Thine, Jesus, Thine!

No more this heart of mine

Would seek its joy apart from Thee ;  
 The world is crucified to me,  
 And I am Thine !”

7th. “*That He might present us to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*”—“*faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy*.” (Eph. v. 27 ; Jude 24.) Here is the climax ! This was the joy set before Him, which strengthened Him to endure the cross. His eye looked onward to that blissful day when He will bring us all forth, resplendent with His glory, and shining forth in His likeness. No scar, no stain ; no shame, no sin ; no grief, no pain ; but each one beauteous, glorious, perfect ; each lesson learnt, each sin subdued, each fruit abounding. Oh, what a recompense to HIM for all His suffering, for all His patient, loving toil ! Then will He sing His song of praise in the midst of the great congregation ; and as He looks around on the countless multitude of children whom His God has given Him, He will verily be “**ANointed WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE HIS FELLOWS.**”

#### NOTES AND REPLIES.

Is any special importance to be attached to using one cup and one loaf at the Lord's table ?

It is of great importance to remember that the supper, the table, the bread, and the wine, are looked upon as *one* from its institution on the night of the crucifixion to the consummation in glory ; so that we sit around the same table, and eat of the same loaf, and drink of the same cup, that our Lord blessed and left for our use ever after. But as the many loaves and cups that have in fact been partaken of at all the suppers celebrated in the church of God do not invalidate the unity of the supper, so neither does the fact of more loaves or more cups than one being used on any single occasion when convenience requires it, set aside the truth that the loaf and the cup are but one, typical of the one body of the Lord Jesus and His blood.

We are in danger of making much of ceremonial exactness, in proportion as the divine reality loses its power over our souls. When

the body and the blood of Christ occupy our thoughts, we see the divine unity that links us with the common table of our common Lord ; and one loaf and one cup, or many, alike present to our hearts and affections the one Christ.

What is the meaning of *sinning wilfully* in Heb. x. 26 ?

It is needful to remember the connection which shows what sin it is the apostle has in his mind ; and he defines it in verse 29 in a three-fold way. First, it is the treading under foot the Son of God, and thus rejecting God's love in the gift of His Son ; second, it is the counting the blood of the covenant as a common thing, and thus rejecting the love of Christ on the cross ; and thirdly, it is the doing "despite unto the Spirit of grace," and thus rejecting the love of the Spirit who seeks to minister the grace of God to the needy sinner. This threefold rejection culminates in the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, of which we are told that it hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. (Matt. xii. 31, 32.) Such was the sin of Judas Iscariot, which stands in marked contrast with that of Paul, who sinned ignorantly (1 Tim. i. 13) ; or that of Peter, who denied his Lord with his lips while loving Him in the depth of his soul. For such nothing remains but a "fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." The vengeance of God will then be executed "without mercy." For the need of the failing and troubled child of God who has fallen into sin, there is always, on its being confessed, the full provision of the cleansing blood, and the living High Priest.

What authority is there for saying that "the Lord's-day," in Rev. i. 10, refers to the first day of the week ?

In the first place the form of this expression has to be noticed. It is not the same as "the day of the Lord," which is the phrase so frequently used to point us onward to the great coming day. Here it is the same as is used in 1 Cor. x. 20 for "the Lord's supper," and occurs nowhere else. The connection thus brought out between the Lord's-day and the Lord's supper is important and very beautiful, reminding us of Acts xx. 7 : "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." In the second place, the universal usage of the early church necessitates its being referred to the first day of the week. And thirdly, the Greek cannot be rendered, "And I was carried in spirit into the Lord's-day," as some have suggested, who would refer it to the day of the Lord's coming.

For further information on this passage, we would refer our readers to Alford's interesting and conclusive note in his Greek New Testament, vol. iv. p. 551.



## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

*(Continued from page 35.)*

## THE SANCTUARY.

“Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”

EXODUS xxv. 8.

It is Jehovah who is speaking; and after mentioning the heave-offering, which He was ready to accept from the children of Israel, He proceeds to show the object for which such heave-offering was required. It was that a sanctuary might be made for Jehovah to dwell in, *in the midst* of His people.

He had redeemed them out of Egypt by the blood of the Passover Lamb, and thus they are typical of those who through faith in Christ have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into His kingdom. (Col. i. 13.) They had been baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and thus were typical of those who are baptized by one Spirit into one body, and bear the name of the Head—“the Christ.” (1 Cor. xii. 13.) They are the standing types of the Church of the living God; and the things which happened to them were “for our ensamples” (or types), “and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.” (1 Cor. x. 11.)

Let us turn to some other portions of Scripture that may fill our minds with the condescending grace of God in being willing to dwell at all amongst sinful men.

When Solomon had built the temple with all its splendour and magnificence, he looked upward from it all, and contrasting it with the glory and majesty of God, he exclaimed, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?” (1 Kings viii. 27.)

We may take Isaiah lvii. 15 as conveying to us God's answer to such a question: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Or again (Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2): "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith Jehovah: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

Yes, God *will* in very deed dwell with men, *if* there are those who thus tremble at His word. "They shall be my people, and I will be their God." (Jer. xxiv. 7.) He has redeemed us from all iniquity, and washed and made us white in the blood of the Lamb, in order that we may share the glory of His Son, and dwell in the paradise of God; and He has not only redeemed us unto Himself to dwell with Him *there*, but even now He says, "Give me a sojourning place, that I may dwell with you *here*."

Those that tremble at His word also form *unitedly*, as well as individually, a dwelling-place for Him. "The most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." (Acts vii. 48.) No walls can circumscribe His presence; but, says Peter, "Ye also, as lively" (or living) "stones, are built up a spiritual house." As Aaron bore the plate on his forehead engraven "*Holiness to Jehovah*" (Exod. xxviii. 36), so *we* individually, as the temple of God, should present ourselves holy and acceptable unto Him, that He might dwell in us; and as the tabernacle was "*Holiness to Jehovah*," so *we* collectively, as a spiritual house, should be holy unto the Lord our God.

"*Let them make me a SANCTUARY,*" or HOLY *place*. As a holy God, the dwelling-place they were to make for Him

must be holy. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13); how much less then could He *dwell* amidst it? Even man seeks cleanliness in but a temporary dwelling; how much more must God look for purity, whether in His tent amidst Israel, or in His temple of living stones of this present time. He does not now seek outward grandeur or beauty; but He does require holiness within: "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever." (Ps. xciii. 5.) A sanctuary, then, is a *holy place*.

"*That I may dwell* AMONG *them*," i.e. "*in the* MIDST;" not as a stranger or a guest, but as a Father in the midst of His own family. The Lord not only wants our hearts, but also the *centre-place* there. He occupies the centre-place in heaven, and when He condescends to dwell with men on the earth, His rightful place is in the midst of His people: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And on two occasions after His resurrection the Lord Jesus came and "stood in the midst" of His disciples. Let us be watchful and earnest about this truth, and take care that we gather together around our Lord Jesus as our living Head and only Centre.

"According to ALL that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of ALL the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Moses was commanded to make all things according to the pattern which God showed him in the mount. If God dwells among men, He must not only have a holy place and the centre-place for His dwelling, but He must have *His own will* done there, and everything carried out according to His direction; not as now, men doing in divine things that which is right in their own eyes. When John was caught up by the Spirit into heaven, he saw a *throne* set in heaven, and the Lamb

who had been obedient unto death in the midst of the throne. It is this that constitutes the joy and blessedness of heaven, that there is only *one will* there. As in the modern factory one steam-engine sets in motion all the complicated machinery, so the vast mechanism of the heavenly bodies moves in obedience to one Will and one Power; and thus it should be in all God's workmanship in Christ Jesus. His angels excel in strength, yet they "do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." (Ps. ciii. 20.) "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." "His servants shall serve Him." The sanctuary must be according to His will and pattern. Oh, may we love and cherish these divine principles more and more! As the joy of heaven consists in God's holy will being done in everything, so let His will alone be done in the Church, and it will be to us a heaven below. Self-will in any form mars the unison, and spoils the joy. Paul, when speaking of those that offered gifts according to the law, says, "Who serve unto the *example* and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii. 5); and God's Church upon earth should be ordered in all things according to the heavenly pattern.

Every real Christian is a sanctuary and dwelling-place of God, where His will should be done as it is done in heaven; and every gathering of God's saints should be a sanctuary, a holy dwelling for God, where He is loved, and served, and worshipped, and no margin is left for man's will, or opinion, or ingenuity.

In connection, then, with God's dwelling-place among men, let us remember—

1st. That it must be holy; for He is holy.

2nd. That He must have His place in the midst.

3rd. That HE is Lord of all, and His will alone must be done in all things.

# THE CHILD ON THE JUDGMENT-SEAT.

WHERE hast thou been toiling all day, my child,  
That thy brow is burdened and sad ?  
The Master's work may make weary feet,  
But it leaves the spirit glad.

Was thy garden nipped with the midnight frost,  
Or scorched with the mid-day glare ?  
Were thy vines laid low, or thy lilies crushed,  
That thy face is so full of care ?

"No pleasant garden-toils were mine—  
I have sat on the judgment-seat,  
Where the Master sits at eve, and calls  
The children around His feet."

How camest thou on the judgment-seat ?  
My child, who set thee there ?  
'Tis a lonely and lofty seat for thee,  
And well might fill thee with care.

"I climbed on the judgment-seat myself ;  
I have sat there alone all day ;  
For it grieved me to see the children around  
All idling their life away.

"They wasted the Master's precious seed ;  
They wasted the precious hours ;  
They trained not the vines, nor gathered the fruits,  
And they trampled the sweet-scented flowers."

And what hast thou done on the judgment-seat ?  
My child, what didst thou there ?  
Would the idlers heed thy childish voice ?  
Did the garden mend by thy care ?

"Nay, that grieved me more. I called and I cried,  
But they left me there forlorn ;  
My voice was weak, and they heeded not,  
Or they laughed my words to scorn."

Ah, the judgment-seat was not for thee ;  
The servants were not thine ;  
And the Eyes which adjudge the praise and the blame,  
See further far than thine.

The Voice that shall sound there at eve, my child,  
Will not raise its tones to be heard ;  
It will hush the earth, and hush the hearts,  
And none will resist its word.

"Should I see my Master's treasures lost,  
The stores that should feed His poor,  
And not lift my voice, be it weak as it may,  
And not be grieved sore ?"

Wait till the evening falls, my child,  
Wait till the evening falls ;  
The Master is near, and knoweth all ;  
Wait till the Master calls.

But how fared *thy* garden-plot, my child,  
While thou sat'st on the judgment-seat ?  
Who watered thy roses, and trained thy vines,  
And kept them from careless feet ?

"Nay, that is the saddest of all to me,  
That is the saddest of all ;  
My vines are trailing, my roses are parched,  
My lilies droop and fall."

Go back to thy garden-plot, my child ;  
Go back till the evening falls ;  
And bind thy lilies, and train thy vines,  
Till for thee the Master calls.

Go make thy garden as fair as thou canst,  
Thou workest never alone ;  
Perchance he whose plot is next to thine  
Will see it, and mend his own.

And the next may copy his, my child,  
Till all grows fair and sweet ;  
And when the Master comes at eve,  
Happy faces His coming will greet.

Then shall thy joy be full, my child,  
In the garden so fair to see,  
In the Master's words of praise for all,  
In a look of His own for thee.

## ISRAEL'S FOUR TEMPLES.

THE eyes of God's waiting saints, as well as those of men of this world, are just now turned intently toward the East and the Holy Land; but with what different feelings! The progress of events, and the solution of "the Eastern Question," is waited for by all Christendom with a view to furthering yet more "man's day" (as Paul calls it) of earthly peace and human greatness. The politician, the manufacturer, the merchant, and the men of art and science, have all of them their different hopes respecting it; but in this they are alike, they see not God's counsel in it all, and in their thoughts and plans about it they no more "regard the work of Jehovah, nor consider the operation of His hands," than their predecessors did in Isaiah's time. (See Isa. v. 12.)

But it should be very different with us who, as children of God, and as waiting ones for Jesus from heaven, watch with solemn interest the tokens in the Eastern horizon that the day of God and of Christ must soon dawn; for if so, our being caught up to be "for ever with the Lord" must needs be nearer still. What godliness then becomes us at such a time as this! and with what chastened spirits, and hourly obedience to all His known will, should we fill up the "little while" "till He come!"

But we also "pray for the peace of Jerusalem;" for in her day of peace our Father's name will be hallowed, and His kingdom will have come, and we shall then already be living and reigning with Christ. The risen saints in their heavenly city will be shining forth the glory of God and of the Lamb, and the nations of a millennial age beneath will be walking in the light of it. Jerusalem below will have been brought through the "day of Jacob's trouble,"

and having "received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins," she will in her own land "possess the double," that God means even yet to give her of all blessing and of all joy.

The Scriptures also, as to Jerusalem and the East, should be humbly and diligently studied, and all they teach us of her past, her present, and her future should be clearly understood and most assuredly believed. And as a help towards this we would point out the four temples of Jerusalem's chequered history, as given us in God's pages of the past and of prophecy. We may call them—

The Solomon temple (1 Kings vi. 3, &c.),

The Haggai temple (Haggai ii. 15),

The Herod temple (John ii. 14), and

The Ezekiel temple (Ezekiel xli. 1).

Very different though these buildings are from each other, both in their materials, their construction, and their moral and spiritual character, each of them has the name of "temple" given it in the Scriptures referred to above. This suggests a linking of them together for our study, and shows how unchangeably dear to God is mount Moriah as a spot. Of it, as well as of all Jerusalem and all Israel, may we not say, "The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance;" (Rom. xi. 29) *i.e.* without change of mind on God's part? "Mine eyes and mine heart," God says, "shall be there perpetually." (1 Kings ix. 3.) The Haggai building might be poor and contemptible in men's eyes, compared with that of Solomon which preceded it; but in God's gracious account it was nevertheless "the temple of Jehovah" (Haggai ii. 15); and spite of all the iniquity and deceit with which king Herod put up the sumptuous forty-six years' structure of our Lord's time, Jesus still claimed it as His "Father's house." At the risk of any angry resistance they might make, He so drove the buyers and sellers



from it that His own disciples were reminded of the words in Ps. lxi.: "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up."

"Nothing changeth God's affection,"

whether it be to His blood-bought children individually, or to His Church as a whole; or whether it be to the Israel nation, to their land, their city, or the temple in its midst.

How strikingly the dark and the bright of Israel's whole history are illustrated by these four temples! Three of them so bright, and the house that Herod built so dark! Yet even in the bright ones the brightness was of different kinds.

It was national greatness and prosperity after his father David's stormy times that gave its solidity to *Solomon's* temple; while all the earth came to hear the wisdom of its gifted but fallible and mortal king. That building represented the nation's prosperity under its kings, as the tabernacle in the wilderness showed God's favour to Israel under Moses, their law-giver. Solomon's was emphatically the temple of the *nation*, and was laid waste when the last portion of the nation was carried into captivity. It was given, like all else, to try man, and to test the nation, that the more room might be made for God and His abounding grace by their utter failure being proved.

The *Haggai* temple was a work of that same abounding grace, wrought by His Spirit in the hearts of a remnant, and by the diligence of their hands; the nation, as a whole, being still in captivity; hence it was peculiarly precious in God's account, though it was built of wood, and in comparison with the first house "as nothing" in outward show. But since it was the best they had to bring, God took pleasure in it, and by His Spirit filled their hearts with joy as they laboured in it; for the very word "*Haggai*" means festive or joyful; and the Psalms cxlvi.-cl., which

are so full of "hallelujah" praise, seem to have been written then, and have been sometimes called "the Haggai Psalms."

But the Haggai temple was rich also with *prophetic interest*. God cheered the remnant, as they toiled in building it, with blessed predictions of a "latter house" that should one day stand on that very spot, the glory of which should exceed that of even "the former house" of Solomon's day. (See Haggai ii. 6-9.) That the blessed promise made in this Haggai passage does refer to a yet future time is proved by Paul's quoting it in Hebrews xii. as a passage even then *still unfulfilled*. . Paul shows in it the promise of a new heavens and a new earth, but the words include also a future house or "temple" on that very Jerusalem spot. This is proved by the mention of "the silver and the gold"—that is, the earthly riches which shall enrich it—and also the words, "IN THIS PLACE will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

Zechariah was another prophet raised up by God to cheer these builders in their work; and in Zechariah vi. 9-15 God's message to them is equally clear, predicting the day when the Man should reign "whose name is The Branch" (a millennial title of Christ: see Isa. iv. 2; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15), and that He should "build the temple of the Lord," and should "bear the glory."

These predictions point to the yet future temple in Palestine and in its earthly Jerusalem, when for His thousand years of reigning, Jesus shall possess it as "Immanuel's land," and, as the angel told Mary, "the Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." (Luke i. 32.) This is the temple of which Ezekiel had such visions given him seventy years before Haggai and Zechariah's time.

How blessedly God thus links the feeble yet godly

temple built by the remnant in their poverty, with the only future house on the same spot the rearing of which would be pleasing to Him! Truly grace leads on to glory, and is "glory in the bud!"

But there is a dark and guilty house as well as these three bright ones; it was the house that *Herod* built. As an Idumæan or Edomite, he had no divine right to be "king of the Jews;" so he flattered the ritualistic and Pharisee pride of the nation by building them a temple in place of the humble Haggai one, and made it so costly that even the disciples involuntarily admired its "goodly stones." But its pride was its condemnation; it boasted of the "forty-six years" it took in building. And, as if the more to expose its dark and guilty character, it was the only one of the three that have as yet been built, in which HE ever stood who was "greater than Solomon," and as "the true light" made its darkness manifest. Rich, with whatever money and art in Herod's day could enrich it, Jesus still saw under all its glitter both its covetousness and the money-getting arts of its priests, and called it first a "house of merchandize," and afterwards a "den of thieves." Jesus' presence in it was in truth its only real treasure, or honour, or glory; and when He was grieved away, and His blessed and unsullied feet finally left it, "Ichabod" was on it all; and Jesus said, "Your house" (mark, no longer "My Father's house"), "*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." And in the day when that nation is fashioned anew out of a remnant, and all of them are saved by grace, and welcome Jesus, their own Messiah, the house that receives Him through the Prince's entrance (see Ezekiel) will be the temple of Christ's millennial reign—that "latter house" foretold by Haggai.

And meantime, whatever other building may stand on that spot before the awful judgments of Christ's kingdom-day have cleared it for the Ezekiel temple to be built there, they will only be buildings of man's guilty wealth and boastful pride, and will be but a continuation as it were of the "desolate house" of Herod's time; for Jesus will still be saying, "Ye shall not see Me." Call it by whatever name men will, utter in it whatever creed they choose, establish in it any outward ritual or liturgy they like, it will still be to Jesus, and to all who love Him, but the same "desolate house."

Yea, let the now scattered Jewish nation regain their land and Jerusalem as its capital, and build it once more to suit their ancient Levitical rites—let them offer in it once more the morning and evening lamb of even *their* burnt-offering, it will then be only more than ever the "desolate house," and such an "abomination" to God as will bring upon it the desolating judgments of Christ's kingdom-day.

Matt. xxiv. 15, &c. shows that there is again to be a guilty Jewish temple on that spot. In it the lie of the Man of sin is to be enacted, by his image standing in its holy place.

Thus the guilty Herod temple is linked with a yet future similar structure for Antichrist, just as the previous Haggai house, which it pushed aside, is linked in the page of Scripture with the millennial temple described in Ezekiel. And naturally so, because of similarity of character. Pride, and boast of wealth, and rejection of Jesus, link the two former; while God's grace working by His Spirit in the hearts of His saints, and the smile of His favour, link the latter.

Whereabouts we now are, in the stream of events brought before us by these four temples, it is the duty and privilege of God's waiting saints to learn.

H. D.

## THE HOLY RIVER.

EZEKIEL xlvii. 1-12.

THIS wonderful vision will be literally fulfilled upon the earth when "the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." *Then* "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it;" and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy mountain. *Then* "all Israel shall be saved," and there shall even "be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. . . . Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord."

"Oh, what a bright and blessed world,  
This groaning earth of ours will be,  
When from its throne the tempter hurled,  
Shall leave it all, O Lord, to Thee!"

How marvellous will be the glory of that blessed time! The temple reared in all its majesty; the glory of the Lord visible to all nations (Isaiah lxvi. 18); the pillar of fire by night, and of cloud by day, overshadowing the holy city (see Isaiah iv. 5, 6); and the holy river flowing down out of the sanctuary; and spreading its fertilizing streams on every side.

This river will issue from the sanctuary of the Lord, from the place of His throne, and the place of the soles of His feet. (Ezek. xliii. 7.) They are holy waters, and will be the earthly representation of the fountain of living waters which flows from Christ. They will be literal waters, possessing wonderful invigorating and fertilizing powers, so that wherever these waters flow everything will

live. They will flow toward the east country and go down into the desert, making the desert to blossom and bud, and the wilderness like the garden of Eden. Those vast arid deserts, the waste howling wilderness, will all be turned into a fruitful field. The Dead Sea will be healed and filled with fish, and peace and plenty reign throughout that happy land.

Again, the virtue of that holy river will be so great, that on each side of it trees will grow. Trees which will bear fresh fruit each month; their fruit for food, their leaves for medicine.

Behold the rich provision of our God! All nations will come up to Jerusalem to worship, and no sooner do they tread beside these living waters, than all their need is met. The supply of fruit so plentiful, it cannot be exhausted; the waters so reviving, that nothing else will be desired; the shade so pleasant, that they will love to walk or rest beneath it. No burning sun to smite by day; no dreary darkness during night; no beast of prey or envenomed snake; but rest and safety, joy and gladness, filling every heart. The temple rearing itself before their eyes, and *they* intent on drawing near, to see the glory of the Lord, and to worship at His feet.

Zech. xiv. 8 teaches us that those living waters will go two ways; half of them toward the former sea (the Mediterranean), and half of them toward the hinder sea (the Dead Sea). "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. . . . there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21.) Not one river, nor two; but broad rivers and streams, all issuing from the sanctuary, and scattering blessing all around. Is not this a beautiful picture? Imagination fades away; its powers cannot portray a scene so lovely, so perfect in all its parts.

But there is a glorious heavenly counterpart to this, of which we read in Rev. xxii. 1, "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." There is also a spiritual application of it when we meditate on the love that flowed from the broken heart of the Lamb of God when He was stricken, smitten, and afflicted for our sins.

Those earthly waters will issue out of the sanctuary; that is the secret of their wonderful power. And who can tell the precious, priceless virtue of those living streams which flow continually from Christ! Only let them flow richly over our souls, and we shall be fruitful indeed.

The trees that grow by that river will bring forth new fruit each month for the multitudes that throng Jerusalem; and if our souls are rooted beside the river of God's love, the fruits of righteousness will abound and flourish, twelve manner of fruits, each one in its season, and fresh fruit each month (Rev. xxii. 2), each fruit of the Spirit abounding in us, and ready to yield its pleasant clusters to any who like to gather them—patience, meekness, faith, love, endurance, joy, courage, praise, and self-denial, one and all ready at hand, just as occasion needs them.

Everything will live where those waters come. So also the power and energy of life will overspread our hearts, and barren though they be, yea, like the parched desert, these living waters will quickly make us like a watered garden filled with every pleasant and beauteous plant. Oh, may we know far more of their healing and invigorating power!

We read of miry places and marshes which shall *not* be healed. There may be many such in our hearts; miry places where these waters do not come. These miry places

are the secret of our barrenness. The Lord enable us to search them out, and remove the hindrance to the inflow of these precious streams, and then "they shall be healed, because these waters shall come thither." This is the secret of healing, perfect healing, so that every hindrance to life, prosperity, and fruitfulness may be removed, and out of our bellies may flow rivers of living water.

Israel's portion *shall be* theirs in the coming day. All these promises shall be literally fulfilled to them in the land which God has promised them; but in the meantime, while Israel is cast aside, we are called to grasp and enjoy the heavenly and spiritual reality of which all these earthly blessings are a shadow. The Lord enlarge our hearts, and give us power to *take* what His love has *given* us.

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## THE LIGHT OF PROPHECY.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 PETER i. 19.

It is very precious to see what a place "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" had in the heart of him who said, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

The beloved absent Master was never forgotten by the loving faithful Peter—that Master with whom he had walked in Galilee, whom he had seen die on the cross, and ascend in glory into heaven: and with the blissful assurance that the same Jesus would come again as He had gone, Peter "returned to Jerusalem with great joy." (Luke xxiv. 52.)

We cannot overrate the influence of this hope upon the apostles; and they persistently sought to stamp it deeply upon the faith of their followers.



Filled with this hope himself, Peter pressed consistency and godliness on those saints to whom he wrote, that so they might have an entrance abundantly "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The apostles had gone outside Jerusalem with Christ, and as "strangers and pilgrims" were henceforth to be outside it in life, in spirit, and in worship; "outside the camp" in fellowship with Him who suffered "outside the gate."

Peter allowed nothing to draw off his thoughts from that blessed hope. Death, he knew, would come to him, for his Lord had told him so; but he accepted it as a legacy of suffering and of triumph; and his earnest words, though regarded by the scoffers as nothing but "cunningly devised fables," must have helped and strengthened the martyr spirit of the church in those days of persecution and suffering.

The voice from the excellent glory on the mount of transfiguration was an expression of God's delight in Christ; but the glory itself foreshadowed that day, when the once crucified King of the Jews should come as God's King to uphold the pillars of the earth, for which He laid the foundation by His death.

The prophetic word was a light that shone brightly on the path of the suffering saints. Its cheering beams yielded present spiritual power to faith, and sustained the patience of their hope; and the world around, when seen in the light of that coming kingdom and glory, was but as a dark place, or, as the word in the original signifies, "*a place of abject, squalid wretchedness and poverty.*"

What was the wealth of the world to one who had the heavenly city clearly in view? It was but poverty. What was earth's glory, but beggary? What its magni-

ficence, but wretchedness? If we understand and accept the singular expressiveness of the word which is here translated "a dark place," we shall see Peter's estimate of things around, and shall be preserved from the attractions with which the enemy seeks to beguile and to turn us aside. We are called to seek "a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." All else is resting on the sand, which God's mighty water-floods will soon overwhelm and destroy.

The light of prophecy shines "until the day dawn and the day-star arise"—in our hearts *now* by faith, and *in fact* in the future. To those who regard prophetic truth as unpractical we would specially commend this verse. It shows us how intensely practical God designed prophecy to be, guiding the eye as to the future, and enabling the heart to bear its own disappointments, and also those in the church, and in the world.

But while in chapter i. the apostle thus clearly shows the value of prophetic Scriptures, in chapter ii. he unfolds the corrupting process that would go on in professing Christianity, of which Balaam stands before his mind as the fitting type. (v. 15.) Balaam stood with eyes opened to see the visions of God, and his ears "heard the words of God," yet he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and his folly was rebuked by a dumb ass. So now we see a Christianity that promises liberty, but is itself the slave of inward corruption. It seemed to have escaped much of the outward pollution of heathendom, but is again fast falling into a deeper than heathen defilement. Such a Christianity makes the scene around us indeed a dark and filthy place; and we increasingly need to be put in remembrance of these things, and to look at them in the clear light of prophecy. Then we shall not be misled by glitter and show, but weighing all and measuring all in God's

sanctuary, and by His word, altered circumstances will not in our eyes alter God's truth.

But as the second chapter reveals the corruptions of the present, so the last chapter carries on our mind to the fulfilment of all God's purposes in a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. At the same time he forewarns us of the scoffers who shall arise, and pointing to the continuance of things around, shall say, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

Satan has done his utmost to make the church forget the coming and kingdom of our Lord, of which the Spirit would ever remind us; and as attention is awakened in these last days to *the hope of the coming*, we must expect that the devil will raise up scoffers. Walking after their own desires, they will especially deny this hope, because it shows their self-will to be folly, and their ways madness. Man does not like to be disturbed in his plans and purposes; and the warning that the Lord will come as a thief in the night is an unwelcome intrusion, to one who wants to take his ease, and to live in the hope that to-morrow will be as to-day, and yet more abundant.

Our present object is not to unravel the dispensational teaching of this interesting chapter, but simply to point out for what purpose prophetic light is given us. From verse 11 to the end of the epistle the apostle shows some of the great purposes of God in making us wise as to the future:

1st. To lead to holiness of life. "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (behaviour) and godliness;" *i.e.* the hope should enter into the whole tenor and tone of our life. (v. 11.)

2nd. That we should be "looking out for and hastening the coming of the day of God." Man's day has rolled on six thousand years, and is rolling on still in its sad and

sorrowful course; and while we cry, "Thy kingdom come," we are commanded to be looking out for it, and to hasten its advent.

3rd. That we should "be diligent to be found of Him in peace, spotless, and blameless." These words "be diligent," and "give diligence" (in chapter i.), show how much divine activity should be increased, both in our souls and in our lives, because we "look for such things."

4th. To be a help to steadfastness against the error of the wicked, by which so many are led away. This is no small matter when we remember the evils foretold as coming in through "false teachers," and ending in "damnable heresies."

All these purposes of God will be accomplished in us if the last verse of this solemn epistle be but true of us, and we "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

H. G.

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## THE TWOFOLD POSTURE OF THE SOUL AT THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Remarks on Exodus xii. 11-13; Luke xxii. 14. By T. N.

THERE is a twofold posture for the soul in the commemoration of the sufferings and death of the spotless Lamb of God; and these two postures are presented to us in these two portions of Scripture.

There is the Egypt posture—standing; and the posture in the land—reclining.

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is contemplated in Scripture as a stranger and pilgrim here, and as having a citizenship in heaven—raised up together, and made to

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We partake of the Lord's Supper in this twofold character.

God was not only particular in His appointments touching the passover lamb, and how it was to be dressed, but the posture of the Israelite in Egypt on that night was also appointed. "Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover." The truth symbolized by the posture of the Israelites in Egypt is our pilgrim character in this world. That posture was not again taken; it was peculiar to that night, but was always to be remembered. Of this wilderness-position of the Church of God the apostle Peter speaks: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end." (1 Peter i. 13.)

"Your shoes on your feet, your staff in your hand." Is there no word for us here, beloved? Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us. Do *we* keep the feast as strangers and pilgrims, with girded loins? Are our shoes on our feet, or do we think that a pair of slippers will do for our pilgrim journey? Are we prepared for the ruggedness of the way—"your shoes on your feet, and your staff in hand;" expecting to have enemies to overcome, as well as ruggedness to be endured, or, as we read in Eph. vi., "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"?

"Ready to tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour we have found."

"And ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover." Why in haste? Because, beloved friends, though they themselves were sheltered beneath the sprinkled blood, judgment hung over the Egypt-world around. And so with us. We partake of these memorials of redemption in the midst of a world over which the judgments of God hover. Eat it in haste, for, though God has sheltered His

people, He is about to pour out His judgments on the world.

That night they were thrust forth ; driven out so hastily that they had not time to leaven their bread. Ah, beloved friends, there is a significance in this. It tells us to be so prepared to leave the world, that we should neither have heart nor time to leaven the food of which we partake. This spread table bids us forsake the idols of an Egypt-world around, and eating of it in haste of soul is the best way of escaping the corruptions of evil around us.

Now let us turn, for sweet and blessed contrast, to Luke xxii. 14, 15 : "And when the hour was come, He sat down [reclined], and the twelve apostles with Him."

When the memorial was kept *in the land*, it was not with the girded loins, shod feet, and staff in hand ; but they kept it on the couch at ease. I have been told by a converted Jew, that when the passover was observed in the times of our Lord, the Jews were exceedingly particular as to their posture. Standing was not permitted, nor was sitting ; they reclined on couches around a table on which a lamb was placed, with bitter herbs. The words "sat down" signify "reclined on a couch."

"When the hour was come, He *reclined*, and the twelve apostles with Him. And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." He desired to give the disciples a foretaste of the twofold joy of having them with Him *here* and *there*. In the glory they shall recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; and He would give them a foretaste of that feast.

The chief meal was at eventide, when the labours of the day were done. The passover was to be kept between the two evenings. When the thirteenth day had closed with the setting sun, and ushered in the fourteenth, He *reclined*, and the twelve apostles with Him. God foresaw

the desire of the Lord to partake of the paschal lamb before He suffered; for in that self-same day was He to sacrifice Himself. Therefore the time was left optional—"between the two evenings." The thirteenth is closed, the fourteenth begun, and He takes the posture of the ascended Christ as if He had already accomplished His atoning work.

Mark the posture! Here is the table; there the emblems. On either side, and at the top, are couches spread, soft and easy. The twelve are with Him. Jesus is reclining—one arm on the table, with the other free to partake of the feast. Next to Him reclines John, who, in order to look into his Lord's face, must fall back upon His bosom. (Judas did not partake of the Lord's supper, but of the passover feast.) *Reclining*—this is the sweet posture of our souls—the atoning work is done. We have often sung—

"Oh that I could with favoured John  
Recline my weary head upon  
My dear Redeemer's breast!"

Well, you may do so; as redeemed by that precious blood, raised up together, seated together with Him, you may fall back, like John, into the bosom of your Lord, and there make known to Him your requests and desires. Get close up to Jesus as John did, ready to drop back (for that is the word, he fell back) on His breast. (John xiii. 25.)

Now mark the two postures!—*standing* with loins, girded, with shod feet and staff in hand, prepared to leave an Egypt-world with all its idols; and at the same time, *reclining*, realizing the completeness of redemption's work, with Jesus entering into God's rest, and hearing the Father say, "Bring forth the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry."

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to understand Eph. v. 14 as a *quotation*?

In this verse we would understand only the words "awake" and "arise," as quoted, the apostle adding to the one, "thou that sleepest," and to the other, "from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." The first we would take as the first word of Isa. lii.—"AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem"; and the latter is the first word of chap. lx. 1—"ARISE, shine; for thy light has come." Paul often thus quotes millennial Scriptures, both in his gospel labours and in his epistles to the saints. (Cf. Isa. xxix. 14 with 1 Cor. i. 19; Isa. xlix. 8 with 2 Cor. vi. 2; Isa. liv. 1 with Gal. iv. 27. Also in his gospel work—Isa. lv. 3 with Acts xiii. 34; Isa. xlix. 6 with Acts xiii. 47; and Isa. vi. 9, 10 with Acts xxviii. 26, 27, &c., &c.) And if we better understood the spiritual application of millennial Scripture to our present life and labours, as the Holy Ghost would teach it to us, then the "things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard" (cf. Isa. lxiv. 4 with 1 Cor. ii. 9) would be such present realities to us that the glories of heavenly things would eclipse all the vain show around us of things seen and temporary. May the Lord open our eyes that we may see, and our hearts to obey His call to arise and shine, for our Light *has* come.

Who are the *priests* mentioned in Exod. xix. 22:

God's purpose in Israel was that they should be a *nation* of priests, because a holy nation, that they might be, as we read in Ps. cxiv., a "sanctuary" and a "dominion" for God. As such the priestly office was not confined to any tribe. All through the patriarchal age it belonged to the heads of the families of the people, so that the father of the family was both its ruler manwards and its priest Godwards. In chap. xxiv. 5, 6, we find Moses sending "young men of the children of Israel" to offer sacrifices, while he, as head of the people, sprinkled the blood of the covenant. The essential thought of priesthood appears to be having access to the presence of God, the King, whether before the veil or within the veil. This is illustrated in 2 Sam. viii. 18, where David's sons are called *cohenim*, i.e. priests, translated "chief rulers," and so called as being allowed to come into the presence of the King. See also 1 Chron. xviii. 17, "The sons of David were (first or) chief about the King." This high honour Israel, as a nation, forfeited from the time of the golden calf, and thenceforth were to keep afar off, and priests and Levites, veils and doors, prevented their direct access to God.



## ATONEMENT AND FORGIVENESS.

ROM. v. 11; ACTS x. 43.

WHAT thoughtful person does not know that, as the result of unwisely feeding and nursing infants, disease and deformity are to be found? If this is true in nature, it is equally true, and of even more importance, in things spiritual, even as the soul is of more importance than the body.

The food of newborn souls is that same Word of God by means of which they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost; it is also the guide of their steps. Consequently, to feed aright is to feed on that Word, and to walk aright (that is, to behave correctly) is to act in obedience to it. (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.)

All Scripture is essential; there is nothing in the word of God unimportant; everything written is essential to the end for which it was written. That which is not essential to our salvation is essential to our true knowledge of God, our communion with Him, and our full obedience.

Let me then entreat young Christians to acquire correct, *i.e.* scriptural, views of God's character, and of His ways; also early, by grace, to form godly habits of watchfulness and prayerfulness, carefulness of speech and action, and unreserved obedience to His revealed will. If this is done we shall not have a believer praying to be reconciled to God, nor a preacher of the gospel telling unconverted people they are forgiven.

There is a difference between atonement and forgiveness; they are connected, yet distinct. The one was effected *for* us, but without us; the other is made true *in* us.

*Atonement* was made by Jesus to God on the cross,

and *for* us; *forgiveness* is the act of God to us in Christ, and is witnessed to in our conscience by the Holy Ghost. Atonement was made before we were born; forgiveness, or remission of our sins, took place *when* we believed; we *then* "received remission of sins." (Acts x. 43; xxvi. 18.)

It may be interesting and profitable to trace this difference as it appears in the scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony" on this, as on all points.

With regard to the first; that is, "*atonement*." It is a word which in our English translation frequently occurs in the Old Testament, but is only once used in the New (Rom. v. 11), where it stands as the translation of one form of the Greek word *katallassō*, "to change, exchange, to reconcile." In the Old Testament it is the translation of the Hebrew word *kipper*, "to cover." Of this, which is its true meaning, there are many happy illustrations or examples; such as Noah *pitching* the ark with pitch, Moses making the *lid* (or *cover*) of the ark of the tabernacle, which formed the mercy-seat; but there is one very interesting use of this word which Jacob made when preparing to meet his brother Esau. Having arranged his present, he said, "I will appease" (that is, cover) "him with a present, and afterward I will see his face." As between man and man, Jacob with his present put a cover between his offence and Esau's anger, and afterward saw Esau's approving countenance.

As to the second word, "*forgiveness*" or "remission." In the New Testament these are the usual translations of the same Greek word *aphesis*. There is another word, *apoluō*, "to loose," once used for forgiveness (Luke vi. 37), "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven;" but both convey the idea of release, freedom from, deliverance, as we see in Luke iv. 18, where the former of these Greek words occurs in the sentence, "To preach deliverance to the captives."

This may suffice as to the scriptural uses of the words atonement and forgiveness. Let us now enquire as to their connection with the work of Christ.

*Atonement* refers to His sufferings on the cross, when He actually bore our sins and the consequent judgment of God; when He satisfied justice, expiated guilt, and paid the ransom-price, in order that, by the *blood* "of His covenant, His prisoners might be sent out of the pit in which there was no water." (Zech. ix. 11.) In a word, when "He through the eternal Spirit offered *Himself* without spot to God," He performed the mighty deed of "covering" for ever our sin and guilt, reconciling us to God by His death, and justifying us by His blood. He then *atoned*, and laid the solid basis on which God could display His grace in justly forgiving sin; for mercy shown to the believing sinner is an act of justice to Christ. "The sure mercies of David" are just and "holy things."

*Forgiveness*, or remission, is based on atonement. "God for Christ's sake" (or in Christ) "hath forgiven you." It is the act of God towards the sinner, in virtue of his having believed in the work of Jesus on the tree. As a matter of experience it stands thus: An unconverted man finds himself convinced of sin, and discerns the fearful consequence, namely, the righteous judgment of God; he is conscious of guilt, fearful of judgment, and oppressed and bound by this awful sense of God's displeasure at his sin. While in this state the Holy Ghost, who has convinced him of sin, shows him Jesus Christ, God's Son, suffering in his stead; he believes it, the awful weight of guilt and fear is lifted from his soul; he is free, for he has obtained remission; the accusations of conscience give place to the peace of God through faith in the peace-speaking blood of Christ; the sense of God's displeasure at his sin is exchanged for the assurance of his acceptance in Christ, the

Son of God's love; and he is happy, for he is forgiven, he is delivered. Having believed, and known the blessedness of the atonement as covering his sin, love to God takes the place of enmity, and his entire condition is changed; he is reconciled, and it is his privilege to "JOY IN GOD, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he has *now received* the atonement."

This is his washing or bathing (John xiii. 10), so complete that it leaves nothing to be done ever after but to wash his feet; that is, to cleanse and keep clean his daily walk through the Word.

Henceforth God is known as a Father, and with Him as such the reconciled one has to do. The severest form the dealings of God can assume towards him now is that of Fatherly correction; and though very solemn and severe, if needs be, it is the token of Fatherly love, and the mark of his sonship, intended for his profit, to make him more holy, more like God his Father. (Heb. xii. 5-11.)

Even when conscious of sin, which indeed is too frequent an occurrence, he should have no "*conscience* of sins" (Heb. x. 2), as if the atonement had not covered all, nor should he know again his former fear of judgment and presence of guilt; but as a child he should confess his offence against a Father's love with deeper grief, and more perfect hatred of the sin than at the first, knowing that "if we confess our sins, He is *faithful* and *just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This childlike confession of *known* faults, together with the prayer for cleansing from secret faults (*i.e.* faults unknown to ourselves, but seen by God), is the secret of abiding peace and joy in the Lord, and becomes power for service and suffering.

The neglect of such confession and of such prayer leads to hardness of conscience respecting sin, until God

is, to speak with reverence, often obliged to give up His child to the commission of that which will put him to shame, even before men.

Israel of old opened and closed each day with the morning and evening lamb. Christ is our Lamb, whose blood once for all covered sin, and on the ground of it God as our Father can repeat His acts of forgiveness.

Hold fast then, beloved, to the one sacrifice of Christ, the virtue of which is perpetual, eternal, unchangeable. By it you were reconciled to God, "reconciled by His death;" and your position was entirely and for ever changed; remembering this, practise without fail the confession of your faults, as a child to a father, and so walk in peace, in the light and joy of the Lord. This, I repeat, will be your strength both for service and endurance, and you shall certainly escape the judgment of the Lord, and shame before men.

Once more, beware of false teaching on this fundamental point. The scriptural teaching is not at-one-ment (by which is meant reconciliation *without* blood, without the cross), but atone-ment, *covering by blood*, or by the one offering of Jesus Christ on the cross. Since the fall, there is nothing for man, apart from the blood of Christ, but judgment.

H. H.

## GOD'S PREPARATION OF HIS SERVANTS.

Remarks on ISAIAH vi., by T. N.

WHEN God is about to send His servants on any special mission He brings them into His own immediate presence, and in communion with Himself teaches and fits them for their public ministry. The best preparation for public ministry of the word is communion with God in private.

Before Moses was fitted for his position as the leader of

God's people, God revealed Himself to him in the burning bush. The visions of Ezekiel at the river Chebar, and of John in Patmos, show the same thing. Paul, too, is another example. When he was struck to the ground by the light from heaven, brighter than the noon-day sun, he had a special revelation of the Lord in glory as a preparation for the special testimony he was to bear.

We get the same truth here. King Uzziah having died, the prophet Isaiah is to be charged with a special message to the people; and God calls him aside into His own immediate presence, and reveals Himself in His glory and majesty.

*"I saw the Lord."* Our ideas connected with the word Lord are indefinite and vague. The Spirit of God is accurate. One title is never used instead of another without a meaning and a reason. The word LORD, when written with capital letters in our translation, usually means JEHOVAH; and occurs about four thousand times in the Old Testament. It means the self-existing One, the everlasting One, the ever-living God, the One who *is*, who *was*, and who *is to come*.

The word used here is Adonai, and not Jehovah. "Adonai" means Lord, Master, and implies sovereignty, the right of possession—my Master, my Lord; to whom I belong. It is used in the plural form in this verse, giving us the idea of trinity in unity—Father, Son, and Spirit, the three persons of the Godhead; Lord of hosts; Lord not only of heaven and earth, but of all the wide universe.

*"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne."* God is seen as the Sovereign, the throne being the symbol of dominion, majesty, and power.

*"His train filled the temple."* The temple gives us the idea of worship, and in this vision God is presented as the object of worship and adoration.

*"Above it stood the seraphim."* The word signifies "burning ones;" full of burning zeal and holy ardour. They are represented as encircling the throne of God.

*"Each one had six wings."* Now mark the use of the wings. Two to cover the face as they worship. These seraphim take the attitude of lowly, reverent adoration; they cover their faces in the presence of Him before whom they stand, with a deep sense of the glory and majesty of God. They teach us a lesson here. The poet has said—

"Man rushes in, where angels fear to tread."

*"With twain he covered his feet."* As they cover their faces, and bow their heads in lowly adoration when they worship in the presence of God, so when they descend to earth on their ministries of love to those who shall be heirs of salvation, they cover their feet. There is no display about the service of these heavenly messengers; their ministrations are silent and unseen. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him," but we are not conscious of it, we see them not; and not until we get home shall we know what their varied ministries toward us have been.

*"With twain he did fly."* Two wings ready for instant flight. These holy ones stand in the presence of God with folded wings, as we are told in Ezekiel, "When they stood they let down their wings;" but ready for immediate flight, just waiting the bidding of Him whose behests they delighted to obey, and then gladly winging their way to carry messages of comfort and cheer to those to whom they are sent.

*"And one cried unto another."* Is it some flowery peroration which they utter? some burst of flowing eloquence? Ah, no! A simple yet majestic ascription of praise to Jehovah. "*Holy, Holy, Holy,*" thrice repeated; recognizing the three persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and

Spirit. Such is the fervour, the vehemence of their cry of worship, that the posts of the door moved, and the house is filled with smoke. Various thoughts are suggested by this, but I pass on.

Now notice the effect on the prophet. "I am undone," literally "*dumb*." Isaiah, in the presence of God, and listening to the thrice-repeated ascription of praise to His holiness and majesty, is struck dumb with a sense of God's exceeding holiness and greatness, and his own defilement. "I am a man of unclean lips." He had not a word to utter. The sense of utter insufficiency and impurity closed his lips. In God's presence, and with this vision of glory and majesty before him, he could not utter rash and hasty words. His hand is on his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and he can only say with the poor leper, "Unclean, unclean." Job talked much and long till God dealt with him Himself, and revealed His glory and majesty to him; then he could say, "Now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Oh for more of such dumb speakers! God's messengers would speak to more purpose had they gone through an experience like this, so humbled, so emptied as to be dumb in the presence of God.

"*Then flew one of the seraphim.*" With what holy joy and delight did the seraph spread his wing for this errand. In Daniel we find the same thing, "Gabriel being caused to fly *swiftly*."

"*Having a live coal from off the altar.*" This is a beautiful symbol. Fire represents God's holiness and purity. But it is a coal from off the *altar*; the fire had fed on the sacrificial lamb. The fire was always burning on the altar, but the lamb was placed there morning and evening. Sin is purged, iniquity taken away, on the ground of the atonement of Christ. God's holiness and



righteousness have been satisfied, and on the ground of sacrifice the lip touched with the live coal is purged, and fitted to be the channel or instrument of God's messages.

The prophet is now ready for a divine commission. Humbled to the dust with a sense of his own sinfulness and impurity, with purged lip he is now ready to reply to the question, "Who will go for us?" "Here am I, send me." We want more such messengers, self-emptied, humbled. The word would then be with power and authority.

Thus fitted and divinely commissioned, does the prophet carry all before him? We might have thought it would be so; but no, his experience was, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" A judicial blindness had settled on the people; they rejected Isaiah's message; yea more, they also rejected the loving voice and ministry of the Messiah Himself; their hearts were hardened, and as a nation this is still their condition. Still there is and always will be a remnant, according to grace.

So now there are gospel-hardened sinners; those who have so often heard and so often rejected the message of grace that it reaches them not, they are given over to hardness and impenitence of heart; and the servant of God, faithful though he may be, and divinely commissioned too, must not be disappointed at his testimony being rejected by the many, and received only by the few.

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## THE REDEEMER.

BY THE LATE W. H. WILLIAMS.

THE Hebrew word in the Old Testament translated "Redeemer" presents to us our Lord Jesus Christ in five aspects:

1. The "*Kinsman*." Such was Christ, not only to the

children of Abraham, but also to us Gentiles. Verily He took on Him the seed of Abraham; but as truly did He become the Son of man, descended from Adam. So He became the Kinsman of the whole human race.

2. The "*Redeemer*." Leviticus xxv. 25, 47-49, teaches us that in Israel, whenever a person sold himself as a slave, or mortgaged his property, he, or the property, or both, might be redeemed. In case he could not do so himself, his next of kin had the right. The "Kinsman" was to be, if he chose, the "Redeemer." How precious thus becomes our Lord Jesus Christ to us! We had sold ourselves for nought, we had forfeited our heritage; but the One who became our Kinsman paid down (oh, so willingly!) the vast ransom, that we might rejoice in a new-found freedom, and (as further revelation shows) enter upon even a more glorious inheritance than we had lost. He "gave Himself a ransom for all." He who, in incarnation, became our Kinsman, declared Himself our Redeemer in resurrection.

3. The "*Deliverer*." This seems to be almost entirely the thought attached to the title in the Psalms and Isaiah. God's people were in bondage, groaning under the power of tyrannical masters. More than once were they in such a case, and more than once their God interposed on their behalf, and delivered them. *We* were in worse than Egyptian bondage; *our* souls were oppressed by worse enemies than Canaanites, Midianites, or Philistines; but our Redeemer was mighty. Willing to shed His blood for us, He was also able to rescue us. And believers who already, in spirit, have seen their Egyptian enemies "dead upon the sea-shore," may repeatedly sing His praise as, by faith, they daily prove His delivering power.

4. The "*Husband*." Another duty involved in kinsmanship now claims our attention, presenting, as far as human

figures can, the tender love of our Redeemer; and the intimacy of our union with Him. If the Israelite, reduced to penury, died, leaving a widow childless, the kinsman who redeemed the property was to marry the widow, and "raise up the name of the dead upon the inheritance." This is the special subject of the book of Ruth. There the wealthy one, Boaz, both redeems the property of his relative, and brings into closest union with himself the destitute and childless widow. Has this no voice for us? Israel doubtless, in days yet to come, will learn this for themselves with unspeakable joy. But does this not claim the affectionate recognition of those who, in destitution and widowhood, have been brought into a union with Christ, closer than Israel will ever know, and only faintly symbolized by the relationship between Boaz and Ruth? It does speak to us, and may well call for the adoring gratitude of those who have such a Redeemer.

5. Lastly, the "*Avenger*," as the word is also rendered. In the days immediately after the flood God's unchanging fiat had gone forth—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. ix. 6.) Under the law this was solemnly sanctioned. The "Avenger of blood" was to slay the murderer. Whether the violent death was accidental or not, the sword of the avenger was drawn, and was only sheathed either when, in the case of unintentional homicide, the slayer was sheltered in a city of refuge, or when it had been bathed in the life's blood of the murderer. There is a day at hand when the accumulated crimes of this present evil world, added to the murder of the Son of God, will meet with swift and unmitigated judgment. The One who once meekly gave Himself a ransom for all, will in the day of wrath come forth as the "Avenger of blood," and with "the sword that proceedeth out of His mouth" will smite the wicked. Then those who never fled to Him

who was the ready refuge even of inexcusably guilty sinners, will have to feel the full vengeance of Him who "treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." (Rev. xix. 15.) First (see Rev. xix.), the Kinsman-Redeemer, the greater than Boaz, in the joy of His heart, amid the glories of heaven, celebrates His nuptials with His Church; and then the same Redeemer, in His awful character of Avenger, in flaming fire takes vengeance on "them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

(Continued from page 49.)

### THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

EXODUS xxv. 10, 11, 16.

IN God's order of the vessels of the tabernacle the ARK is mentioned first. Its place was in the centre of the Holiest of all. The word *ark* simply means a coffer or chest. It was made of shittim-wood, and was emblematical of the pure, perfect, sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus. In Luke i. 35, the angel said to Mary, "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."

Within the ark were afterwards put the tables of the law, and with this agree those words foretold of the Lord in Psalm xl., and applied to Him in Hebrews x., "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, *thy law is within my heart.*"

The dimensions of the ark were two and a half cubits of length by a cubit and a half of breadth, and the same of height. Taking a cubit to be the measure from the top of the elbow to the end of the middle finger, say from 18 to 22 inches, we have in our measurement the length of it about 4ft. 6in., and the breadth and height about 2ft. 9in. ; and the exactness of these measures may remind us of those other words spoken of the Lord in the same Scriptures, "A body hast thou *prepared me*."

The ark was to be overlaid with pure gold within and without. Shittim-wood overlaid with gold foreshadowed the great mystery of godliness. "God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God," and "the word was made flesh, and dwelt (or tabernacled) among us." (John i. 1, 14.)

*Overlaid with pure gold.* To those whose eyes were blinded, God's Christ was nothing more than Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter's son ; but those whose eyes were opened could say of Him with John, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." As man He was sinless ; yet was He also very God ("Emmanuel—God with us"), and holiness was His attribute. It was not simply in the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ that God was manifested, but the glory *without* was the expression of the divine perfectness *within*. In the majestic walk of Jesus of Nazareth we see the glory of God in opening the eyes of the blind, unstopping the deaf ears, healing the sick, and cleansing the lepers. Not only so, but all was divinely pure also within as to affections, motives, and aims.

We see His shittim-wood character portrayed in Isa. lii. and liii. As Jesus of Nazareth, His visage "was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the

sons of men." He was "the man of sorrows," the "despised and rejected of men," the "root out of a dry ground." But we see the gold shining out in such a scene as we have in Mark x. 13-16, when mothers came to Him, bringing their infants. His disciples rebuked them, but He was much displeased, and said to them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." The glory similarly shines out in those words which tell of a different and heavenly scene, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xxv. 34.)

Divine love comes from within, but is manifested without. We also see the shittim-wood in Rev. v. A Lamb in the midst of the throne as having been slain. The body that hung on the tree, and was afterwards put into the sepulchre, is here seen in the midst of the throne of the highest glory. When we behold Him there we shall, like Thomas, see in His hands the print of the nails, and the spear-mark of His side. He will then be within and without the glorified Christ Jesus, the same for ever (Heb. xiii. 8), "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person." (Heb. i. 3.)

The ark was in the midst of the Holy of Holies, and was typical of Jesus in the midst of His people. He will occupy the centre place of the heavenly temple, and the praises and service of heaven will gather round Him for ever and ever. Oh, may we gather around and exalt Him here as we shall hereafter in heaven, where both the shittim-wood and the pure gold will be for ever known in their blessed perfection!

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“THE MORNING COMETH.”

2 SAMUEL xxiii. 5.

IN his “last words” the “sweet psalmist of Israel” looked forward to Him who should be as “the light of the morning,” even “a morning without clouds;” and the dark clouds of his latter days, which also cast a painful gloom over the future of his house, only made that cloudless morn the brighter and more precious to his heart. There are those who in our time are afflicted for the affliction of Joseph, and who sorrow like Nehemiah, when he wept over the ruins of the house and city of God; and to such we would recall David’s words—“Although my house be not so with God; yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it (*i.e.* my house) not to grow.”

Such also were the thoughts of Paul in his second epistle to Timothy, as he stood near his martyr’s crown, and had to say, with sorrow of heart, “All they which are in Asia be turned away from me.” The house he was leaving behind him truly was “not so with God,” and would soon become as a great house filled with vessels to dishonour as well as to honour. Still he could say, “The foundation of God standeth sure (like David’s covenant), having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His.” This satisfied Paul’s soul Godwards; and the command, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,” satisfied him as to the path of the individual believer, or of those who should together seek to honour His holy name.

H. G.

## ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

MUCH truth in few words is a marked feature of God's Bible as a whole, and especially of this precious book of Proverbs. The sparkling brightness also with which they present the truth helps to attract the dullest reader or listener, and fixes it in the heart and memory.

The Proverbs truly answer to Solomon's own description of "a word fitly spoken;" viz., "apples of gold in pictures of silver," or rather, citrons of gold in basket-work of silver. (Chap. xxv. 11.) In its delicate tracery the basket of silver filigree-work has only enough of the metal to hold the fruit together, and tempt you by its fragrance and its beauty. So the brevity of Solomon's proverbs helps to win you to the truths they teach.

Nor was *pains* spared in their preparation any more than wit. As we read and study them, we are reminded of the preacher's diligence spoken of in Eccles. xii. 9, 10: "Moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even *words of truth*."

We are told that these "many proverbs" were no less than "three thousand" in number. (1 Kings iv. 32.) We have, therefore, but a few of the many Solomon must have uttered, and which those "happy" servants of his, as the queen of Sheba called them (1 Kings x. 8), must have listened to and counted up, as they stood continually before him, and heard his wisdom. If each verse of the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were counted as one proverb, we should even then have but little more than a



thousand; whereas the actual number preserved for us must be looked for only from Prov. x.-xxix (and some of these are duplicates), together with some proverb-like portions of Ecclesiastes. But we may be sure God has given us those that we most need; just as we cannot doubt that the one "Song of Solomon" handed down to us is the best for us of all the "thousand and five" of which he was the author.

No one knows by whose compiling care the book of Proverbs took its present form; but since chapters xxv.-xxix. were an addition made by "the men [*i.e.* the scribes] of Hezekiah," the book must have been completed long after Solomon's time. Yet probably all of it, including even chapters xxx. and xxxi., are Solomon's own words; and "Agur" (*i.e.* "the gatherer"), and "king Lemuel" (a word which means "dedicated to God"), are only other names for Solomon. This leaves only chapters x.-xxiv. as the proverbs which Solomon could have himself collected.

It seems natural to think that this was done toward the close of his life, and that these priceless words of wisdom reach us as the fruit of restoring grace to his soul in his later years. If so, it must have been a companion volume to the book of Ecclesiastes, in which the preacher had evidently reached an age at which he could look back upon all the indulgences he had allowed himself, and all the experiments he had made of men and things in his previous life. (See Eccles. ii.)

And if it be true, as one would love to think, that before he died Solomon's soul was restored to that "fear of the Lord" which "is clean and endureth for ever" (of which his father David had sung in Ps. xix.), what could he have more desired than to save his son Rehoboam from wandering from wisdom's ways?

In such days of restored communion with God, how precious would be all that could still be gathered up of the wisdom given to him in his early days! "The words of the wise," that had been "as goads" both to himself and to others (Eccles. xii. 11), *urging on* both the king and his subjects to wisdom and heavenly virtue, would be once again welcomed for their very sharpness. "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it." (Ps. cxix. 140.) He would call to mind the days when, in answer to his godly prayer at Gibeon (1 Kings iii.), "God gave him wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore." In those days not only the queen of Sheba "came to prove him with hard questions," but "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings [*i.e.* sent by all kings] of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings iv. 29, 34.)

And when at last he no longer looked on the wine, because it was "red in the cup" (Prov. xxiii. 31), but forsook the intoxication of his mere domestic pleasures, and the still worse sin of the idolatries into which they led him (see 1 Kings xi. 1-10), who can wonder that he made what collections he could of his own early utterances? Licentiousness in the king, and a corrupt court, would soon make the scribes of God's precious word forget their work; and many of the "three thousand proverbs" were not then perhaps to be found. Still he used all that he could recover; for the restored soul seeks to repair the breach in Zion's walls just where his own sinful ways have made it.

Thus David's last words (2 Sam. xxiii.) were about his own family, against whose welfare and blessing he had so sinned in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, and in his behaviour to Absalom; and all Solomon's remaining

wisdom is used in the book of Proverbs for a similar purpose.

He uses *skill* as well as diligence. The first nine chapters show this. They seem to be intended as a preface to the proverbs themselves. In these chapters Solomon presents to his son that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom," under every possible form of *womanly beauty and attraction*. It is as if he remembered how sinfully and sadly his "many wives" had turned his own heart away "from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice," and he would now save his son from the same snare by "the expulsive power," as one has called it, "of a new and a higher affection."

"My son," says he (chap. v.), "drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe: let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love." Such are the alluring emblems by which he would give attraction to the first verse of the chapter: "My son, attend unto *my wisdom*, and bow thine ear to *my understanding*."

In all the first nine chapters of the book the grace and love of God to man is set forth by this same emblem of the virtuous and faithful woman and wife; and a continual enlargement of the subject may be observed as the chapters follow each other, and a correspondingly fuller and more solemn description of sin and its allurements, under the figure of the "strange woman" and the "harlot." What a godly use for Solomon to make of his sorrowful experience, of having taken to himself many "strange

wives," "women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites, . . . nations concerning which Jehovah said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you."

The "virtuous woman" is again the subject at the close of the book (see Prov. xxxi. 10-31); only here it is her *profitableness* to men by her many *good works*, as before it was the *joy* she gives to the heart of him who embraces her.

She is seen in this last chapter as one who enriches her husband by a diligence that ceases not day nor night; so that "her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her; [saying], Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her *own works* praise her in the gates."

How true it is that "the grace of God which hath appeared to all men," and "bringeth salvation," enters also into all the details of life, and shows us that our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity [lawlessness], and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works*."

If it was for Rehoboam's sake that Solomon made this collection of his proverbs, and addressed *him* in his frequent and very tender word, "My son," it is sad indeed to have so little evidence that Rehoboam ever profited by his father's sorrowful experiences, or his affectionate and precious counsels. But no part of God's word is of any merely "private interpretation," any more than is the word of prophecy. Whenever "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," they uttered

what was suitable for all ages, and for all circumstances of God's people, more or less ; and this has been richly true of the book of Proverbs, and still is.

In its pages we hear God our Father's voice addressing *us* each time we read the loving words, "My son;" and Paul distinctly quotes Proverbs iii. 11, 12 when he says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Hebrews xii. 5, 6.) Truly Paul had not read the book of Proverbs in vain, nor did he think that he himself, or his suffering fellow-saints, could afford to forget its exhortations.

And we may be sure that a "greater than Solomon" was a delighted reader of what Solomon wrote. What a joy must those first nine chapters of Proverbs have been to Jesus our Lord! With what delight would He hear God His Father's voice addressing Him at each occurrence of the words, "My Son!" because His was the listening ear of a perfectly obedient heart. None ever had occasion to tell Him that He had forgotten one of its exhortations, as Paul had to tell the Hebrews. And who can conceive the joy with which the wondrous child of twelve years old, who had more understanding than His teachers, or than the ancients (*i.e.* elders) of Israel, must have read Proverbs viii? How blessedly did the Holy Ghost portray the Eternal Word in that chapter a thousand years before the Word became flesh and tabernacled amongst us, and read it for His own instruction!

Verily the past and the present alike tell that the book of Proverbs has not been written in vain. Some remarks on the study of the actual Proverbs themselves must be the subject of another paper, if the Lord will.

## MEEKNESS AND MAJESTY.

"In thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness."—PSALM xlv. 4.

THUS wondrously in the song of Christ's millennial triumph the Holy Ghost strikes a chord reaching back to the moral glory of His lowly days on earth, linking in the meekness of God's Lamb between the eternal pillars of truth and righteousness; just as in Rev. v. we find that He who alone could loose the seven-sealed book of judgment was the "Lamb as it had been slain." "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things."

In the day when He shall "ride prosperously," going forth conquering and to conquer, still the exaltation is linked with the humbling, the victory with obedience unto death.

In all this has He not left us "an example that we should follow His steps"? We readily render lip service, but how little do we tread the lowly path of Him who was sent into the world to be the world's light! He who sent us forth to preach the gospel of His grace said also, "Ye are the light of the world." He gave "some evangelists;" but to all His saints He gave the power of a life in resurrection, which every one might see, and grace for a reflection of the meek and lowly One, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

This is our mightiest gospel—a living representation to the world of Christ crucified and Christ risen, until the day when we are with Him in His majesty and glory. Are we preaching it day by day so as to be read of all men?

A. E. W.

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

DID *Judas* partake of the Lord's Supper?

From the narrative in *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *John* we should certainly say "No;" but had we the gospel of *Luke* only, we should answer "Yes." In all the gospels the Lord points out the traitor, and this may help us to reconcile the apparent contradiction. See *Matt.* xxvi. 21-25; *Mark* xiv. 18-21; *Luke* xxii. 21-23; *John* xiii. 21-35. *Matthew* and *Mark* distinctly state that it took place *before* the partaking of the Lord's Supper by the disciples; and *John* says, that when *Judas* had been pointed out as the betrayer, in answer to his own question, "Lord, is it I?" and by the giving of the sop to him by our Lord, "*he went immediately out: and it was night.*" This of itself would be conclusive that he never could have remained to partake with the others of the Lord's feast of dying love; for *Mark's* words, "It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish," show us that the sop was given him in connection with the Paschal Supper. Should any object to the inference drawn from *John* xiii., that in verse 2 we read "Supper being ended," we would observe that the Greek there is *δειπνον γενομενον*, and should be rendered "supper being come;" that is, it being supper-time. In *Luke's* account the Paschal lamb and the Paschal cup are spoken of in their relation to "the kingdom of God." Immediately following, but distinct from it, is the mention of the Lord's Supper. From this we infer that *Luke* gives the account of the setting apart of the bread and wine by our Lord, but not of its being partaken of by the disciples; and this is confirmed by the solemn words, "BUT, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table" (*v.* 21), words that abruptly follow the solemn thanksgiving, and seem to indicate a hindrance that must be removed ere the bread and wine could be partaken of. The hinderer goes out, and then our Lord could breathe out those precious words, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him," &c. (*John* xiii. 31-35.) It is therefore immediately after this that we would place the participation of the Lord's Supper as narrated in *Matthew* and *Mark*, and thus make it distinct from the setting apart of the elements indicated by *Luke*. The apparent difference becomes thus an unfolding of what the Lord's Supper is designed to be—an occasion of self-judgment.

Thus the Holy Ghost in the assembly of saints would still guard the holiness of the Lord's Supper, and would send out into the night those who are of the darkness. He would always gather in the weak and the loving, and only exclude the traitorous and the false.

How was the promise of Gen. xlix. 10 fulfilled as to the sceptre not departing from Judah "*until Shiloh come*"?

The divine purpose was that the sceptre of Israel should be in only the tribe of Judah; the children of Jacob were all to bow down to Judah (v. 8); and this promise was to continue. (v. 10.) Zedekiah, the last king that ever sat on the throne of David, was of Judah's tribe, and there will never be another God-given or God-owned "king of the Jews" until the once crucified Jesus sits on the throne of His father David as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." Thus Jacob's prediction of the sceptre *never departing* from Judah will be seen to have been fulfilled when Christ reigns as "Shiloh." The word *Shiloh* means "the one to whom it belongs, the owner," and is a title of Christ, not in the days of His weakness and rejection, but in His days of reigning power. Compare with Gen. xlix. 10 Ezekiel xxi. 25-27, where Zedekiah is spoken of as the "profane wicked prince of Israel," on account of whose sins both the diadem (or rather, mitre) of the priest and the crown of the king should be taken away, and no successor is spoken of until "Shiloh," the owner come; for the decree is "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Many who do not see the second coming of Christ to set up His kingdom in Jerusalem, refer Gen. xlix. 10 to the first advent, and bring forward the fact that no one was styled king of Judea after Herod the Great, who died within two years of the birth of Jesus. But they forget that from Zedekiah till Herod the Great there was no one bearing that title at all. All those six hundred years the sceptre was held by God in abeyance, and still is, until He comes who shall be crowned with many diadems, one of which will be Prince of Judah and King of Israel. Meantime we see in Herod the Great, the Edomite, a type of the yet future Jewish antichrist, who, as the false prophet and the lamb-like beast, will ingratiate himself with that nation, and usurping power over them, will subserve the interests of the head of the Roman earth, the beast that rises out of the sea. (Rev. xiii.) These both perish at the battle of Armageddon, when "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" shall appear as "King of kings, and Lord of lords."



## ENOCH, THE MAN WHO PLEASSED GOD.

GEN. v. 21-24; HEB. xi. 5, 6; JUDE 14, 15.

THE history of this man of God is given us in three places in the Scriptures; each of them alike brief, but comprehensive, and very significant. There is scarcely a history given of which less is written, yet in which more is said; and we may well desire that Enoch's biography should become true of us. So let it be, Lord Jesus.

Enoch means *dedicated*, or perhaps more properly, *made fit for the use or object for which anything is intended*. Thus we find the word used for preparing God's house and altar for the purpose for which they were built; as also for the training and preparing of a child for his path in life.\* May we seek this trained and disciplined condition of soul, which will secure our being really dedicated to our Master's service, and prepared as vessels fit for His use.

The three scriptures in which Enoch is mentioned are the following, which we place in the order in which we desire to speak of them: Heb. xi. 5, 6; Gen. v. 21-24; and Jude 14, 15. In the first we see that he *pleased* God; in the second that he *walked with* God; and in the third that he *witnessed for* God.

\* The use of the word will be seen in the following passages: Of God's house (1 Kings viii. 63; 2 Chron. vii. 5; Ezra vi. 16); of God's altar (Num. vii. 10; Neh. xii. 27); of a man's dwelling (Deut. xx. 5; Ps. xxx.; title); of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. xii. 27); and lastly of a child (Prov. xxii. 6), "Train up a child in the way he should go"—prepare him for it, dedicate him to it.

## I. HE PLEASSED GOD.

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is [becomes] a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Heb. xi. 5, 6.)

This latter verse gives a few helpful thoughts as to what is essential to pleasing God. There must be a *coming* to God, as the *worshipper* when he draws near in full assurance of faith, having the heart sprinkled and body washed (Heb. x. 20); or as the *afflicted* and *tried* one, who finds in God a refuge and defence. *Coming* implies faith and trust.

Faith says "HE IS." He, the God of our hearts and hopes, is as a mighty reality. It is not merely that God exists; all know that; but only faith knows the God who is, and that He is the living God, the almighty God, the I AM, the Jehovah of His people.

But there is not only a coming and a believing; there is also a *diligently seeking*. This is essential to pleasing Him. It is not the careless seeker or the dreaming wisher who receives, but the one who diligently seeks; seeking as the woman sought, who, having lost her piece of silver, lights a candle, sweeps the house, and seeks diligently till she find it. Ah! God keeps us waiting long for a desired blessing, not because He has pleasure in keeping us waiting, but to stir up laggard hearts and lazy steps to a diligent seeking.

Let us notice a few things that are pleasing to God. Rom. xii. 1 tells us that the body presented as a living and holy sacrifice is *well pleasing* (or acceptable) to God. Heb. xiii. 16 tells us that doing good to others, and communicating of such things as we possess, are sacrifices *well*

*pleasing* to God. In Phil. iv. 18 the gifts sent to the apostle are called "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, *well pleasing* to God." In Eph. v. 9, 10 we are told that the fruit of the Light (not Spirit, as in our version) is "in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is acceptable (*well pleasing*) to the Lord." In Col. iii. 20 the obedience of children to parents is said to be *well pleasing* to the Lord. In 2 Cor. v. 9 we are told that the great object of our ambition should be to seek that we may be accepted of Him, that is, may *please Him well*; for we are already "accepted in the Beloved;" and Paul winds up the epistle to the Hebrews with this mighty prayer, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through (in) the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is *well pleasing* in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Chap. xiii. 20, 21.)

And let it not be thought our God is a hard Master, hard to please. Nay, verily, none so easily pleased, if only the heart be right and the eye single to His glory.

## II. HE WALKED WITH GOD.

"Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Gen. v. 21-24.)

In a list of many names, of each of which the only record is, he lived, he begat children, and he died, we find one of whom it is recorded that he "walked with God." This is the history of the inner life of Enoch. He walked upon his high places, as Habakkuk did in after days.

Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed. It was not God who agreed to walk with Enoch, but Enoch who humbled himself to walk with God. It is often long before this first step in the matter of communion with God is taken. We want God to walk with us in our self-devised plans and paths; and when, after bitter experience and sore disappointment, we find this will not do, we seek to make a compromise with God, and would fain walk with Him so far and no further, according to reservations and restrictions of our own making. But this will not do. God has His own holy path, and can walk in no other.

The expression to "*walk before God*" is used respecting Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. xvii. 1; xxiv. 40; xlviii. 15), and also of David (Ps. lvi. 13; cxvi. 9); but the expression, "*walk with God*," is only used of Enoch and of Noah. (Gen. v. 24; vi. 9.)

It is not easy to define this walking with God; but the path of the Lord Jesus in communion with the Father gives us the best conception of it. The different gospels show us His perfect walk with God, and it is also spoken of in the prophets. In Him there was no reservation, no compromise; His surrender of Himself was absolute and perfect. Thus He is revealed as awakened morning by morning, having His ear opened, and His obedient footsteps turned not back from what the willing ear heard, and the subject heart delighted in; for He could say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." Thus the blessed Son of God walked with God, and again and again received the witness from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This voice was heard on various occasions by those around Him, but was ever heard in His inmost soul by Him who said, "I do always those things that please Him."

*"Enoch walked with God."* This is not said of him before the birth of his son Methuselah. He may have known his God more or less during those sixty-five years, but it would seem that at this period his life assumed a higher tone. God had come more into it, and a fellowship unknown before had sprung up between God and His servant—a fellowship which necessarily altered the current of his life and its ways, and distinguished him among his fellows as the man of God. What transpired to bring about this change we know not; suffice it for us to know that so it was, and so it may be again, when any soul lays hold on God, laying its will prostrate at His feet.

Another feature in this high and heavenly communion was, that it was abiding. *"He walked with God three hundred years."* Thus long did he walk in the light of fellowship with God, not afar off, but nigh, like Moses on the mount, when alone with God those forty days and forty nights. How precious the contemplation of such a life! And if of one, why not of another? Why not of any of us as children of God? Enoch's life is not an exception, it is an example; and God only knows how many followers Enoch has had during the long years of this world's guilty history.

He never waxed weary of this divine companionship. Doubtless it was sweeter and sweeter every year; and the more evil the world grew around him, the more closely did he cleave to Him who was his God, his life, his all—a Portion that ever satisfied, a Fountain that never became dry. So it was till the last moment that he trod the earth; for we find it again and again repeated, "And Enoch walked with God;" and then in a moment "he was not; for God took him." Thus "he was translated, that he should not see death."

## III. HE WITNESSED FOR GOD.

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” (Jude 14, 15.)

Here is Enoch's prophetic testimony as it had been handed down, and now for the first time incorporated in the sacred record of Jude. No doubt the flood is indicated in the first instance in this solemn and awful prophecy. Methuselah, the name Enoch gave to his son, means *at his death He will send*, and indicates that at the very commencement of those days of holy walking with God, God led him into the secret of His counsel as to coming judgment. They were dark days. Men were beginning to multiply, and their longevity must have produced an experience of wickedness in the aged and a precocity in evil in the young, such as we can form little conception of; for if the sinner of ninety be a greater adept in sin, and more hardened in crime than a youth of nineteen, what shall we say of the sinner of nine hundred, in comparison with whom the man of ninety is but a youth.

As Enoch began to walk with God, he began also to witness against the ungodliness he saw, and the hard speeches he heard. He was not only faithful to God in the secret of a high and heavenly companionship, but also in the outer sphere of a rebellious world. There was no smoothing down of God's word. He uttered his terrible prophecy with all the severity of language the circumstances demanded.

Like Elijah, he stood forth as a man of intimate communion with God, and of faithful, unflinching witness against those who rose up against Him. Elijah's life was oftentimes in danger. How it fared with Enoch we know

not; but a significant little word, "he was not found," seems to imply that he was taken away out of the perils that surrounded him.

May God bless this short and hallowed history, and write its words more legibly on the pages of our inner and outer life, that we may yield a clearer testimony while here below, and even in death, if such be our portion, give a bright witness of fellowship with Him who is the resurrection and the life. But, as Enoch's end specially reminds us, our hope is to be caught up without dying at the coming of the Lord. May our testimony correspond with this blessed and glorious expectation. H. G.

## CONFESSION.

### A WORD TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 JOHN i. 9.

WE cannot have settled rest and peace of soul, unless we see the distinction between the one past putting away of guilt by our God as Judge, and the *present* forgiveness of sins which we continually need from God as our Father.

By one offering Christ "hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Atonement has been made; the guilt is put away; and "by Him all that believe are justified from all things." As Himself our Righteousness above, He meets each charge against us. There is no need for further sacrifice; the one sacrifice once offered ever suffices, and that precious blood which has been shed

"Will never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed church of God  
Be saved to sin no more."

Thus the holiness of God is *continually* and *for ever* met. The sword of justice has been sheathed in the

heart of Christ, and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Blessed indeed is he "to whom the Lord will not impute sin," and whose sins and iniquities He remembers no more.

How glorious is the grace of our God! How rich! how full! how free! What human mind could have devised a salvation so perfect, so glorious, so certain? An all-sufficient Sacrifice; a Saviour mighty to save; a Substitute to bear our sins; a Surety who pledged Himself to meet every charge against us; and a great High Priest, ever living to make intercession for us. Truly our souls will make their boast in the Lord, and in His salvation how greatly will we rejoice!

Still there is a danger, and a very great one. There is such a thing as sinning against this faithful, changeless love, and being careless as to grieving that blessed Lord.

Unconfessed and indulged sin is a very terrible thing. It is the fruit of a careless, hardened, and ungrateful heart, and must and will bring down our Father's rod upon us as His children. As God, He *justifies* us because of the shed blood (Rom. viii. 33, 34), and therefore there is no hell for us; but as our Father, He cannot *forgive* while we are careless and impenitent; and unless we humble ourselves before Him, He must deal with us to bring us to repentance. (See Ps. lxxxix. 30-34, and Job xxxvi. 7-11.) The Lord preserve us from such base ingratitude.

Unconfessed sin is also a tremendous burden. It not only spreads a cloud between us and our God, but actually defiles us, and makes us unfit for the sanctuary. It grieves the heart of our God, and makes us ill at ease in His presence, and oftentimes hinders us from drawing near. How often, when urging some poor wanderer to return, we are met with these words, "I can't; I don't know



how; I cannot go back." And why? Some sin has risen as a mighty barrier between the soul and God, and until that sin be confessed and forgiven there can be no peace, no rest, no joy.

But only return, poor wanderer. Only acknowledge your iniquity. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously," and He will heal your backsliding, and love you freely. Do not excuse or make light of your sin; tell it all out to the Lord, and then lift up your face to Him in the consciousness of His forgiving love. He is quick, oh, so quick to forgive! No sooner do the words "I have sinned" escape from our hearts, than the kiss of forgiveness flows from His lips. No need to continue groaning. His grace is exceeding abundant, His heart is full of tenderness, and His hand stretched forth to bind up our wounds, and pour in the oil and wine.

But we *must* confess. This is the condition, the *one* condition both of forgiveness and cleansing. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *Faithful*; for He has promised, and shall He not do it? *Just*, because Christ has borne our punishment, and paid the price of our pardon.

Could anything be more gracious—more thoroughly within our reach? "Only acknowledge thine iniquity," and thou shalt be forgiven, fully restored to favour, and the smile of thy God shall rest again upon thee. His word is sure, and we may rest implicitly upon it; and it is unbelief, and nothing else, that keeps the soul from enjoying peace upon confession. What confidence we should have—what quiet rest of soul! And surely such rich abundant grace should win our hearts, and lead us to walk humbly and lovingly before our God.

## FEET-WASHING.

“If I, then, your Lord and Master [Teacher], have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.”—JOHN xiii. 14.

LOOKING through the wide range of duties incumbent on the Christian, perhaps one of the least attractive, and therefore most neglected, is that enjoined upon us in these words. Were the injunction limited to the literal washing of one another’s feet, how many obstacles would present themselves to hinder its observance. It is true that certain high personages have washed the feet of paupers as an act of ostentatious humility, but in ordinary life it is wholly unknown.

Objections present themselves with still greater force when the moral bearing of the command is at issue. Were I to discover and mention to my brother in Christ any conduct of his at variance with his high position as a child of God, and name it to him, is it not probable that his anger would be aroused? “How dare you take such a liberty?” would be the thought flashing through his mind, if not audibly expressed; or he might perhaps ask, “Who are you to speak thus to me, notorious as you are for doing so and so?”

Such a result is very discouraging. Instead of succeeding in my object, my own delinquencies are brought out into strong relief. My brother receives no benefit from my admonition, and I have to ponder whether the beam is not in my own eye, the mote only in his. A rebuff like this indisposes me for further action, and I let my brother take his own way without further interruption. He continues to dishonour Christ, it may be increasingly; for the course of sin seldom stops where it began. But what is to be

done? Is the injunction to remain a dead letter? Has the Master issued the order without consideration of human nature and its propensities? Or is it only to be obeyed when one finds a conscience tender, humble, and submissive, and where admonition is next to superfluous?

In Leviticus xix. 17 we read, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." The neglect to rebuke sin was accounted an evidence of hatred, and faithful rebuke was obedience to the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The prophets of Israel were ever remonstrating against the wickedness of their neighbours, and therefore they were their truest friends, in contrast with the others who said, "Peace, peace, when there was no peace." The "suffering sin upon a neighbour" was, in the mind of God, to do him an injury, an injustice.

God has given us the power of discriminating between right and wrong, and would have it employed to amend and help, and not to disparage. How very seldom do we recollect the command, "Go, tell him his fault between thee and him alone;" our object being not to injure, but to restore. The example of the Lord Jesus in washing His disciples' feet furnishes the divine way of seeking such restoration. Let us mark the mode He adopted; but first let us notice His frame of mind while performing this lowly office.

Filled with the recollection of the glory He had with His Father before He created this world, anticipating the joy of returning to His loving Father's presence and resuming His former glory, and fully aware that all in heaven and in earth were about to be subjected to His authority, the blessed Jesus gives this practical lesson of His thoughtful love. The conscious dignity of His posi-

tion, unknown to those then present, but unfolded unto us, increases the wonder of His condescension.

With all this before His mind, the Lord of the glory "*laid aside His garments.*" He thus divested Himself, not only of all that might interfere with what He was about to do, but also of all external display of superiority over His poor followers.

Very different are our ways. The tone of authority in which our reproofs are uttered indicates anything rather than a humble, lowly spirit. The immediate consequence is, that the person whose feet we design to wash is roused to resistance; our well-intentioned effort is found useless, and dispute and anger ensue.

The Lord Jesus then "*took a towel, and girded Himself.*" By so doing He places Himself in a lower position than that of His own servants; He becomes their servant. Pride revolts against a reprover who claims to stand on a higher level; but when the knee is bent, both knees if necessary, the attitude is not so offensive, and he may possibly be listened to.

"*After that He poureth water into a basin.*" The washing of water by the word is our potent remedy; soothing, cleansing, and healing, it restores and invigorates.

"*And began to wash the disciples' feet.*" No doubt this was done with all gentleness. Had there been a sore place on any foot, the gentleness would have been redoubled. The soft touch of the loving hand applies the water. No harsh means are used; but only repeated applications if necessary.

"*And to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.*" The object being now effected, and all stain being removed, no trace must be left of the process by which this was accomplished. The blemish might have been seen and commented on by others; but it no longer

exists. This is all that need be known. The doer of the work made himself of no reputation, and did but a faithful servant's part.

Such careful washing of one's own or others' feet is but little attended to; hence it follows that every one is left to "do that which is right in his own eyes." This was expressly forbidden in Deut. xii. 8; yet how constantly adopted by ourselves! And how great our need to remember and obey the command to Israel, "to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord our God" (Deut. xiii. 18), and in His sight! Each individual among them was to a considerable extent responsible for his neighbour's conduct. We have contracted the habit of casting off all such responsibility in regard to our brethren in Christ.

In our day great advance has been made in moral conduct, in active benevolence, and in communicating to others the glad tidings of the gospel of peace. But has equal zeal been displayed in personally walking with God, and in obeying His commands? He who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, may well expect of us a closer attention to His loving command on this subject.

Feet-washing does not preclude other and further measures if the brother prove wilful in his opposition; but this is the mode of seeking his good most congenial to the heart of our God, with whom mercy ever rejoices against judgment. This example of lowly service is, moreover, the introduction to that beautiful series of instructions and of comfort which our loving Lord gave to His disciples in John xiv.-xvii. as His dying legacy; the whole evincing how deeply His heart was engaged in their well-being, to which their mutual love and tenderness were so greatly to contribute. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

R. N.

## JOSHUA'S PATIENCE-LESSON AND ITS RESULTS.

THE word of God sets a high value on *patience*. Paul gloried in tribulations for the *patience* that they wrought (Rom. v. 3); and by another apostle we are told, that if patience has her perfect work we shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. (James i. 4.)

Two things seem almost essential to the exercise of patience: *one* a foretaste of the joy or reward that is promised; *the other* a settled faith in the Promiser. Yet in the instance now to be referred to we see a child of God glorifying Him by patience apart from any hope as to its outcome.

"Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God." (Exodus xxiv. 13.) Such is the brief mention of Joshua on that wondrous day when seventy of the elders of Israel caught a glimpse of the divine glory on the mount, and returned to the camp below, while Moses remained to receive the instructions concerning that sanctuary which the Lord promised to dwell in. The last verse of the chapter separates the servant from his master, who had gone up higher that God might speak to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend. It is to this lonely servant and the searchings of his heart that I feel attracted.

Had he or his master any revelation of the length of time they were to be separated? I trow not. Evening closed in and morning dawned again upon the servant waiting at his post. The manna of God's providing removed any necessity for return to the camp below, and his loyal heart would on no account allow him to be out of the way whenever the master *did* come back; so he waited.

another day, and another, and again another. A week had passed, and no sign yet of his welcome return. If he only could have the privilege of preparing him his daily meal, or pouring water on his hands, the rest of the time in solitude were easy to bear. But no; there was not a single break in the silence, even as one week succeeded another.

"If I could only feel I was of service to any one, how different it would be!" he might have often thought. "Shall I go down into the camp? the change would refresh me," perhaps suggested itself; but the prospect of his master coming down during that absence, and finding no Joshua ready to receive him, was not to be risked on any consideration. So nearly six weeks passed away. "What if my master Moses never returns? am I to be always here?" He might have been bowed down with such anxieties; but the forty days, which might have seemed four hundred to him, were at last ended; and oh, what joy to be found at his post when Moses descended from the cloud! Blessed, blessed Joshua!

The next view we have of him is as he accompanies his master to the foot of the mountain. Moses' heart was full of unspeakable sorrow, but Joshua's remark, "There is a noise of war in the camp," proves that he was ignorant of Israel's awful sin, and could only conceive of trial from without, and was altogether unprepared for this manifestation of evil from within.

Oh, what thankfulness must have filled his soul as the blessed result of his patience-lesson became apparent! The future saviour of his nation—their leader into the promised land—*by this very ordeal*, had been completely separated from the sinners of the congregation. So polluted had the whole assembly become by the sin of the golden calf, that God said, "Let me alone, that I may consume them." It was no small mercy to be apart from it.

Nor was this *all* the direct result in the way of blessing. We read that Moses took the tabernacle, or tent where he had hitherto judged the people (for *the tabernacle* had not yet been made), and pitched it without the now polluted camp. (Exodus xxxiii. 7.) God spake with him face to face there, as He had done on the mount; and Moses turns again into the camp, where his presence was doubtless needed. We find at this point, "His servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle." (Exodus xxxiii. 11.) He acted thus of his own free will. He had become accustomed to stand on the threshold of the door where God speaks and His glory is revealed, and he *now chooses that for his portion*. He had become accustomed to dispense with the associations of the camp, and now that they are still unpurged from the guilt of the golden calf, *he chooses to be separate still*.

Dear child of God, walking in a lonely path, seeing no end to your present suspense, but assured that you are on the ground where He has placed you, *be of good cheer!* If you are being unconsciously separated from surrounding defilement, if you get to prefer the threshold of His presence to all earthly attractions, if you learn thereby to do well without the company of professed believers, who think lightly of sin, who can measure the value of your *patience-lesson?*

E. K. G.

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"JOSHUA'S not departing out of the tabernacle (Ex. xxxiii. 11) furnishes an important hint to those who are young in the faith not to venture into worldly scenes, or into mixed religious associations, lest they become ensnared, and be not able to stand. Like Joshua they should abide in the presence of the Lord, even though it involve separation from much that is attractive and enticing."



## THE LORD OF PEACE.

"The Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. '  
2 THESS. iii. 16.

THE Thessalonian saints were in trial, but Christ was to them "the Lord of peace." "The God of peace" gives us the thought of God dealing in grace with His children; "*the Lord of peace*," of Christ's reign in our hearts.

"*Himself*." That is, the One who made peace for us by the blood of His cross; who in heaven itself is our peace, "this same Jesus."

"*Give you peace*;" not peace in things around us, but "the peace of God;" not the rest of hushed winds and calmed waters, but of walking over the waves with Him.

"*Always*." For all time; under every variety of circumstance.

"*By all means*." The very trials working out the end of the Lord, that the peace that passeth all understanding might *rule*. Satan himself is used as an unwitting instrument of blessing in the purposes of God. Jacob said, "All these things are against me," just when God was bringing about in His own way the desire of his heart. We want waiting, trusting grace, to give God time to work.

A. E. W.

THE peace which God Himself enjoys, the peace which Christ can call "*My peace*," is undisturbed by opposing powers of evil, unruffled by the violence and seeming triumph of Satan, and it remains firm and unshaken in the soul of the believer, like the calm crystal sea before the throne. "It passeth all understanding;" for the very opposing elements that would seem to have the power to disturb it, only in fact confirm it.

H. W. S.

## WORDS OF COMFORT.

ISAIAH liv. lv.

[In the epistle to the Galatians (chap. iv. 27) the apostle Paul draws words of comfort from these chapters of Isaiah, and this paper seeks still further to apply these cheering words of Israel's future day to drooping hearts now. The blessed stream of this Scripture flows from the smitten rock of Isaiah liii., which closes with Christ's own joy in seeing of the travail of His soul and being satisfied; hence the joyous outburst with which Isaiah liv. lv. begins.—ED.]

"SING, O barren! break forth into singing, and cry aloud." What! our poor, withered, fruitless hearts commanded *to sing*? Yes, sing, and cry aloud; for "the desert *shall blossom as the rose*," and the wilderness become a fruitful field.

Have you been rejoicing in that word of your God, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you*"? Has it become to you, as it were, a "*tent*," in which you can lie down and rest your sin-burdened heart? Truly it is a goodly resting-place. But stay not there. Rise up, and see the fulness of your portion, pardoned sinner. "Enlarge the place of thy tent." Lift up the curtains that lie folded and unused around you; stretch them forth, and walk up and down the length and breadth of His glorious promises. "Spare not;" grasp them *all*. "Lengthen thy cords," and enjoy the wondrous blessing provided for all those who will enlarge their habitation, and make the Lord Himself their dwelling-place.

Has not the Lord opened out His wondrous *heart of love*, that we may walk up and down the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of that glorious dwelling-place, and abide in Him? Spare not indeed, but "lengthen

thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes," and fix and root them all in Him.

Surely our hearts respond, "My soul followeth *hard* after *Thee*." "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

"But this is not *my* portion," says some troubled heart. "*I* have been cold and careless; I have forgotten *HIM* who bought me with His blood, and turned aside to other joys. I—I—can do nothing to please Him. All my efforts have been marred by sin; shame and sorrow must be *my* portion, until I reach my home above."

Listen again, poor burdened one. What tender, gentle words are these that fall upon thine ear—"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." It is the voice of Him who *cannot lie*, who says to thee, "Fear not; thou shalt *not* be ashamed," for *I* have borne thy shame: "neither be confounded," for shame hath covered *My* face. Yea more, thou "shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more." And why? "For thy *Maker* is thine husband." He is forming thee for Himself, to show forth His praise to all eternity. "The Lord's portion is His people." He *will* perfect that which concerneth thee; and will not be ashamed of the work of His own hands.

It may *seem* to thee as if the Lord had forsaken thee; but it is not really so. He is only leading thee about, to humble, and to prove thee, and to do thee good in thy latter end. Can you doubt such love? He may have been teaching you a few hard lessons; but why are you grieved in spirit? Can you not trust Him? If He does refuse a few of your childish wishes, must you needs turn away and walk in widowhood?

"Oh wherefore, wherefore dost thou wrong  
His heart who loves thee so,  
And rob Him of thy tribute song,  
To nurse thy thankless woe !

Throughout the earth His earnest eye  
Hath careful searched to see,  
What spot it was beneath the sky  
That *best* befitted thee.

Yet thou that chosen holy place  
Profanest now with tears ;  
And when thy soul should sing His praise,  
It weeps its idle fears."

But are you sad, and ashamed to lift up your head, because you have stumbled and fallen and sinned against your Lord ? Alas ! you have been walking *alone* ; you have forgotten His words of warning love, "*Without Me ye can do nothing.*" Still His heart is yearning over you. Only return, and He will swear, as He did to Noah, that He will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee ; for the "mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but His kindness shall not depart from thee." "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." He points onward to the glory, and tells you how He is preparing you, even *you*, to shine forth in His kingdom, and be a name and praise to Him.

Away then with every distrustful thought, and listen to the voice of Him who spake as never man spake : "Ho, *every one that thirsteth*, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ;" "and let your soul delight itself in fatness." *Take* of the living bread ; eat it with joy ; satisfy your hunger to the full ; there is enough and to spare. "Eat, O friends ; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved."

S.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

*(Continued from page 86.)*

## THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

EXODUS xxv. 12-17.

WE now come to the four rings of gold in the four corners of the ark, and the two staves of shittim-wood overlaid with gold, which were put into the rings by the sides of the ark for carrying it.

These rings and staves were adapted to the wilderness journeyings of God's redeemed people Israel. By them the ark was borne on the shoulders of the priests, and wherever the people went the ark accompanied them. Sometimes it went *before* them, and sometimes midway between the tribes; and when they encamped, it was set up in their midst.

Whenever the cloud was taken up, whether by day or by night, as the signal to go forward, they were at once to obey, and the ark was in readiness to accompany them. The staves were not to be taken from the rings. They were always there, and the ark ready to be borne by them, whether the people were led *forward* by the grace which carried them on, or whether, in the discipline of God, they were turned backwards in their journeyings.

This blessedly applies to the Lord Jesus, who, though now in heaven, at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour, is *ever* with us. He will never leave nor forsake us.

“Where'er we seek Him He is found.”

He is ever ready and prompt to manifest His presence in fulfilment of His own word—“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst” (Matt. xviii. 20); ready also to accompany His

people all their journey through the wilderness. He is with us, as the "shittim-wood overlaid with gold," in all the tenderness and sympathy of His humanity, and at the same time in the majestic dignity of His Godhead. As shittim-wood—"in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15), able to sympathize; and as gold—"the God of all grace" (1 Peter v. 10), "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." (Eph. iii. 20.)

The staves were not taken out of the ark all through the journeyings of the children of Israel; but when the self-same ark was taken into Solomon's temple, and there placed under the wings of the larger cherubim, which covered the ark *and the staves* (1 Kings viii. 7), *then*, and not till then, the staves were taken out, that the ends might be seen in the holy place for a remembrance of their wilderness journey. So when our pilgrimage is over, and we are gathered around the throne in our home above, we shall always remember that *His* presence was with us by the way during our pilgrim course.

We will now consider the testimony which was put inside the ark. This was the two tables of stone on which God re-wrote the ten words as recorded in Deut. x. 1-5. When Moses went up the first time into the holy mount, God gave him two tables of stone written with the finger of God; but before he descended from the presence of God, the children of Israel had utterly broken the first and great commandment, and consequently Moses breaks the tables at the foot of the mount. Jehovah then told him to prepare two other tables like unto the first, and to come up again into the mount, and in wonderful grace He again wrote the same ten words. These second tables Moses was commanded to put into the ark.

Here we have a foreshadowing of the truth as it is in Jesus. God gave His holy righteous law on Sinai's mount,

but man proved himself totally insufficient to fulfil His righteous requirements. Romans iii. 19, 20 tells us, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." But God has not relinquished one iota of His claims. As He commanded Moses to put the tables of stone into the ark, so the Lord Jesus hid the law of God in His heart, and perfectly fulfilled all its claims, and He is made to us of God "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

God does not now give us His law as the ground for our entrance into the kingdom, nor has He withdrawn it or passed it by as of no importance, or as not being righteous, just, and holy, but He has made full provision in Christ Jesus for its fulfilment, and that *in us*. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled *in us*, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And Paul says, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." (2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.) "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Heb. x. 16); and thus the life of Jesus may "be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 11); and each of us may be able to say with truth, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

Do the words, "*We are also His offspring*," in Acts xvii. 28, give any warrant for referring to man at large the Fatherhood of God?

The Fatherhood of God, according to Scripture, is only towards those who are born again, and who become children of God by faith in Christ. (John i. 12; Gal. iii. 26; 1 John iii. 1.) Hence the difference between the expression, "the Father of spirits" (Heb. xii. 9), addressed to the people of God, and "the God of the spirits of all flesh" (Num. xvi. 22; xxvii. 16), as used in the Old Testament of man at large. The one has to do with redemption and regeneration, and the other with creation. When Paul uses the words of the heathen poet, he explains what he means in the words, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." In this sense all mankind are the offspring of God, but in this sense only. This distinction, however, is of essential importance in discriminating between God's relation to man as His creature, and man as recreated in Christ and born again of the Holy Spirit; it is also of equal importance that we lower not the relation of man to God to that of the beasts that perish, as, alas! many are wont to do who seek to avoid the awful reality of a future existence. Of men alone it can be said, that *in God* they live, move, and exist. This links man with God and a *future*, which has ever to be kept in mind; and thus while the Fatherhood of God belongs to the redeemed alone, the life of man is not merely the result of creation, but is a breathing into him of the inspiration of God. The word rendered "breath" in Genesis ii. 7 is never used of the lower animals in the Hebrew Bible.\* As a consequence of the above, none can use the prayer, "Our Father," &c., but those of whom it is true that they are children, and have received the spirit of sonship, whereby they cry, "Abba Father."

Is *demoniacal possession* to be regarded as madness or lunacy?

Certainly not. The possession of an individual by an evil or unclean spirit may cause madness, as it caused deafness and dumbness in Mark ix. 25, 26, but must not be confounded with it. Besides, in Matt. iv. 24, diseases, possessions of evil spirits, lunacy, palsy, &c., are mentioned as distinct forms of human suffering.

\* Compare the following passages where the Hebrew word נְשִׁמָּה occurs: Gen. ii. 7; vii. 22; Deut. xx. 16, &c.; Job xxvi. 4 ("spirit"); xxxii. 8 ("inspiration"); xxxiii. 4; Prov. xx. 27.



## THE SYROPHENICIAN;

OR, THE POWER OF FAITH.

MATT. xv. 21-28; MARK vii. 24-31.

THE careful reader of Scripture cannot fail to be struck with the high commendation conferred on simple faith in God. Again and again it occurs in the gospels; and in Heb. xi. we read of a great cloud of witnesses to its power. In chap. xii. we are led off from these to the perfect example of trust—"Looking unto Jesus."

Faith is the same in all, and on all occasions; but each case has its peculiar points of interest and instruction. In the one referred to above the blessed One of God, whose steps were ordered, observed, and delighted in by the Father, was in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon; noted cities, where wonders of goodness and of judgment had been known. The *locality*, therefore, was a remarkable one. The next noticeable point in the narrative is

## HIS INCLINATION.

"He entered," says the historian, "into a house, and *would* have no man know it." He *inclined* to privacy; "but," it is added, "He could not be hid." He could pass through the midst of His enemies on the brow of the hill of Nazareth, and go on His way; could *hide* Himself in the temple from those who would have stoned Him, and on another occasion could withdraw; but now He could not be hid. And why not? Simply because of

## THE NEED.

His presence and help were *needed*. A poor woman, a Greek, a Syrophenician, a mother with sorrowful heart for her daughter, vexed with an unclean spirit, needed help. She heard of Him, and found Him.

## THE APPEAL.

She appealed to Him thus: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; for my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." (Matt. xv. 22.) Noble titles these—"Lord," and "Son of David." A piteous cry was hers—"Have mercy; my daughter is sore vexed with a devil." Yet the blessed Servant of God met both with

## RESERVE AND SILENCE.

"But He answered her not a word." Say, did He not hear? Yes; He heard. Was He indifferent? Oh, no! Morose? Nay; that He could not be. Did He utterly reject her suit? Not so. His was not the silence of indifference, moroseness, nor rejection; but significant, though trying; trying to the sorrowful mother, but intended by Him to instruct her, and prepare her for the blessing she sought at His hand. Again, was not Jesus Lord? He was, even David's Lord. Was He not also Son of David? Yes; of the house and lineage of David. But what had she to do with David? or what encouragement could she derive from the title, Son of David? A Greek, a Syrophenician, a Gentile, outside Israel's polity and its privileges (Eph. ii. 11, 12), she had on that ground no claim. Therefore she could only be met with perfect silence. His silence held the sorrowing woman in

## SUSPENSE.

Although kept in suspense, she continued to cry; and the disciples interfered, saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us." Did they mean that Jesus should dismiss her unaided? or that He should meet her need, and thus silence her? We are not told which; but the Lord's reply to them, made in her hearing, was such as would prove

## THE TEST.

A test of her faith: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." To Israel she did not belong;

therefore the reply, humanly speaking, offered no encouragement; but to her it was better than dead silence. That which might discourage nature encouraged faith, and led to

#### PERSEVERANCE.

She drew near and worshipped, saying, "Lord, help me." Faith thrives where nature faints. We who are illuminated with the light of the gospel, and indwelt by the Holy Ghost, can discern that in all this Jesus was only preparing her for the blessing and high commendation in reserve for her. It was an exercise of that wisdom which led Him to remain away from Bethany while Lazarus was sick, even until it could be said he "is dead," in order to manifest His sympathy by groans and tears, and His power by calling Lazarus forth. The faith He was thus trying or proving was His own gift; and He knew how to test it without causing it to fail. Yes, He knew it would bear a yet further test, and said to her, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs."

Thus spake the Son of David, the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, in whom also the Gentiles were to hope. Jehovah had separated Israel from the rest of the nations, and exalted His nation above them; and now Jehovah's elect and perfect Servant upholds that position in its integrity, although Israel themselves had dishonoured it. "The Jew first and also the Gentile" was, and will again be, the divine order on the earth. This supremacy shall again be theirs. "For the gifts and calling of God are without a change of mind." But will she abide this test? Yes she will, and know the joy of

#### VICTORY,

the reward of her patient faith and persevering plea.

Dear reader, ponder well her reply; her words speak volumes, their full import only known to Him to whom

they were addressed. She approved the sentiment, and took her place. It was truth, whether taken in the letter or spirit; for it would be sin to give the children's bread to dogs, and wrong to cast the precious crumbs of truth to those who are as unclean in heart and ways as dogs. Her national standing, compared with that of Israel, was as the dog to the children, and the blessing she sought was as a crumb to the full meal. This she acknowledged, virtually saying, "I know it, Lord. I know I am as the dog; the dog's place is mine; I am content to take it. I ask not now Israel's position at the table, but am under it. I ask not for Israel's portion, the full meal, but the crumb that falls. Call me what thou pleasest; put me where thou choosest, only give me the crumb. Lord, heal my daughter."

It is enough. The cord has been sufficiently stretched, the test duly applied; and now, to the mutual joy of Christ and the woman, followed

#### THE COMMENDATION.

"Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." "O woman," the expression of admiration, not of surprise. "Great is thy faith," and this not to fill her with self-admiration, but that all might know His estimate of patient, persevering trust. "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Who shall describe her joy, much less the gratification of the Gratifier—of Jesus, the Healer? Thus the narrative closes. What of its application or instruction to us?

First, observe it is not a question of salvation. She did not enquire what she should do to inherit eternal life, as the young nobleman did; neither was her cry like the jailor's at Philippi, "What must I do to be saved?" but she sought and obtained the blessing of her daughter's deliverance from possession of an unclean spirit. It is rather an example of the power of faith, of the honour it

secures in whatever way it may be exercised ; also of the test or trial to which it may be subjected by the Lord.

It is quite true that, through listening either to a perverted gospel or an imperfect presentation of Christ and His finished work, many a soul struggles with a burdened heart and conscience for years, from which a clear sight of Christ and His work relieves them, and great is the joy which follows ; but in the case before us we have, I think, an example of the exercise, patience, and triumph of faith in the daily discipline or education (chastening, Heb. xii. 6) of our souls in our daily life, through temptations, from Satan acting on the flesh, either through persons, circumstances, or even the condition of the body. Whatever it may be that afflicts us, it calls for and brings into exercise faith in God.

This proving of our faith by Christ is more precious to Him than that of gold to the refiner. Satan may be the instrument, "but the LORD trieth the righteous." Satan may stir the Sabceans against Job, may bring down fire, rain, the stormy wind, and sweep away his all, and, last and worst, touch his flesh ; but it is only by permission he does it, and under control. He may sift Peter, but the prayer of Christ preserves and restores him. His messenger to Paul may be a thorn in the flesh ; but the Lord is over all. Job dealt with God, directly blessing Him, although indirectly failing to do so ; for he cursed the day of his birth. Peter's eye met that of Christ ; and Paul "besought the Lord thrice."

In either case there was also a process. Job was tried by the loss of all, by disease, and by his friends, and that not for a day only ; and although too often in an impatient frame of mind, he *endured* to the end of his trial ; and Paul *besought* the Lord *thrice*.

The result was similar in each case. Job was brought

to take his right place before God, as vile and abhorring himself, repenting in dust and ashes ; Peter, by the sifting, was freed from some measure at least of self-sufficiency, and led to think more soberly of himself ; and Paul learnt to accept the heavenly discipline of his risen Lord, and to glory in his infirmity. All were blessed, and after the trial of their faith knew its triumph.

So also with ourselves, beloved fellow-believers. When we first learned to cry to God, He saw much in us to be brought down, much ignorance of ourselves, of our folly, weakness, and waywardness ; or we may have appealed to Him on mistaken grounds, or from impure motives ; or may have overrated the thing for which we sought Him, seeking some temporal blessing with the earnestness proper only to things spiritual and eternal. Whichever of these may have been our case, or if all combined were true of us, we have been disciplined by the Father in wisdom and love, either by what we have called silence, or some yet sharper test of our faith, until we have taken our proper place, formed a more correct estimate of that which we have sought, quieted our souls before Him, content to be anything, nothing, so that *He* was glorified, and *we* truly blessed. This done, we were delivered, and rejoiced.

Thus it has been with us, and thus it will be even with those who now are babes in Christ ; the patience of faith preceding its triumph, and humility securing honour.

If we learn this much from the woman's patient, persevering faith and lowliness, let us also be instructed by the blessed Master's commendation—His estimate of the faith He proved. Discerning this, we shall be more careful to *trust*, than anxious to be *delivered* from the trial. Let us also remember that in proportion to our trust will be our lowliness, and that being believing and lowly, we must of necessity be happy.

H. H.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

### THE MERCY-SEAT, OR PROPITIATORY.

“And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold.”—EXODUS xxv. 17.

THE original word rendered “mercy-seat” properly signifies “a propitiatory,” from the root to “cover over;” hence to make atonement, or reconciliation.

The mercy-seat was the cover or lid of the ark. But upon this lid or cover the blood of atonement was sprinkled on the great day of atonement. To this the Holy Ghost refers in Rom. iii. 25, “Whom God set forth a PROPITIATION through faith in His blood.” Here the word “propitiation” is akin to the word employed in Heb. ix. 5, “shadowing THE MERCY-SEAT.” Again, 1 John ii. 2, “He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world;” and 1 John iv. 10, “God loved us, and sent His son a propitiation for our sins.”

This propitiatory was of pure gold, the emblem of that which is divine. No shittim-wood was employed. The blood sprinkled on it was the emblem of the atoning death of Jesus. Of this we read in Leviticus xvi. 14, “And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon (the face of) the mercy-seat (or propitiatory) eastward; and before the mercy-seat (or propitiatory) shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.”

It was distinctly enjoined that the sprinkling was to be “with the finger,” because when thus sprinkled the finger pointed to the blood. Once only was it to be sprinkled on the face of the propitiatory, beneath the eye of God; for *once* was sufficient for His eye. But it was to be sprinkled *seven* times *before* the mercy-seat, to meet the eye of the worshipper in approaching; for *we* need a full assurance, a sevenfold or perfect witness.

Again, that *one* sprinkling of blood on the golden propitiatory was not to be in the centre, but "eastward." For as the forefront of the tabernacle was toward the east, and as Jehovah appeared in the cloud over the propitiatory, that blood came between the glory and the worshipper. By this arrangement God seemed to say, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah i. 18.)

It was on the propitiatory of pure gold that the blood was sprinkled. That polished slab of purest burnished metal set forth in full perfection those few drops of pure and precious blood. So also it is the divine excellency of the victim, "God manifest in flesh," that gives the value to the atoning blood, "drawn from Immanuel's veins," in response to the divine mandate, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts."

The Shekinah glory above, showed out the intrinsic excellency, as well as the divine value, of that all-atoning blood in the fullest, clearest light.

*"Two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof."* The propitiatory is of the same measurement as the ark.

It is the PERSON of Immanuel which gives the value to His blood-shedding and propitiatory sacrifice. The value of the work is co-extensive with the excellency and glory of His person. "Christ loved the Church, and gave HIMSELF for it." "When He had by HIMSELF purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

His obedience unto death was the crowning act of the life obedience of Him who came into the world saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."



## ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

*(Continued from page 93.)*

How should I read the Proverbs of Solomon, so as to remember them easily, and thus profit myself and others? is a question that may be asked by children of God.

No doubt, the same answer applies that does also to the study of the Scriptures as a whole; viz., Read regularly through them; but read also special portions with more or less additional frequency, as circumstances or the soul's condition shall require.

The simple fact that the book of Proverbs happens to consist of thirty-one chapters has led some to read a whole chapter each day of the month—a precious proof of their love of this portion of God's word; and we may hope they profit accordingly. Another once said that he found the “word of God” in the book of Proverbs so truly “quick (*i.e.* living) and powerful,” and its edge “sharper than any two-edged sword,” that he could not read more than a few verses at a time, because its reproofs cut him so deeply. Surely this was one of those wise men described in Prov. xvii. 10—“*A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.*” But apart from the weight and pungency of the truths contained in these precious proverbs, most of us feel that we cannot even *remember* a large number of them, if read at one time, much less profit by them. Like jewel after jewel in a casket, each proverb is so rich, and yet so apparently unconnected with those around it, that the delighted eye and the pondering heart become burdened with the variety and preciousness of the treasures laid before them.

Hence some have found it very profitable to gather

them up under different headings or subjects. In order to this, the prayerful reader has only to consider, as he comes to each proverb, what its subject really is. It may prove to be some one of the many excellencies of wisdom, such as, "That wisdom pleases God;" or, "Is profitable to its possessor;" or, "It makes the wise man teachable," &c.; or, "The blessedness of godly living;" or, "The contrast between it and ungodliness." Many other subjects will be observed in these "words of the wise," such as Covetousness, Slothfulness, "A Father's discipline," "Filial duty," "Suretyship and the Surety," Soberness, Liberality. As might be expected, a large number will be found under the head of "The fear of Jehovah," and a still larger number under that of "The *lips* of the godly and the ungodly." When the whole is gone through, perhaps some fifty different subjects will have been found; and very useful will a list of them prove for reference, both to the private Christian and to those who minister the Word in public.

Of course, such an arrangement applies only to the short and unconnected proverbs of chaps. x.-xxix., and its value is chiefly to the person himself who makes it, rather than to any who content themselves with others' labours; for Solomon truly says, "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the precious substance of man is to the diligent." (Prov. xii. 27; see Hebrew.)

Yet as there are some who cannot make such a collation for themselves, one that has been found useful is subjoined. It was made some fifteen years ago, and has never been revised, and any who go through it may soon improve upon it. Amended translations of some of the verses, affecting in some instances the entire subject of the proverb, are indicated by an asterisk, and appear in a foot note. The Proverbs of Solomon copied out in Hezekiah's reign (chaps. xxv.-xxix.) are distinguished by the letter H.

# A COLLATION OF PROVERBS X.-XXIX. INCLUSIVE, ACCORDING TO SUBJECTS.

Wisdom pleases God—10. 1 ; 12. 22 ; 15. 20 ; 23. 15, 16, 24, 25.  
H 27. 11 ; 28. 7 ; 29. 3.

Wisdom is Heavenly—15. 24 ; 24. 7.

Wisdom is Profitable to the Possessor and to others—10. 13, 14 ;  
13. 14 ; 14. 1, 8 ; 15. 17, 30 ; 16. 16, 21, 22 ; 17. 8 ; 18. 16 ; 19. 2,  
8, 20 ; 21. 16, 20, 22 ; 22. 17-21 ; 23. 12 ; 24. 3-7, 13, 14. H 28. 26 ;  
29. 18.

The Wise Man's Teachableness—10. 8, 17 ; 11. 14 ; 12. 1, 15 ;  
13. 1, 18 ; 15. 5, 22, 31, 32 ; 16. 9 ; 17. 10, 24 ; 18. 15 ; 19. 25 ;  
20. 18, 24 ; 21. 11 ; 24. 6. H 25. 8,\* 12.

His Fear—14. 16 ; 19. 27 ; 21. 29 ; 22. 3. H 27. 12.

His power of Judgment—13. 16 ; 14. 15 ; 15. 21 ; 24. 27. H 28.  
5, 11.

His Forgiving—19. 11 ; 20. 3,\* 22 ; 24. 17, 18. H 25. 21, 22.

Folly set in Honour—19. 10. H 26. 1, 8.

Folly Incurable—13. 19. H 26. 11 ; 27. 22 ; 29. 9, 19.

Godliness Profitable—10. 2, 22 ; 11. 4-6 ; 12. 28 ; 13. 22, 23 ; 14.  
19, 34 ; 16. 7, 8, 17, 31 ; 17. 1 ; 18. 18 ; 19. 22 ; 20. 29 ; 21. 7, 21 ;  
22. 17, 18 ; 23. 23.

The Godly Man's Numerous Seed—11. 30 ; 17. 6.

The Godly and Ungodly Man's Individuality—11. 16 ; 12. 5 ;  
14. 10 ; 15. 13-15 ; 18. 14 ; 20. 5, 27 ; 24. 10.

Enmity between Godly and Ungodly—H 29. 27.

Their Present Paths—10. 29 ; 13. 7 ; 14. 20 ; 18. 23.

Their Religion—15. 8, 29 ; 20. 25\* ; 21. 27. H 28. 9.

Their Daily Life—15. 9.

The Godly Man a true Neighbour ; the Ungodly not—11. 12,\* 29.

The Ends of Godly and Ungodly—10. 3, 24, 25, 28, 30 ; 11. 8, 10,  
21, 23, 28, 29 ; 12. 2, 3, 7, 8, 21 ; 13. 9, 12 ; 14. 32 ; 22. 3 ; 23. 17-21.  
H 27. 12 ; 28. 10, 18 ; 29. 16.

The Overthrow of the Ungodly—10. 10 ; 11. 7 ; 15. 10\* ; 17. 11,  
13, 16 ; 18. 2, 3 ; 19. 21 ; 21. 7, 18 ; 22. 8 ; 24. 15, 16, 19-22.  
H 26. 26, 27 ; 28. 17 ; 29. 1.

Righteousness and Wickedness their own Reward—10. 6, 7, 16 ;  
11. 5, 6, 17, 19, 27 ; 12. 20, 26 ; 13. 2, 5, 6, 13, 15, 21, 25 ; 14. 11,  
14, 18, 23, 30 ; 15. 6 ; 16. 22, 26 ; 19. 16 ; 21. 5 ; 22. 5. H 28.  
1, 10 ; 29. 6.

Uprightness profitable and pleasing to Jehovah—10. 9; 11. 13, 18, 20; 16. 11-13; 17. 15, 23, 26; 18. 5, 17; 19. 1; 20. 7, 10, 14, 17, 23; 21. 3; 24. 23-26. H 28. 6, 21.

Deceitfulness of Sin—12. 15; 14. 12, 13; 16. 2, 25; 19. 3; 21. 2; 24. 9.

Covetousness—11. 26; 12. 12; 15. 27; 18. 11; 19. 6, 7\*; 20. 14, 21; 21. 6, 13, 25, 26; 22. 16, 28; 23. 4, 5, 10, 11. H 27. 20; 28. 8, 20, 22.

Labour Profitable—10. 4,\*5; 12. 11; 13. 11; 14. 4, 23; 22. 29. H 27. 23-27; 28. 19.

Slothfulness—10. 4, 26; 12. 24, 27\*; 13. 4; 15. 19; 18. 9; 19. 15, 24; 20. 4, 13; 21. 5; 22. 13; 24. 30-34. H 26. 13-16.

Evil of Anger—10. 12; 12. 16; 14. 17, 29; 15. 18; 16. 29, 30, 32; 17. 14; 18. 19; 19. 11, 19; 22. 24, 25. H 25. 15; 26. 17; 27. 4; 29. 20, 22.

Father's Discipline—13. 24; 19. 18\*; 20. 30\*; 22. 6, 15; 23. 13, 14. H 26. 3; 29. 15, 17.

Filial Duty—19. 26; 20. 20; 23. 22. H 28. 24.

Importance of Fellowship and of the Company we keep—13. 20; 14. 7; 17. 12; 18. 24\*; 23. 6-8; 24. 1, 2. H 25. 20; 29. 24.

Suretyship and the Surety—11. 15; 17. 18; 20. 16; 22. 26, 27. H 27. 13.

Fear of Jehovah—10. 27; 14. 2, 26, 27; 15. 3, 11, 16, 33; 16. 3, 4,\* 6, 20, 33; 17. 3; 18. 10; 19. 23; 20. 12; 21. 1; 22. 2, 4, 12; 23, 17, 18; 24. 21, 22. H 28. 14; 29. 25, 26.

On the Lips of Godly and Ungodly—10. 13, 14, 18-21, 31, 32; 11. 9; 12. 6, 13, 14, 17-19, 22, 23; 13. 2, 3; 14. 3; 15. 1, 2, 4, 7, 23, 26, 28; 16. 1, 13, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28; 17. 4, 7, 20, 27, 28; 18. 4, 6, 7, 13, 20, 21; 20. 15; 21. 23; 22. 11; 24. 26. H 25. 11, 15; 26. 4, 5, 6-9, 18, 19; 29. 11.

Good News Precious—12. 25. H 25. 25.

Deeds looked for by God, not Words merely—20. 11; 21. 8. H 25. 14.

The Godly Man a Reprover—H 27. 5, 6; 28. 4, 23; 29. 5.

Confession—20. 9. H 28. 13.

Slander and Backbiting—10. 18; 11. 13; 17. 9; 18. 8; 20. 19. H 25. 9, 10, 23; 26. 20-23.

The Betrayer—H 25. 19; 26. 23-28.

The Proud—11. 2; 12. 9; 13. 10; 15. 25; 16. 5, 18, 19; 17. 19; 18. 1, 12; 20. 6; 21. 4, 24. H 25. 6, 7; 26. 12; 28. 25; 29. 23.

The Scorners' Blindness—14. 6; 15. 12; 17. 5; 18. 2; 19. 29; 22. 10; 23. 9. H 27. 7.

God Sovereign in Grace—22. 2. H 29. 13.

God the Perfect Judge—10. 29\*; 11. 31\*; 12. 14; 21. 12.\* H 26. 2, 10.

Soberness—14. 33; 20. 1; 23. 1-3, 19-21, 29-35. H 25. 16, 17, 27, 28; 27. 1, 2, 8, 21.

Power of Riches—10. 15; 13. 8; 14. 24; 22. 7.

Liberality—11. 24, 25; 19. 17; 22. 9. H 29. 7.

Character of a Witness—12. 17; 14. 5, 25; 19. 5, 9, 28; 21. 28; 24. 28, 29. H 25. 18.

The Messenger and Servant—13. 17; 14. 35; 17. 2. H 25. 13; 27. 18; 29. 21.

The King—14. 28; 16. 10, 12-15; 19. 10-12; 20. 2, 8, 26-30; 21. 1; 22. 11. H 25. 2-7; 28. 15, 16; 29. 2, 4, 12, 14.

The Woman and the Wife—11. 16, 22; 12. 4; 18. 22; 19. 13, 14; 21. 9, 19; 22. 14; 23. 26-28. H 25. 24; 27. 15, 16.

#### \* AMENDED TRANSLATIONS.

10. 29: "But [it is] destruction to the workers of iniquity."

11. 12: "He that despiseth his neighbour is void of wisdom."

11. 31: "Behold, the righteous shall be remembered in the earth;" *i.e.* with punishment, if he sin. (Compare 1 Peter 4. 17, 18)

12. 27: "Will not catch his prey in the net, but the precious substance of man [is to] the diligent."

15. 10: "Sore correction shall be to him that forsaketh the way."

16. 4: "All things for their own end."

18. 24: "A man of many associates acquires them to his ruin; but there is a friend," &c.

19. 7: Perhaps "He pursues their words [*i.e.* their promises], and they are not [or, are vain]."

19. 18: "But let not thy soul desire to kill him;" or as in margin.

20. 3: "Every fool soon becomes angry."

20. 25: "Who uttereth rashly that which is holy;" *i.e.* vows.

20. 30: "The scars of a wound are a cleansing in the wicked [man], and stripes [that reach] to the inward parts of the belly."

21. 4: "Jehovah hath made all things for their own end."

21. 12: "The righteous [judge] wisely considereth, &c., and overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness."

25. 8: Or, "Lest thou shouldst do something [bad] at the end thereof." (Compare Matt. 26. 58, 69, &c.)

N.B.—For other amended renderings see margin of Reference Bible.

To show the usefulness of any such collating of the Proverbs, let us consider the first subject given in the foregoing list; viz.,

WISDOM PLEASES GOD.

Chap. x. 1: "*A wise son maketh a glad father*: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." How precious this truth when applied to the child of God! Compare 1 Thess. iv. 1: "Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to *please* God." How stirring to our hearts that *we* may make our God and Father glad!

Chap. xii. 22 adds another truth: "Lying lips are Jehovah's abomination: but they that deal truly are *His delight*." The expression here is stronger—"they are His delight"—and because of their practical godliness; for it is said of them, they "deal truly."

Chap. xv. 20 follows next: "*A wise son maketh a glad father*: but a foolish man despiseth his mother." The partial repetition here of chap. x. 1 shows the importance to the Spirit of God of our filial relationship; while the affecting latter part of the verse may serve to remind us of the despising of earthly parents by their children in these days, and also of the undervaluing by young Christians of their elders in God's Church. In this way Paul reproves the self-conceited Corinthians when he says to them, "We are fools for Christ's sake," fools, that is, in your account, "but ye are wise in Christ." (1 Cor. iv. 10.)

We next come to chap. xxiii. 15, 16, 24, and 25: "My son, *if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine*. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things." Here the theme of pleasing God rises still higher, while the special address, "My son," shows God's joy in His children. The heart and the lips of His saints are dwelt upon here, as their *dealing truly* was in chap. xii. 22; for the "right things" our lips speak are a joy to God,

our Father, only when they are the outflow of the wise heart, and when our actions are in harmony with them. Otherwise our Lord says of us, as He did of Sardis, "I have not found thy works perfect (filled up) before my God."

Unmingled joy of *both parents* is the subject of the other verses (24, 25): "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise son shall have joy of him. *Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.*" But all this is connected with the hearkening to the father, and the not despising the mother when she is old, spoken of in verse 22; and with the self-sacrificing steadfastness that was willing to "BUY the truth" at all costs, and never to sell it. (v. 23.) Who is not reminded by such a passage of the joy that Paul had in his Philippian children in the faith, whose "fellowship" with him "in the gospel" he so delighted to remember, and of God's joy in them also; for their ministry to Paul's needs was "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, *well pleasing to God.*"

Three other passages on the same subject occur in chaps. xxv.—xxix., the Hezekiah portion of the book. The first of them is chap. xxvii. 11: "*My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.*" An earthly father might reasonably point to his son's, or his children's, honours as proof that parental character and training had not been wanting; but as no character is more misunderstood or reproached in this evil world than that of God our Father, how sweet to us to hear Him bid us be wise, that as His witnesses in this world He may by us silence "the enemy and the avenger." (See Ps. viii. 2.)

Thus Job became once and again God's answer to Satan's reproaches (see Job i. 8–12, ii. 1–6); thus also our Lord says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they

may see your good works, and *glorify your Father* which is in heaven." (Matt. v. 16.) How precious and how welcome must this one verse of Proverbs have been to Jesus Himself when on earth; and how blessedly He fulfilled it, we learn from the twice-repeated words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And by Him God mightily answered them that reproached Him, and He still does so.

Then chaps. xxviii. 7, and xxix. 3, may be taken as carrying on and concluding the subject. "*Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son* : but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father ;" and, "*Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father* : but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance." Here we are again reminded of the same delight of God our Father in both the obedience and the wisdom of His child, while the contrast is drawn even more strongly than before of what even children of God become who indulge self-will and depart from wisdom's ways. They *shame their Father*, and they *spend their substance*. Surely in a life like Abraham's we see the "wise son" that kept the law, and by his wisdom rejoiced the heart of God ; while we see in Lot one who *shamed* the name he professed, and lamentably *spent his substance*.

If this sketch of one subject of the Proverbs stirs others to consider more carefully and more skilfully some of the other subjects, it will not have been given in vain.

Other ways of studying this precious book of Scripture may be considered in another paper, if the Lord will.

H. D.

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## SALT AND LIGHT.

MATTHEW V. 13, 14.

THE Church of God is of inestimable value to the world. They think it not, and would be glad to be quit of us oftentimes; but so it is. Even Lot was of incalculable value to Sodom. "What! That worldly-minded, half-hearted man?" Yes. Listen—"Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither." God could not pour down His judgments upon wicked Sodom while Lot was there. So now, God cannot pour out His wrath upon this guilty world until the Church be taken away. Only let the Church be gone, and quick indeed will be the judgments.

"*Ye are the salt of the earth.*" Take the salt away, and how soon will corruption spread. How watchful, then, should we be to keep our salt fresh and pungent, that it may be felt. There is much around to destroy its savour; and salt that has lost its savour is good for nothing. But, blessed be our God, He can restore its saltness. Salt is *tasted*; and our conversation should be with words of grace, yet so seasoned with salt that its savour might be felt.

Again, "*Ye are the light of the world.*" Not merely a lamp, like John the Baptist ("he was a burning and shining light," or "lamp"), but the light itself, the essential light. Christ gives us the very place which He filled Himself. While He was in the world He was the light of the world; and now that He has gone away, He calls us "the light of the world." God has lighted this earth by light in the heavens; and just in proportion as we live in the enjoyment of our heavenly portion will our light shine

forth. Light is *seen*, and we should seek to show forth our heavenly birth, our heavenly hopes, and heavenly calling. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

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## CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

How is a Christian to know, in these days of confusion and division, his proper place in what is called Church association? The question is one of the greatest importance, and a clear understanding of the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Word concerning it is much to be desired. It is not, however, to be set before all other things; for it is evident, by the word of God, that God values the *condition* of the soul far more than the *position* in which the individual stands towards the professing Church.

Right condition of soul enables us to appreciate and to obey the teaching of the Spirit in every matter; and "to him that hath shall more be given." Our natural abilities may enable us quickly to discern proper principles; but this knowledge may neither be received nor held in spiritual power.

Very many who recognize certain true principles are utterly lacking in power to exhibit the spirit and essence of the truth which they praise, and glory in holding; and, on the other hand, others who are feeble in knowledge, and incompetent to prove the rightness of their position through clinging to the Truth-teacher, have wrought great things, and attracted many to their living Head.

Truth learned intellectually may be lightly held, and as

lightly yielded; but when the truth holds us—sways, moulds, energizes us—it becomes a living power, so that the held one can honestly say, “I can do nothing but ‘*for the truth’s sake.*’”

Now it is evident from the Scriptures, that after the Lord Jesus had risen, and ascended up on high, His people were of one heart and one mind, living together in such simplicity and singleness of heart that “fear came upon every soul,” and they were had in “favour by all the people.” There was unity of purpose, of desire, of action—a living organization imbued by one Spirit. Their worship was in the greatest simplicity; and the ministry of the Word amongst them was full of Christ in the past, in the present, and in the future. As members of Christ, they were guided by their glorified Head; and recognizing by the Spirit the apostles and prophets as commissioned and empowered to make known to them the will of God, they walked “in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.” No vain strife was there then among them as to which of them should be accounted the greatest; but walking in the Spirit, they *naturally* were given to love and to good works, and thus manifested who they were by their moral likeness to their absent Lord. The Scriptures and Church history tell us of the gradual declension of the early Church from this primitive glory, and of its alliance with the world. In course of time the Church of the State assumed the temporal lordship of souls; and true hearts were accounted heretics for diverging from the outward and nominal church, and cleaving to the Lord of the true Church. Persecution after persecution arose, first by the world against the Church, and then by the world-allied church against those who dared to stand out as true witnesses for Christ amidst all the false and delusive profession.

Dark ages truly those were, and the light seemed almost gone ; yet at all times God has had a faithful remnant, hidden indeed from men, but ever known to Him—a people of inward grace among a mass of outward profession, clinging to Himself, and preserving seed for future sowing.

When God's time was come, at the period commonly called the Reformation, He brought forth His witnesses, men of His own choice—Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, Erasmus, Calvin, Farel, Knox, Melancthon — through whom He wrought mightily, and by whom went out unto all Europe the glorious old truths of justification by faith and salvation, not in the nominal church, but in Christ alone, the Head of the true Church. The Bible, no longer hidden from men, was printed in the vulgar tongue, and sent forth into every land to work its own work as a life-giving seed. And by these and other means God wrought, until in nearly every kingdom of Europe there arose “a Reformed Church,” a protest against the false, the spurious Church of Rome. Again arose persecutions, bitter, cruel persecutions, against the godly ; and for between two hundred and three hundred years there seemed no prospect of peace in any land for the true servants of God.

Mistaking God's dispensations, and thinking that temporal power and prosperity were indicative of spiritual power, the good men of the Reformation period hoped, when they found their cause espoused by the State, that the time was come when the Lord was to take the kingdom and reign. Therefore they endeavoured, by using temporal power and establishing State churches, to turn all the people unto their views of truth.

Forgetting that they themselves had but partially grasped the truth, they laid down creeds and confessions of faith, liturgies, rites, and ordinances, deeming that they

were acting in full accordance with the word of God, and had the full mind of the Spirit.

But as the word of God became better read and known, godly men began to assert for themselves the liberty of adhering to only such truths as they found in the Scriptures.

Thence arose various sects or bodies of men, dissenting from the doctrine and practice of the established churches, and daring to act independently; each sect as it arose, clustering round some fresh understanding of a Scripture truth, or clinging to some more or less gifted teacher.

Thus from both the parent stem of Rome, and from the churches of the Reformation, and from the numerous sects and denominations that have arisen since, there have sprung and are springing Christian assemblies, having more or less vitality, and each believing its action to be in accordance with the word of God.

The Church of Rome, glorying in her visible unity, points to the existing divisions of Protestantism as proof of its error, and, mistaking forced uniformity for spiritual unity, glories in herself as the only true church, outside which there is no salvation. In this state of things, *what is any one to do* who really longs to know the Lord's mind as to his action towards other Christians, and his position as a child of God in the Church? It is evident that whole-hearted, intelligent obedience to God's word is the truest way of loving our fellow-Christians. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments." "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Even if we know but little at first, God will give us more, because our souls are in proper condition to receive and to benefit.

There was at the first but one visible Church, and every

convert entered into it as a matter of course; but it is not so now, and as a rule the converted one either joins the church his friends belong to, or the church of the person who has been used as the instrument of his conversion; or, using his own judgment, he joins that which most commends itself to him at the time. By-and-by he learns fresh truths, and, to his astonishment, finds they are not either believed or obeyed by those he is in communion with, and that a creed, tradition, standards, or personal views, hinder his going forward in the truth of which he is convinced. In short, he finds that the Word of God is not permitted to judge and guide in all things. But if the Word is not allowed full scope, dearth of soul and lack of church power must arise, and he asks, "To what place can I go where the word of God is the only guide? *With whom can I associate in Church fellowship?*" The answer is found in that blessed word of promise, the provision of the Lord for His scattered people: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am *I* in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.) The Lord Himself takes the place of all channels and earthly cisterns from which the soul had vainly sought refreshment, and becomes, as at the beginning, the centre round which His people meet. They gather then *unto Him*, as members of His body, as living stones of the spiritual temple, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ. As to their worship, they seek that it should be guided by the Spirit, in accordance with the Word. They assemble themselves together from week to week to remember the Lord's death till He come. (Acts xx. 7.) They wait on Him to teach them, and to bestow on them gifts for ministry (according to Eph. iv.), and for building them up in Christ in all things.

While any such assembly remains truly waiting on the Lord, and manifests the essentials of the true Church by

its holiness and meekness, and unswerving obedience to the Word, the Lord will add thereto saved ones, and make that assembly, by its holy activities for Him in seeking after the souls of men, a very praise before all. But if, on the other hand, the members composing it begin to glory in their supposed obedience, and in their fancied rectitude of principle and worship, the Spirit of the Lord, being grieved, will refrain from working, and such an assembly will be, as it were, a number of dry bones, instead of a living army, filled with the mighty power of the Spirit of God. As God's dear children, we should be known by our essential qualities of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," rather than by the shameless assertion that we are right, and all others are wrong. Yea, we should be known, not by a negative protest against others, but by a positive display of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

A. O. M.

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#### NOTES AND REPLIES.

Is it right to say, "Christ made an atonement for the sin of the world"?

Christ has certainly made an atonement on account of all sin; but it would be wrong to assert that all sin was atoned for. Christ's act in becoming a sacrifice for sin has reference Godward, and is universal in its aspect; and hence God's precious and full gospel invitation, "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Christ's death has opened the way for this abounding of the mercy of God. But God has conditioned atonement or reconciliation to each individual, on faith in Christ and acceptance of the mercy through Christ; and hence the sin of the believer alone

is atoned for, while the atonement is free to all. So Christ is, as John says, the propitiation for our sin and for the sins of the whole world; yet none are propitiated for who reject the propitiating sacrifice. On this ground Isa. liii. is only applicable to one who believes the report and confesses sin upon the head of the Sin-offering. Hence the atonement is, as from God, unlimited in its extent and universal in its aspect; but as to man, it is limited and particular. The distinction observed in Scripture between the universality of the atonement in the gospel presented by God, and the limited character of the atonement in the gospel received by man, has carefully to be regarded in preaching, or else expressions are used and applied to the unregenerate hearer which belong only to the child of God.

WHAT is the meaning of "*guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*"? (1 Cor. xi. 27.)

Whenever God's children are careless, or self-indulgent and self-pleasing partakers of the Lord's Supper, they sin against that precious death of their own Saviour and Lord which the Supper sets forth. They insult the Lord Jesus in the matter of His death upon the cross, concerning which there are but two attitudes to take—either that of worshipping and reverent trusters in Him as "our Pass-over sacrificed for us," or that of His enemies who bruised His body and shed His blood, and then idly looked on or wagged the head and indulged their sinful pleasures in the presence of His death. It is in this character of idlers and self-pleasers that the solemn words, "*guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*," may be applied to God's children. They may "eat and drink judgment to themselves," but not "damnation," as our translation has it; for that is a word used only for the sinner, and cannot be applied to the believer; on this point great mistakes are often made, and inferences drawn which cannot stand the test of Scripture. God associates Christ very closely with the Supper, and it was forgetfulness of this that brought sickness and death on some of the Corinthian Church. (See *vv.* 29, 30.) Hence the apostle says, "Let a man examine himself, and so" (*i.e.* in this self-distrusting and Christ-honouring state of mind) "let him eat." Unworthy partaking does not refer to the sense of personal unworthiness, but to a disregard of the love of Christ and of God's judgment respecting sin. In the prophet Malachi we see the priests of Israel exhibiting a similar spirit when they said, "The table of the Lord is contemptible." (See chap. i. 6-14.)



## THE MYSTERY OF PRAYER.

THOUGHTS ON LUKE xi. 1-13.

PRAYER is the pouring out of the heart's longings and desires into the ear of God. It is not simply the cry of distress, nor is it only supplication or intercession for some special object, but it includes all that is involved in our position of dependence upon God. It is well to keep this in mind, or we take away from prayer its most precious ingredient, which is communion—the communion of the worshipper with his God, the filial intercourse of the child with his Father. Prayer seems to have more direct reference to God, while supplication and intercession have more to do with persons or circumstances. We say this, because in the minds of some prayer appears to occupy a lower place than we think is intended by the use of the word in Scripture.

But while prayer embraces the simplest breathings of a child, as well as the deepest and fullest utterances of our blessed Lord Himself, there is a mystery in it that none but those taught of God can fathom; for we address the Unseen as if we saw Him, and if our prayer be real, we expect the answer as if we heard it. There is a holy mystery in all this that the Spirit only can reveal; hence that remarkable expression, "Praying in the Holy Ghost." (Jude 20.) We know not what we should pray for as we ought, and therefore the Spirit helpeth our infirmities.

The thought of communion with God in all true prayer is especially evident in the character of our blessed Master when we regard Him as the Man of prayer. Seven times in the gospel of Luke is He so presented, and one of these occasions we desire to consider.

Who shall say what prayer was to our Lord? We may take Ps. xxxiv. as a sample of the condition of His soul in those nightly and daily communings with His Father—and what confidence and trust does it not reveal!—"I will bless the Lord at all times;" for "this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears." "The eyes of the Lord" were surely upon Him, and "His ears open" to His cry. Such were the Lord's realizations at the grave of Lazarus, when "He lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always."

With such thoughts before us, let us read in Luke xi.: "And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

His disciples had seen many pray, many a Pharisee with many words and hollow self-righteousness, and many a poor sinner with words few and real; but in the presence of their praying Lord they must have felt a strange awe as, waiting in reverent silence, they witnessed a character of prayer never seen before, a realization of God's presence, a consciousness of being heard, a communion so deep and true as seemed to bring heaven down to earth, and make God very nigh. No wonder then that one (as if asking for all) said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Our Lord at once responds to the request in those precious utterances included in what is commonly termed "the Lord's prayer." He first unfolded to them the relation in which they stood as children in the words, "*Our Father*," thereby implying that sonship was essential to prayer in its highest sense. He then added seven petitions, each of which unfolds a different position of soul in which we stand before God in prayer. We need to understand

each of these relative positions, if we would take our true place before God, and neither be too high nor too low. Our Lord would teach us to combine the height of the positions presented at the commencement of the prayer, with the depth of the humiliation presented at its termination.

The first three petitions concern God, and point onward to the future. In them we realize our standing:

First, as *worshippers*—"Hallowed be thy name."

Secondly, as *kings and priests*—"Thy kingdom come;" for we shall reign with our Lord for ever and ever.

Thirdly, as *servants*—"Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth;" for we shall ever serve day and night in the temple.

Thus God occupies the first place. Then there are four petitions which affect ourselves, and point to our present circumstances, and which must never be forgotten, or we endanger the lowly consistency of our walk. These four petitions tell us of our standing here.

First, as *beggars*—"Give us day by day our daily bread."

Secondly, as *sinners*—"Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."

Thirdly, as *weak and tempted ones*—"Lead us not into temptation."

And lastly, as *strangers* in the world, where the prince of darkness rules—"Deliver us from the wicked one."

That which covers the whole ground of the prayer is the word, "Now are we the sons of God;" but we must not lose sight of any of these seven characteristics, for if we do we mar the spirit of our prayer, and hinder communion with our God. There is great danger here; for if we lay hold on the majesty and glory of the one side, it is difficult for us to maintain the lowliness and helplessness of the other. On the other hand, if the latter be

deeply felt, we are in danger of coming to God our Father rather as sinners crying for mercy than as those who are accepted in the Beloved, and made worshippers in the Holiest of holies.

In the parable that follows our Lord goes on to note another feature in real prayer, and that is its *importunity*. This importunity is caused by the urgent and real need of the suppliant, and depends on confidence in the friendship of the one to whom supplication is made. It will take no refusal; but asks, seeks, knocks, till it receives. Man often forgets the claims of friendship, or may be unable to meet them; but we have One to do with who never forgets our need, and is always able to meet it. Man often responds to a request, however inopportune, to avoid the weariness of importunate pleading (like the unjust judge of Luke xviii.); but our God delights to hear and to answer.

Having given the parable, our Lord applies it with these wondrous words, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." God will not say, as man says at an unseasonable hour, "Trouble me not;" "I cannot." But, on the other hand, what is it thus to ask, to seek, to knock? Is it not to ask again and again if there is no immediate response? Is it not to seek in the same way as the woman who, with a lighted candle, swept the house diligently till she found what was lost? Is it not to knock like the necessitous man in the parable, who knocked till the door was opened, and he obtained what he needed?

But the question often arises, Why is there need of this importunity in prayer when God is so willing to give and so ready to bestow above all that we ask or think? The

answer is plain. Prayer to God is not for the purpose of telling Him our wants, as if He knew them not; but prayer is God's appointment for the exercise of our souls, both as to our relationship to Him and as to our real desire after the blessing we seek. We need a preparedness of heart for what we ask, as some of the richest blessings of God's grace would bring judgment and wrath instead of blessing upon an unprepared soul.

Preparation for the answer to prayer will often be at a cost little contemplated at the beginning; but when attained, the soul will fully appreciate the loving care that constrained God to have much patience, and to wait long ere He could fulfil the longing of His heart to bless.

It is no little trial to a loving parent to withhold a long-coveted prize, because the child is unprepared to receive it through ignorance of its value or its use. The trials of life and faith which prepare a soul for the highest blessings would overwhelm one of a weaker faith or a less consecrated life. The finer the clay, and the more prepared for the potter's use, the more precious the result, but the hotter the furnace through which it has to pass.

Prayers answered would lead many Christians through a baptism they could not endure, and put a cup into their hands which they would be unable to drink. Cowper knew what this meant when he wrote those touching lines, so deeply, so painfully true:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In faith and love and every grace;  
Might more of His salvation know,  
And seek more earnestly His face.

"'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,  
And He I trust has answered prayer,  
But it has been in such a way  
As almost drove me to despair.

"I hoped that in some favoured hour  
At once He'd answer my request,  
And by His love's constraining power  
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of this He made me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart,  
And let the angry powers of hell  
Assault my soul in every part.

"Yea more, with His own hand He seemed  
Intent to aggravate my woe—  
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,  
Blasted my gourd, and laid me low.

"'Lord, why is this?' I trembling cried.  
'Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death?'  
'Tis in this way,' the Lord replied,  
'I answer prayer for grace and faith.'

"'These inward trials I employ  
From self and pride to set thee free,  
And break thy schemes of earthly joy  
That thou mayest seek thine all in me.'"

These remarks are illustrated in the following words of our blessed Lord: "If a son ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?" (*vv.* 11, 12.) We want what is wholesome and serviceable. Will God give what would be either unsuitable or injurious? And when in our ignorance we ask for what *we* think is bread, and it is only a stone, or for what *we* think to be a fish, and it is a serpent, will His love allow Him to give it? How many a stone is mistaken for bread! and behind how many an apparently wholesome thing does there lurk a serpent! Surely among many of our greatest mercies we may reckon our unanswered prayers.

Our Lord's concluding words are: "If ye then, being

evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (More correctly "the Father from heaven;" the Father who in verse 2 is described as *in* heaven here gives *from* heaven.)

"*How much more!*" Oh that we could grasp the reality of that loving assurance! How would it satisfy our doubts and dispel our fears. For He who gave Christ *for* us when we were sinners and enemies, and gave Christ *to* us when we believed on Him, *how much more* will He not bestow the Spirit of power, of grace, and of love to accomplish *in* us what infinite love has accomplished *for* us! Paul seems to have had the same truth before his mind when he wrote Rom. viii. 32.

Let it not be said that we have the baptism of Pentecost, and no longer need this prayer. Those who "in one spirit have been baptized into the one body" (Christ), need to drink into the same Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13), and become *filled with the Spirit*. (Eph. v. 18.) It is thus that John vii. 37, 38, becomes a reality to us, and that the rivers of living water flow out.

God's gifts are designed to make themselves *felt*, and His blessings intended to make those who possess them not only conscious of their possession, but also *witnesses* of their possession to others. What will make Jerusalem a praise hereafter? Is it not that Jehovah-Shammah, or "Jehovah is there," will be written upon her walls, and His presence will be visible within her? So should it be in the Church of God; but our misery often is, that the name is adopted without the reality, the form without the power, and this can only prove a delusion and a snare.

Let us seek to live out our privileges, and we shall then have no need to assert them, either in the church or out of it. The ointment of the holy anointing will

bewray itself, and we shall neither need to make a boast of our special possession of the Holy Spirit, nor of our especial consecration to God. "The talk of the lips tends only to penury," while in every real work there is profit. Christ's works bore witness to Him, and God testified of Him. So may it be with us; and may the might and outflowing of the Holy Spirit be His witness that we are pleasing Him.

H. G.

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## ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

(Concluded from page 136.)

ALL that has been said in a previous paper as to arranging the individual proverbs of chaps. x.-xxix. under different subjects arises from the seeming want of connection between each proverb and those next to it. But a thoughtful and prayerful reader of even these chapters will often observe more link of meaning between the proverbs than appears at first sight; just as in the book of Psalms the godly student rejoices to find many precious connecting links between the different psalms.

A few instances of this in the Proverbs may now be given. The well-known and much-loved verse, "A friend loveth at all times, but he is born a brother for adversity" (Prov. xvii. 17; see Hebrew), may seem at first sight very unconnected with the verses before and after it; but on closer examination, something like a chain of instruction may be found reaching from verses 15 to 18.

The passage begins thus: "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they *both* are abomination to Jehovah." (v. 15.) This may be taken as God's solemn account of unregenerate man given in few words. He justifies the wicked by consorting with him, as did the prodigal who *joined himself* to a citizen of that



same "far country" (Luke xv.) rather than at once return to his father; and, as a consequence, the unregenerate man condemns the just one. Thus Balaam justified the wicked by consorting with Balak, with a view to reward, and would fain have condemned the just; for he would have cursed Israel if he could. Pilate also justified the wicked when he yielded to Jewish clamour, and so had no alternative but to condemn the "Just One." Still more terribly does this proverb apply to Judas Iscariot, who so emboldened and justified the wicked by covenanting with them for money, while he condemned the Just One by betraying Him. Indeed, this proverb describes sin's dark course, whether it be in the individual sinner or in the history of our guilty race; for what was man's way on earth till Christ came, whether Jew or Gentile, but one continuous justifying of the wicked? And what therefore *could* it be when at last He did come but a condemning of the Just One? Hence the whole fallen race must needs be an "*abomination*" to Jehovah, as well as the individual sinner.

But a sudden change of subject appears in verse 16, and yet there is a connection. The verse runs thus: "Wherefore is this!—a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, and he hath no heart to it?" (See Hebrew.) The condemning and death of the Just One is here seen as putting a "price" into the hand of the "fool" who did that dark deed, by which he may nevertheless "get wisdom," if he has but a heart for it. What a blessed turn this is, from the guilt and crime of the cross, to the grace of God to the sinner through and by means of that very cross! As John Newton says:

"In evil long I took delight,  
Unawed by shame or fear,  
Till a new object struck my sight,  
And stopped my wild career.

- "I saw One hanging on a tree  
In agonies and blood,  
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,  
As near His cross I stood.
- "Sure never to my latest breath  
Shall I forget that look ;  
It seemed to charge me with His death,  
Though not a word He spoke.
- "A second look He gave, which said,  
I freely all forgive ;  
This blood is for thy ransom paid ;  
I die that thou mayest live."

Observe also the question-form of the proverb. It is, "Wherefore is this!—a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, and he hath no heart to it?" The inability of the fool (*i.e.* the sinner) of himself to value the gospel of the grace of God is here fully admitted; the price is put into his hand, but "he has no heart to it." Man's murdering of Jesus, and God's raising Him as the Just One from the dead, has been God's glorious way of proclaiming Christ to foolish, sinful man now for eighteen hundred years, and Christ is for men the "wisdom" of God to salvation. Long and largely has the price been put into the hand of the fool, in spite of his having "no heart to it," and in spite of his showing that he has none, by his still making light of the marriage feast, or still worse, by his prostituting the good news of it to worldly ends and purposes.

What worthy or divine object, then, is answered by its being thus long put, so to speak, within man's reach? This is the question Solomon asks, "Wherefore is this?" and God still asks it. Surely Paul gives the answer, when he says, "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is

written, *That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*" (Rom. iii. 3, 4.) God justifies all He has ever said of the incurable evil of man's heart, by man's indifference to the costly and precious grace of His gospel. The "price in the hand of the fool," so little valued and so ill-used, painfully proves that he is indeed the fool—the sinner, and the rebel—that God has in "things written aforetime" declared him to be, and solemnly vindicates God in for ever condemning him. "The law entered that the offence might abound," and the Jew be left without excuse. How much more will they be "speechless," when the King comes in "to see the guests," who have had the gospel, but have not obeyed it! (See 2 Thess. i. 8.) Once again in the millennial age this "price" wherewith to get wisdom will be in the "hand of the fool;" for God loved *the world*, and gave His Son; and when the Lamb of God, "the bearer away of the sin of the world," is reigning in mount Zion, and secures for men a thousand years of earthly quiet and prosperity, so guilty will they be who yield Him only a "feigned obedience" (see Ps. lxvi. 3, lxxxi. 15, margin), and never obtain "wisdom" by Him, that they are at once destroyed by fire from heaven, when their Gog and Magog rebellion breaks out, and the present earth and heavens pass away. Divine justice, therefore, in condemning unbelievers, is one use that God makes of His costly and precious gospel, and a very solemn use it is. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John iii. 19.)

Solomon's next proverb is connected with this by happy contrast. It runs thus: "A friend loveth at all times, but he is born a brother for adversity." (v. 17; see Hebrew.) Here we have what the gospel of the grace of God brings

to the sinner who obeys it. It makes Christ his at once, as the Friend who "loveth at all times." That same precious price, which in the hand of the fool brought him nothing but deserved condemnation for his wanton trifling with it, gives the knowledge of Jesus to the feeblest real believer. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." All the boundless *value* of Christ Jesus as God's gift for the sinner's full redemption fills the believer with wonder at the "WISDOM" of God, who so understood his need; while the equally boundless LOVE of God and of Christ in that finished work proclaims Him to the believer's heart as the Friend who "loveth at all times," and who is "born a brother for adversity."

It is the same precious Jesus who is seen in this verse both as the Friend and the Brother. All through the four gospels we trace Him, in "the days of His flesh," as the One who loved at all times; whether His own kept Him company or forsook Him, ministered to His needs or wounded and grieved Him, we see His love to them and to His Father the same "at all times." "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end;" and when after His crucifixion and death their day of adversity came (see Luke xxii. 35-38), they found Him to be the "Brother born" to succour them in it; for as "the First-born from among the dead" He went before them into Galilee, and there gathered round Him His scattered sheep. (Matt. xxvi. 32. See also John xx. 19.) The gracious gift of the book of Revelation to banished John in Patmos, and to *all His servants* who are, like John, companions in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, also shows Him as the "Brother born for adversity," and able to cheer to the last all His brethren who are suffering for His name's sake.

The link between verses 17 and 18 is much more obvious. In the former we have our blessed Friend shown us; in the latter our proneness to behave unkindly and shamefully to Him by mistrusting Him. The verse says, "A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend." Striking hands was the ancient form of bargain made in the ordinary course of business and with strangers (see Prov. vi. 1, &c.), and suretyship was offered to those in whose love the promiser had no confidence. But how utterly out of place are any such ways towards a living earthly friend, still more towards that Friend who "loveth at all times," and "who sticketh closer than a brother." (Prov. xviii. 24.) None but one "void of understanding" ("heart," see margin) would do it; and a guilty ignorance it must indeed be of the boundless and changeless love of Christ that ever leads us to think that His love to us will cease or lessen, and inclines us to bring vows and pledges to Him lest it should fail. Yet such is the blindness of unbelief even in God's children.

The Galatians were brought to the knowledge of the heavenly Friend by "the hearing of faith," and before their eyes "Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them;" yet because after they had believed in Him they still found themselves sinful and straying, they listened to false teachers, who taught them to add on "works of the law" to make up for these deficiencies. Having come to Christ and "begun in the Spirit," they were now going to perfect themselves "by the flesh." They were being seduced to mistrust of their heavenly Friend, and to striking hands and making themselves surety for something that *they* would fulfil, in order to complete their acceptance with God and their standing in Christ. No wonder Paul cried out, "O foolish Galatians,

who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth" (Gal. iii. 1), and should argue thus with them, "If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?" that is, "Are we thereby less complete in Him?" By no means. And yet to this day how many real children of God are found like the "foolish Galatians," and "void of understanding." The ritualism of our day would not get the acceptance it does with many who are Christ's if they better knew their own Friend, "who loveth *at all times*," and who "is born a Brother for adversity." Just as Joseph's brothers would never have brought to Joseph the pretended message of their departed father, entreating him to forgive their illtreatment of him which he had long since pardoned and forgotten, had they not been "void of understanding" and ignorant of the loving heart of Joseph. The best proof of how little they knew Joseph, and how deeply they pained as well as wronged him, is seen in the words, "And Joseph wept when they spake unto him." (See Gen. l. 15-17.)

These are by no means the only verses of Proverbs following each other between which a prayerful and thoughtful reading discovers a hidden connection. Chap. xviii. 13-16 has a connection which the life and labours of Daniel, or of Paul, might serve to illustrate. Chap. xx. 8-11 may also be grouped together; as also verses 12-15. And in the Hezekiah proverbs, chap. xxv. 2-10 are full of meaning when taken in connection. Others will be seen by the godly reader without giving way to a fanciful or idle ingenuity. Indeed all such study is to be pursued only as far as godliness is helped by it; for "the things that are revealed belong to us," not for the exercise of man's wit, but, as Moses said, "that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

H. D.

## ON JOHN XIII.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A LECTURE GIVEN BY T. NEWBERRY.

THERE appear to be three divisions or periods in this Scripture: (1) The time before the passover supper, when the Lord Jesus was contemplating that of which this feast was a type or shadow; (2) The feast or supper itself; and (3) The symbolical action of washing the disciples' feet; followed by self-examination and self-judgment preparatory to the partaking of the Lord's Supper, mentioned by the other evangelists, but passed over in silence here.

*"Now before the feast of the Passover."* On this memorable occasion of the passover, when the blessed Jesus sat down with the twelve in the "large upper room furnished and prepared," to partake with them of the paschal feast, who can attempt to describe the feelings with which He contemplated the spread board? Ere the day closed (it commenced at sunset) He would Himself be offered up as the true Lamb; as "our passover" He would be "sacrificed for us." The fire of God's wrath against sin would feed on Him; He would be "made a curse," "made sin," that fearful thing from which His pure and holy soul shrunk with such infinite abhorrence.

*"Jesus knew that His hour was come,"* His hour of suffering, His hour of shame. The roasted lamb spake with deep significance of all that was before Him. He knew that He was approaching the cross. The perfect obedience which had marked His path from the cradle until this moment must now culminate in death. He must be "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He knew the hour was come when love must bear its intensest strain, and prove itself stronger than

death and more mighty than the grave. It was a dark, dark hour; the shadow of it had hung over all His earthly path, making Him in this sin-stricken world a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And now the terrible reality was before Him, and He who had ever dwelt in the Father's bosom must endure the hidings of that Father's face.

But above the sorrow and the darkness of that terrible hour a bright beam of light shines in. He was about to depart out of this world indeed by the way of the cross; but it was "*to go unto the Father.*" The way out was also the way in. Through the gateway of death He was going to leave this world of sin and sorrow and suffering for the Father's house above, the presence-chamber of the King. And this was the light from above that gilded this hour of darkness and gloom. The blessed Lord looked beyond the cross, beyond the suffering, beyond the shame and humiliation, to the glorious end. He saw the silver fringe to the dark and heavy cloud. "For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame." It is thus, as in spirit and action having passed through death, and as risen and ascended, that He speaks to us in these precious closing chapters of John's gospel. He speaks not only from the border-land, but from the glory-land, from heaven itself, having left death and the cross behind. I believe we cannot understand the blessed teaching of these chapters if we fail to see that the Lord Jesus is speaking in them as if the cross had already been endured, and the work of atonement were already accomplished.

I once heard it gravely asserted that we had nothing to do with John xv., that it belonged to a former dispensation, and was Jewish in its character. The union there spoken of as existing between the Vine and the branches could not be, it was said, the vital union with Christ which saints of this dispensation enjoy, for there could be no



union before death; and in John xv. the cross was still to be endured. That there can be no union apart from death is true assuredly; for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." But if we see that the Lord was speaking as if the cross were already past, we understand that the sap flowing from the Vine into the branches tells us of the life of Christ, our risen, exalted Head, flowing down to all His members.

The Lord's words, then, are prospective, and the light of glory is lighting up the scene. This peculiarity is characteristic of John; it is his style, so to speak. It is like a picture with a dark foreground, in which a remarkable effect is produced by introducing a bright light from above. So it is here; all is dark shade around, and the light is from above. "I leave the world," He says, "and go unto the Father." "I am no more in the world;" "I come to Thee."

*"Having loved His own which are in the world."* Not *were*, but *are*. This is a happy thought, because it makes it present; it takes *us* in. "He loved them unto the end," unto death. He had loved them up till now. They knew how lovingly, how sympathizingly, how tenderly He had cared for them, and borne with all their dulness and waywardness. But would His love fail now? Would it stand the severest test which could be brought to bear upon it? Would He love them unto death? Oh, yes; His love divine, unchanging, unflinching, unwavering, never faltered. Many waters could not quench it; it triumphed over all. He loved unto the end.

In Gethsemane we see the Father's love put to the test. There, as on mount Moriah of old, the Father's hand is lifted to smite the well-beloved and obedient Son; and in answer to the pleading cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," we hear the word from Jehovah

of hosts, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and smite the man that is my fellow."

"That God might spare His enemies,  
He would not spare His Son."

The cross tells us of a love stronger than death; and as we gaze on that cross in adoring gratitude, we each can say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."

"*And supper being ended.*" In spirit and action the Lord now takes His place in heaven, and in symbol goes on to show us what His present service for us is. All the twelve were present at the passover supper. Judas was there, ceremonially clean as the others, purified from ceremonial defilement. He must have been outwardly as fit as the others to partake of the feast, otherwise the disciples would at once have suspected him when Jesus spoke of His betrayal; whereas they judged themselves instead of suspecting him. But with all this *outward* cleansing, the devil put into the heart of Judas the real leaven, the old leaven of malice and wickedness. No leaven was in that room; it had been duly "prepared." But Jesus saw what no other eye could see, the leaven of sin in the heart, and therefore He proceeds by the symbol of washing their feet, and removing defilement, and afterwards, by leading to self-examination and self-judgment, to clear the way for what was emphatically *His own* supper. Judas could not stand the test; he went out. He was not, as I believe, present at the Lord's Supper. The sop was given at the *paschal* feast; and, as we find in verse 30, immediately he had received the sop he went out.

"*He riseth from supper (i.e. the passover supper), and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself.*" In symbol the Lord is just teaching us here what His present service for us is inside the veil. He died to make us clean; He loves to keep us so. His love

did not exhaust itself in death. He is a living, loving Saviour at the Father's right hand, and the girded servant still; and He will not cease to serve in this way while there is a soiled foot to cleanse. He seems to say to His disciples in action (and the actions of Jesus oft speak as loudly as His words), "I have loved you unto death; but don't think that there my love ends; don't think I shall forget you. My heart will be as true to you when risen and ascended, and in my Father's presence, as it was when I died to make you my own."

Unwearied He waits upon us still; and if we are conscious of defilement, let us put our soiled foot into the loving, tender hand of our faithful and merciful High Priest, that He may cleanse it. He is like the Hebrew servant with the ear pierced; having fulfilled all the legal term of service, out of love He remains a servant still. He loves to serve; and when He has us all home in the Father's house, every spot and stain gone, when there will be no more muddy pools, and no more naughty children who like to walk in them, when He calls us to the marriage supper of the Lamb, even then He will still be the girded servant. "He shall come forth, and serve them." Yes, He delights to serve; and do not we also? Is it not happy to wear His light and easy yoke? His service is so sweet down here, that I love to think that up yonder we shall serve Him still. "His servants shall serve Him."

"*After that He poureth water into the basin.*" It was not an ordinary vessel, but the vessel set apart for this special work. There is also to me something very significant in the Lord's action here. He pours the water into the basin, and as I hear its sound, and mark its flow, I think of the apostle's words, when on the day of Pentecost he speaks of the descent of the Holy Ghost as a proof that Christ was risen and ascended: "He being by the right hand of God exalted . . . hath shed forth this, which ye now see and

hear." The risen and exalted Saviour pours forth the Holy Ghost. Water is in Scripture a type of the Spirit, and I believe the water here speaks to us of the Spirit, "which He shed on us abundantly." (Titus iii. 6.) Then the basin—that which contains the water, and which collects it, so as to make it available for the purpose of washing the feet—is the word of God. The word of God used and applied, and made living by the Spirit, and brought to bear on our thoughts and ways, our hearts and consciences, cleanses us, and makes us fit for fellowship with our Lord. Without this cleansing, without the removal of defilement, there can be no fellowship, no communion. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

"*He began to wash the disciples' feet.*" We love that word "*began*," because it tells us that Jesus has not finished this blessed washing. He began, and He goes on, and will go on until there is not a stain to remove. We like to think of the song of joy over the returning prodigal. They *began* to make merry; the song is not ended. Luke tells us in Acts i. of the things which Jesus *began* to do and teach. He is doing and teaching still, and through eternity we shall be learning more and more of His blessed ways, as they unfold themselves to our wondering gaze.

"*And to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.*" This is a significant action surely. He not only washes our feet, but wipes them. We cannot have part with our Lord without this washing. He cannot go into dirty places with us, and so we part company with Him; before we can again enjoy His smile, our soiled feet must be washed. The process may not always be pleasant—"no chastening for the present seems joyous, but grievous"—but His own hand wipes the tears His faithful love has caused to flow; and ere long, when we reach our longed-for home, when all need for feet-washing is for ever over, God Himself shall wipe all tears from off all faces.

## THE LORD OUR HELPER.

## A WORD TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

“Thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.”

PSALM xviii. 27.

THERE is immense comfort in this precious verse. It embodies a great secret of the Lord's dealings with His people. It presents Him to us in the double aspect of resisting the proud, and lifting up the poor and needy. Only let us take the place of the poor and needy ones, and all His power and grace are at hand to help us.

He looks down from His sanctuary “to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death.” He “lifteth up the meek.” “He forgetteth not the cry of the humble;” “but the proud He knoweth afar off.” He cannot pass by high looks. “Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord;” and if we dare to be rebellious, self-willed, or independent, He *must* deal with us for it. He may and does deal very gently with us; but He *must* bring down our pride. He may wait long and patiently, speak again and again, and give us time to repent; but if we do not humble ourselves before Him, the rod will surely come.

Wilful disobedience *is* pride in some form or other. It either says, “I know better than God;” or, “I shall do as I please;” or thinks to resist His will. But what can *we* do? Are we stronger than He? Can we withstand His hand, or stay His arm? Oh the folly of disobedience! We *must* suffer for it, as well as grieve our gracious God. He sets Himself in battle array against the proud. “Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth,

do I hate," saith the Lord ; and "he that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

"His way is perfect," and He is making our way perfect. He has taken us up to bless us, and bless us He *will*. He will subdue as well as pardon our iniquities ; and our wisdom is to yield ourselves to Him, to be led and guided by Him, and then His smile will rest upon us, and we shall prove that His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths are peace.

He has not given us needless restrictions, nor hard commandments. There is nothing severe or harsh in His precepts ; but He has marked out the good and the right way for us, and entreats us to walk in it, that it may be well with us. He desires that our joy should be full, and our souls continually basking in the sunshine of His love.

"Thou wilt save the afflicted people." This will surely be true of Israel in a coming day, when the Lord will put forth His hand, and deliver *them* from the crushing power of Antichrist ; but it is also characteristic of His *present* dealings with His people in all the varied afflictions which come upon them ; not only those afflicted in circumstances, or oppressed by others, but especially those who are oppressed by the devil, afflicted in soul, and consciously poor in spirit ; those who do not excuse their sins, but are troubled about them ; who grieve over the power of evil within them, and yet fall again and again ; who really desire to obey the Lord, but bemoan their little power, and struggle and struggle against their sin, but with little success.

These are indeed afflicted ones ; wounded in spirit, and oppressed by the devil ; and "a wounded spirit who can bear?" But, dear soul, you have been struggling *alone*, and this is the secret of your weakness. You have forgotten that without Christ you can do nothing. You have

been seeking to get the victory yourself, and then thought to bring the conquered giant to the Lord, and show Him what *you* had done, instead of looking to Him to overcome for you. You thought He bid you fight with the devil yourself, and you have found him too strong for you, and no wonder.

But listen ! "Thou wilt save the afflicted people." Only take your place before Him as the afflicted one, the crushed and wounded one, and He *will* help. He will revive the spirit of the humble one, and revive the heart of the contrite. If we excuse or indulge our sins, He *must* chasten us for them ; but you do not do this. You truly bemoan it ; you are ashamed and humbled, and keenly feel that there is no health in you, no power for good. How easy then to cast yourself upon your God, and truly say to Him, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me !"

And will He be slow to deliver ? Ah, no ! He will send you help from the sanctuary. He will show His marvellous loving-kindness, and save you by His right hand.

The greater our oppression, the louder it speaks to His heart, and cries for deliverance ; and the stronger the sin which troubles us, the more confidence we may have in appealing to Him for help. He is jealous for us with great jealousy. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord ; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

His power is for us. He knows we have no strength, no steadfastness of will, no power to overcome the devil. He does not bid us go and fight alone. He bids us come to Him, and cleave to Him, and He will be our strength.

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

*Can the Word cleanse ?*

The word of truth sanctifies and separates to God all who follow it, and in this sense our Lord uses it in John xvii. 17. Thus also are we to understand Ps. cxix. 9. The Word can preserve us clean as we obey it, but cannot cleanse from defilement. This use of active and causative verbs is very common in the Old Testament. Thus to make alive or quicken often signifies keeping alive, and so here to cleanse the path means to keep it clean in the future.

In what sense is it said in 1 John i. 7 that *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin* ?

The truth in this verse is similar to that of our Lord's words to Peter, "He that is bathed" (ὁ λουμένος) "needeth not save to wash" (νίψασθαι) "his feet, but is clean every whit." (John xiii. 10.) He who has once been bathed all over retains the result of that bathing to the end ; it is never lost. Hence the use of the perfect tense—he has been bathed, and he remains a bathed one still ; but the feet need to be washed. This is beautifully illustrated in Numbers xix., where a water of purification is provided to meet casual defilement. There was no new sin-offering offered ; but the ashes of a previously burnt heifer were put into living water (the symbol of the Holy Spirit poured down, the result of the death of Christ), and this was sprinkled on the unclean. This is called "a purification for sin," or more properly in Hebrew, "a sin-offering." Thus while the heart has been and is ever sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the body has been and is already once for all washed with water, the daily walk needs the living application of the sin-offering to keep the conscience clean. Without this, sin would defile and sear the conscience, and communion with God become an impossibility. If we walk in the light we are not only conscious of the perfectness of our standing in Christ, but also of the imperfections of our walk. For these imperfections God has made provision in Christ as our High Priest, and of His priestly cleansing of us our Lord speaks in John xiii. 8, "If I wash thee ~~not~~" (*i.e.* if I wash not thy feet), "thou hast no part with me." The word λουμένος, "bathed," of John xiii. 10 is used in Heb. x. 22, and refers to the abiding condition of every child of God, irrespective of the question of walk.



## NOAH LEAVING THE ARK.

IN this country of Great Britain the state of the weather, and the recent peril thereby to the harvest, and the marked deliverance by summer weather sent, has occupied not a little the prayers and the thanksgivings of the children of God. And rightly so; for the Scripture teaches us that God's covenant with the earth, by which He has so long given to it both "seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night," was given to Noah, and it still rests upon the sweet savour of Christ that ascends to God from the believing worship of His saints. Even Lot was the preserver of Sodom, as God said to him, "Haste thee, escape thither; *for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither.*" (Gen. xix. 22.) And our Lord says to us, "Ye are the salt of the earth." (Matt. v. 13.) The very presence of God's children in this guilty scene around us keeps back its deserved doom. Presently, at His coming again, there will be the removal of all who are Christ's, whether alive upon the earth, or lying asleep beneath its surface; and then, as in Sodom's and Egypt's case, the wrath of God will follow. But till then we may well be intercessors for the world, as Abraham was for Sodom: Earth's blessings come specially through God's children. It is in answer to their prayers and intercessions that God shapes and sways the course taken by monarchs, and governments, and their congresses; for Christ, at God's right hand, is even now "the Prince of the kings of the earth." And prayer to God in His name, and submissively to God's will, influences also the clouds and the weather.

Noah's altar and his believing worship at it have their counterpart to this day. The apostle Peter tells us indeed

that men are "willingly ignorant" that there ever were any such stupendous facts as the overflowing of the whole dry land of earth by waters, and the diminishing of the entire human race to a single family again. We have men around us now refusing to believe all this; but this should only the more stir us up, as God's children, to search all His records of the past; and we need to pause and consider as we search them. The mighty and solemn occurrences of the deluge are given us in such brief and simple words that it is only by reflection we at all grasp their vastness, and imprint on our hearts and minds their solemn and precious teachings.

Take, for instance, the *immensity* of the deluge. However much some may question it, God's word is plain that it was *universal*. "All the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." Nearly thirty feet, then, above the highest mountain top of earth swelled up those solemn waters of death and judgment. If some of earth's mountains were *five miles* high then, as they are now—and why should we doubt it?—we are solemnized at the *magnitude* of the judgment of that awful day. But on the top of all those high waters floated the ark, as if a thing of life; for it was a vessel of God's providing. Higher up toward God and heaven were Noah and his family, as saved ones, than any other have ever been in mortal life; while deep down in one common ocean grave lay the drowned dead.

"There was a lonely ark  
Sailing o'er waters dark  
And wide around;  
God's wrath had dreadful been;  
Not one tall tree was seen,  
No flower, nor leaf of green—  
All, all were drowned."

The greatest known depth of ocean is some five miles, and this corresponds to the greatest height of mountains. What a solemn contrast then we have between the triumphant height of God's saved ones in the ark and the dark depth of those that perished in the waters! Are we not by this reminded that God's hell is as deep as His throne and right hand of mercy and salvation are high. We are told of the lost being in a "*bottomless* pit." Who shall tell the thoughts and feelings of Noah and his family as they considered the depths of doom from which they had been saved, as well as the height to which the ark had borne them? Yet Noah's deliverance was but a feeble and a passing type of his and our greater salvation in Christ. Raised up to heavenly places in Christ, our living Ark, we solemnly ponder our everlasting deliverance from a deeper doom than that of the drowned antediluvian dead, and sing of a mercy far richer and loftier than Noah's ark could lift us to.

We were "*children of wrath*," says the apostle, "even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath *raised us up together*, and made us sit together *in heavenly places* in Christ Jesus." As we also often sing—

"Lord Jesus, are we one with Thee?

O *depth*, O *height* of love!

Once slain for us upon the tree,

We're one with Thee *above*!"

But we are not only saved in Christ Jesus from the sinner's hell, and raised to God's right hand in the heavenly places; we are also, as it were, *sent down again* into this world to live and walk in it for God our Father, and in it

to tread in the footsteps of Christ. Hence the much instruction as to the WALK of God's saved ones in that same epistle to the Ephesians, "Walk worthy of the vocation," &c. (chap. iv. 1); "Walk not as other Gentiles walk" (iv. 17); "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us" (chap. v. 2); "Walk as children of the light" (chap. v. 8); "Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." (chap. v. 15.) Hence also Jesus' words when He not only said, "They are not of the world, *even as I am not of the world;*" but said also, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also *sent them into the world.*"

This also was typified in the ark of Noah. The raised-up vessel brought its saved ones down again, and sent them forth once more to tread this earth, and live in it for God. Five months of solemn swelling upwards of the flood had taught them much of how high God had lifted them; and another five months of gradual descent was a no less divine way of returning them to earth again. God was in it all by means of the ark, even as God in Christ is to us the God of salvation and of a new creation.

And now at length "the earth was dried," and the eyes of Noah and his family once more looked on its surface of hill, and plain, and meadow, and river, and wood; and a little later "Noah *went forth . . . out of the ark,*" just a year and seventeen days after he and his had entered it. (Comp. Gen. vii. 10, 11; viii. 14, 18.)

What a solemn and affecting moment it must have been to that one family of the saved when they once again trod the soil of this earth, and walked its green slopes! The earth was as large then as now, and the whole of it was theirs. We may think of Noah as possessing at that hour the largest "family estate," as men speak, that could be possessed. Earth's whole dry land was his, and all its living creatures. "Into your hand," said God, "are they

delivered." How like that verse, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth!" or Paul's word to us as God's saved ones, "All things are yours; whether . . . the world, or life, or death . . . all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii. 21-23.)

But Noah knew that he inherited that large possession to hold it in solemn trust for God, who gave it to him. It was a large property, but it had become his in a most solemn way. The wicked had been dispossessed of it. Deep down beneath the grass he trod, or cold in their ocean grave, lay the drowned dead who had so lately claimed it and used it as their own. They were living men and women only a few months before—full of all the arts and sciences of the Cain family; for "there were giants in the earth in those days . . . mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Gen. vi. 4), but they had perished. So whether he looked at the ark by which he had been brought into the newly-recovered earth, or at the silent scene around him, emptied of its evil-doers, and all of it left to himself and his family, solemn thoughts must have filled him. He could not idly wander over it as one pleased with his new possession, as the man in the parable who said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it;" nor could he covetously grasp it as his own in the spirit of him who, not having "room where to bestow his fruits," resolved to pull down his barns and build greater ones.

Very different was the way of Noah. As a saved one, he became a *worshipper*. His first work was to build an altar, and to sacrifice on it to God "of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl." This showed Noah's inward mind; and this grace, wrought in him by God, was a delight to God. It was God's own workmanship, and in it He could rest. It refreshed the heart of God, and gave

Him a ground on which He could promise that until the end of time there should never again be a destroying of every living thing. And as more or less of a Noah-like worship has never ceased in the earth, so this "sweet savour" to God has not been lacking ever since. More than four thousand years of "seed-time and harvest," and of "day and night," since Noah's time, tell of God's continued pleasure in the worship of His saints. Nor will that worship be lacking in the future—not "while the earth remaineth," not even to the day when this earth and heaven pass away, at the setting up of the great white throne. We see, then, the real cause of harvests, for man and beast, as they succeed each other year by year. God never forgets that worship of Noah when first he left the ark; nor does He break the promise He then made.

The truth is, Noah is as truly the continuer of the human race by preservation, as Adam was its origin by creation. The busy world around us would do well to remember that they owe their very existence, under God, to Noah's building that ark, and entering it; that but for this the whole race would have been cut off. And the flocks and herds of earth, now so numerous, are all to be traced up to the few brought forth from the ark by Noah. All this should have a voice to men to humble their pride, and to acquaint them with God, and God's ways both of mercy and of judgment. There is a solemn lesson to all the millions of Noah's descendants in the cutting off of all their predecessors by such an awful judgment as the flood; and God must needs count godlessness and rebellion ever since the flood to be more inexcusable in man, and more guilty than in days before it. By disregarding the flood, men are blinded to the day of "flaming fire" in which Christ will ere long come, "taking vengeance on

them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel," and they will consequently perish in its burnings.

But the tale of mercy and judgment it contains is for *us* as God's children, as well as for the world, and is meant to solemnize and brighten to us the day of Christ's coming, while it also sanctifies our lives and our ways. We have "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." In all this Noah is a pattern to us, and in nothing more so than in the spirit of worship and self-sacrifice he showed on his leaving the ark. May our lives below, as God's saved ones, be truly a burnt-offering, "a sacrifice and an offering to God of a sweet-smelling savour!" There is opportunity for this, both in the church and also in the world; for Christ has sent us into it, and has left us in it, that we should thus be God's witnesses till He comes.

H. D.

## ZEBEDEE'S SONS; OR, THE POWER OF HOPE.

MARK x. 35-38; 1 JOHN iii. 2, 3.

SCRIPTURE abounds with examples of the power of hope. Political and social life also join their testimony to its influence on those who are its subjects.

But what is *hope*? What is the meaning of this little word which can give direction to a man's entire life? It is generally used to express an expectation of desired good. In this connection, like all things under the sun, more or less of uncertainty is associated with it; but the simple hope of Scripture is a *certain* expectation of good, *based on the promise of the God of the hope*—a God who cannot lie.

There cannot be such a thing as blighted hope, if based on God and His word: "Thine expectation shall not be

cut off" (Prov. xxiii. 18); "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts."

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for." It substantiates, makes real to the soul the object of expectation, and sustains the hope. We are not now considering the merits of the object of expectation, but the influence of hope on those who are its subjects. This we can trace very early.

In the garden of Eden, when the tempter came to Eve, he put before her the advantages, as he would call them, which would arise from eating of the tree of knowledge—the forbidden tree. This gave rise to thoughts, and direction to desire and action; it influenced her entire being, and Adam's through her. Thus drawn away and enticed, desire conceived and brought forth sin, and sin finished brought forth death. The expectation of being as gods had power with both.

When grace entered the scene, and mercy found its sphere in misery, the Seed was promised: "Her Seed shall bruise thy head." This promise raised expectations in Eve's mind; so that when Cain was born, she said (though mistakenly), "I have gotten the man from the Lord."

Abraham in anticipation of Canaan is another example of the power of hope; so also is David while he waited for the kingdom; and last, yet first in importance, the Son of God made flesh, who for the joy before Him endured the cross, despising the shame: expectation gave direction to His thoughts and ways, and tone to His instructions.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, had left their father, their ships and nets, at the Saviour's bidding, and followed Him; but with what thought and expectation did they follow? They thought that He was the Messiah, and hoped for the kingdom and glory in Israel.



This expectation they cherished before the cross, and when recovered from the mighty shaking produced by His death, held to it when He was risen; for being assembled with Him, they asked Him, "Wilt thou at *this* time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The conversation between the Master and the two going to Emmaus disclosed the same; viz., that they had cherished the hope of the kingdom during His life, but had buried it in the grave with Him. "We *trusted* (hoped) that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel;" indeed, it was all they could then bear. (John xvi. 12.) The same thought and hope prompted the request preferred by James and John—"Grant that we may sit, one at thy right hand, and the other at thy left hand, in thy glory" or "thy kingdom," as their mother expressed it. This expectation of the *kingdom* had power in their hearts.

The doctrine of the cross they could not understand; it stumbled them. Even Peter, who confessed Him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," failed to grasp the truth of suffering before the glory; while they all *wondered* what the rising from the dead should mean. God's knowledge of them, Christ's knowledge and estimate of them, was another matter. Both these were perfect. Christ's apprehension of them for life and glory was their security (Phil. iii. 12); not their intelligence. In their spiritual condition they were indeed babes, until the other Comforter descended and guided them into all the truth, bringing the forgotten words of Jesus to their remembrance, and expounding them, also showing them things to come.

The blessed Master bore with their ignorance and prejudices, even with the mistaken request of Zebedee's sons, but prepared them for something else, even to drink

of His cup, and be baptized with His baptism. But what baptism? and what cup? Not the judicial cup seen in Gethsemane, and drained on the cross; but the cup of sorrow in their service to Him. Not the baptism of judgment from God, but that of rejection by man, and persecution even to the death.

For this they professed ability, saying, "We are able." What followed? James was killed with the sword by Herod, and John was banished to Patmos "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ." James had the honour of martyrdom, and to John it was given to tarry until his Lord appeared to him in his solitude. But with what different thoughts and hopes did he tarry! Listen to his words: "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet *appear* what we shall be: but we *know* that, when He shall appear, we shall be *like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is." That this hope was powerful in his soul is manifest by his words which follow: "And every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

To see the Lord Jesus Christ as He is, and to be conformed to His image, was John's expectation after Pentecost, and this hope had a separating, transforming, and sustaining power in his soul while he drank of the cup of humiliation and sorrow, and passed through the baptism of rejection and persecution for the Lord's sake.

The proper fruit of this hope, dear reader, is still the same. The legitimate result of life in Christ, and the hope of His coming to take us up to Himself, still is separation from the world, patient endurance of the cross and rejection, with diligence in service until He come. May we so walk as to add our testimony to that which has gone before, to the power of the hope.

## THE BELIEVER'S DAILY CLEANSING

TIPIFIED BY THE USE OF THE ASHES OF THE RED HEIFER.

No one who has read the blood-stained pages of the Jewish ritual, or who has in faith contemplated the mysteries of the cross can for a moment look upon sin as a trifle, a matter lightly to be thought of, or easily to be removed. Its burden has rested as a curse upon man, marring his joys, and pouring poison into his veins, so that the Almighty sin-bearer cried out, in the agony of the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In the mysteries of redemption every child of God sees the judgment of sin put away, and in the joy of forgiving love can say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." But while this is true, a black cloud often arises from a consciousness of indwelling sin, which makes him cry out, "O wretched man that I am!"

In reference to sin we are exposed to two opposite dangers, which have equally to be guarded against—the one leading to presumption, and the other to despair. It is however the former of these that we purpose chiefly to consider, because we think it is particularly needed.

Salvation is free, infinitely free; it is complete and for ever, so that he who believes can say, "All things are mine, whether life or death, or things present or things to come, all are mine; for I am Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) Yet do we read in 1 John i., "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." At this "IF" not a few have stumbled; some from introducing uncertainties into the blessed gospel, where to the sinner

"all is yea, and Amen;" some by making the standing of the child of God in Christ a matter of uncertainty or doubt. These stumbling-blocks are found in the onesidedness of our perceptions of divine truth, and can only be removed by enlightenment from above. There is nothing more untrue than truth out of proportion.

It is necessary to observe the force of the "WE" in the verse alluded to. Throughout the epistles, and particularly the epistles of John, this word applies to the Church of God as opposed to the world, as in the verse, "WE are of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one." Thus the apostle speaks of the children of God, and to them he presents that solemn "IF," as if he would impress on all the deep importance of confession of sin. It seems strange to have to press such a point as this, but it is no less necessary. To confess present sin in order to obtain a present forgiveness, seems in the minds of some to be legalism, if not a virtual denial of the atonement, and the result of this tendency is necessarily a low consciousness of present sin, and a dealing lightly often in relation to it, which is alike subversive of personal holiness and of the divine glory.

Let us, then, remember the solemn truth, that unforgiven sin is unforgiven sin. But in saying this there are two aspects in which forgiveness is to be viewed: the one as affecting the sinner, and the other the saint. In the one case the unforgiven has no fellowship with the cross; he is still an alien, a stranger, far off, without hope, and without God in the world, and under condemnation. In the other, the unforgiven is a *child*, who cannot enjoy peace as long as sin lies between himself and the Father. This distinction it is most important to bear in mind. A child may be an unforgiven child with respect to particular sin or sins, who may yet have laid his hand on the cross, and

have a right to say, "There is now no condemnation." But when sin darkens the soul of the child of God, and removes the light and joy of salvation far from him, what is God's remedy? Not simply a pointing to the cross, but a calling for confession. Of this state of unconfessed sin David says, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture was turned into the drought of summer." This was no mistaken experience, no experience founded upon a misapprehension of the power of the atonement; it was like the cry of Paul, "O wretched man that I am!" We have to learn that sin in the child of God is even a more dreadful thing than ever sin in the unconverted can be; for it stands opposed, not to a law of condemnation that must judge the sinner, but to an infinite love that made a rebel a child, and that must save the child even though through the fire.

The latter chapters of John have been well called the "holiest of holies" of the gospels; and the well-known scene of the feet-washing, in chapter xiii., is given as if to show us what is ever needed, if we would enter into the secret place of the most High, into the chambers of the King's infinite love and fellowship. There Christ takes the place of the servant, who, with loins girded, with the towel and the basin filled with water, waits at the door of this most holy place to wash the feet of all who would enter in. Does not this tell us of a daily need for which nothing can compensate—a work to be performed again and again as we come in contact with sin, and our feet thereby become defiled? If this cleansing be not performed for us (and we cannot perform it for ourselves) a barrier is raised up which prevents all access into the presence-chamber of God, and God in consequence has again to be viewed as from afar; for not until the soul that came to the *altar*

has come consciously to the *later*, can there be a restoration of the joy of lost blessings, and of the light of an unclouded peace. Let not the Christian, then, contemplate the possibility of possessing a sense of forgiveness, unless he is walking in the light where the blood daily cleanses. There may be the reality of a judicial pardon, but the sense of a Father's forgiveness is impossible.

In order to have this truth more deeply written upon our hearts, let us turn to the ordinance of the ashes of the red heifer. (Numb. xix.) This will show us unmistakably that while the sin-offering on the day of atonement pointed to the cross, on the ground of which the Aaronic blessing could come down upon the people of Israel, a particular ordinance was appointed which provided a daily remedy, always at hand, to do away with the uncleanness that man is ever liable to, from within or from without. There we see delineated the gracious remedy ordained of God to meet the necessities of His people's *walk*, as the day of atonement met the necessities of their *condition*. The one enables us to walk on our high places, as the other secured our standing in those heavenly places in Christ; telling us that if we are *alive* in the Spirit, we must also *walk* in the spirit. (Gal. v. 25.)

We will not dwell at any length on the preparation of the ashes of the heifer, or the dust of the heifer, as it is also called. Like the other sacrifices, this offering was to be "without spot and without blemish," typical of Him who presented Himself without spot to God. On it must never have come yoke, the true type of our Lord, who from the cradle to the grave was the servant of God, the obedient child of the Father. The devil's yoke never rested on His holy neck; and when Satan came the Holy One could say, "he hath nothing in me." Once he sought, by the offer of all the world and all its glory, to lay his

yoke upon Him; but he was met with that reproof, "Get thee behind me, Satan." The heifer was also to be red (*adammah*, in the Hebrew), a beautiful indication of its connection with mankind; for God formed man out of the ground (*adammah*, red earth), and therefore called his name Adam. Thus have we a type of a perfect humanity in Christ; and through His death (Ps. xxii. 15) came the "*dust*" and "*ashes*" which, "sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying," not of the flesh, but of the conscience, as the apostle tells us in Heb. ix. 13, 14. It was further ordained that the red heifer, like the sin-offering, was to be brought forth *without the camp*, to have its blood sprinkled towards the sanctuary seven times, to be wholly burnt with fire, into which was to be cast the cedar, the hyssop, and the scarlet; and of this offering it is said, in verse 9, "It is a sin-offering."\* Observe further, that every step involved defilement—1st, of the priest who sprinkled the blood (v. 7); 2nd, of him who burned the heifer (v. 8); 3rd, of him who gathered the ashes (v. 10); and lastly, of him who sprinkled the unclean person (v. 21); while of the sin-offering, on the contrary, it is said, "Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy." (Lev. vi. 27.) There is a deep mystery in this, the one saying, "He was made sin," and the other, "He knew no sin," but "He was made sin *for us* that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him*."

Thus much on the preparation of "the dust" and "ashes;" but what was to be done with them? We are told in verse 9, "It shall be for *a-thing-to-be-kept*" (Hebrew, *mishmereth*). This word is used in Exodus xii. 6

\* The English version has "a purification for sin;" the word in the original is that always used for sin-offering, and it is most important to retain the word in the chapter before us as connecting the ordinance with the sin-offering in Lev. iv.

of the Passover Lamb, which was a-thing-to-be-kept from the 10th to the 14th of the month; and it is also used four times in Exodus xvi. of the manna, which was something-to-be-kept throughout Israel's generations in the golden pot before the Lord, and which was to-be-kept also on the sixth day that they might eat it on the seventh day. From this we learn that as Christ is kept for the Church as the manna of her daily bread, "the hidden manna," so is Christ kept for the Church as the ashes of her daily cleansing. The daily feeding on the one is no less essential than the daily employment of the other. Verse 17 tells us how the ashes were to be used: "They shall take of the dust of the burnt heifer of the sin-offering, and they shall put living waters upon it in a vessel." (See margin.) What have we here but death and resurrection—the dust of death mingled with the waters of life? that mystery which the outpouring of the Spirit of life from the Lamb slain in the midst of the throne explains.

The yearly atonement, as we have already said, gave the Israelite access to the sanctuary; but that access had to be kept up, and hence the needs-be for some other ordinance than that of which the two goats of the sin-offering bear witness, when one was slain, and the other, the scape-goat, was sent by a fit person into the wilderness, bearing away the sins confessed upon his head. This provision we have in the ashes of the heifer. It is said in verse 11 that he who touched the dead body of a man should be unclean seven days, and so of any one who came into the chamber of death, or who touched a bone of a dead man or his grave. And what does all this bear witness to but that all contact with death defiles? The dead is but in type the "old man," the body of sin and of death, that in the child of God has been crucified with Christ. To all others this dead thing is *living*. In every unconverted



man the old man (Adam) is yet alive; but in the child of God it has been crucified, and therefore it is said of the saints, "Ye have died;" "The body is dead because of sin," &c. But while this is true, alas! how frequently is the child of God defiled by moral contact with the body, the bone, or the grave of the old dead Adam. All such contact defiles; it may happen often unwittingly, yet it is none the less defiling, and it is just this that the ordinance under consideration is calculated to meet.

As we have seen, the ashes were kept for Israel, and a clean person had to take of them, and to mix then and there with living water, and then to sprinkle the unclean. Observe, it was not to be mingled until the time of need came; the water of separation could not be reserved for future use, as were the ashes of the heifer, thereby conveying precisely the same truth as the ordinance as a whole teaches, that present uncleanness needs a present remedy, as it is so beautifully said in 1 John i. 7, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses [or is cleansing] from all sin." This action of the blood on the conscience is very precious. It is not a past "*hath cleansed*," but a present "*is cleansing*," that we need to be made conscious of.

We now come to the solemn warning voice, "He that purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord; and *that soul shall be cut off* from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him."

It may be asked, "Does not this militate against the security of the position of the child of God?" Our reply might be, "We have merely to present the whole truth of God, withholding nothing, though our ignorance sees not how it can be made consistent with another aspect of divine truth." We will however observe, for the sake of the weak, that God knows how to deliver His children out

of Sodom, and He can bring them through untold sorrows to that point when their defilement becomes confessed, where they must confess or die, and where application is made to the clean One, the Holy and the True, to sprinkle "clean water" that they may again be clean, and that they may enter at last the haven of rest, even though it be as in a bark dismasted and well-nigh a wreck that the mariner, "scarcely saved," enters into port.

Let us seek, by walking in the light as He is in the light, and by having constant recourse to God's ever-sufficient remedy for all defilement, to secure to ourselves an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

While the soul is saved "yet so as by fire," who can describe the present terribleness of that sentence, "cut off from Israel," which has been quoted, and that expression which is its counterpart, "*no part with me*," of John xiii. ? Can we be surprised that when immediate, daily application in faith is not made to Jesus, the Friend who is clean and ready to sprinkle the unclean, that a sense of distance and of separation is felt between the soul and God ? Is it to be wondered at ? A present application of the ashes and the water is needed ; yea, we need as consciously to have our hearts sprinkled with "clean water," as we did in the first instance, as sinners fresh from the world, to be brought consciously to the holy altar.

The clearer our views of the altar and its services may be, the greater is the need of carefulness, lest "the laver and its foot" be lost sight of. Here, as everywhere, we have much need for watchfulness, lest one truth displace another, and therefore the great importance of typical Scripture, where God, speaking unto us as unto children, draws pictures of vital truths which otherwise we are apt to lose sight of in their relation to one another.

The daily walk, the daily cleansing of the conscience, is no less a solemn concern to the child of God than was his first coming to God through the blood of the everlasting covenant; and hence the force of that word in Peter, "to whom *coming*." (1 Peter ii. 4.) Many who would shrink from putting sorrow for sin in the place of the atonement in the first instance, seem not to perceive that there is an equal reason to guard against putting it in the place of the daily cleansing, as if any water could cleanse, whether Abana or Pharpar, other than the living water and the ashes of the heifer which God has appointed. Alas! how many saints go mourning all the day, walking in darkness, self-inflicted, and bordering on despair, because they realize not Jesus as their sanctification as they have already realized Him as their justification. It is worthy of notice, that the apostle connects the act of sprinkling the ashes of the heifer, with sanctification rather than with justification. (Heb. ix. 13.)

In conclusion we would again remark, that sin in the child of God cuts off from communion, and that the only remedy is Christ, who will daily sanctify, and thereby render possible that which is so essential to our happiness as well as to our holiness, even to live and walk nearer and nearer to God. There are, alas! many who are content to live afar off, and such we would only remind of that solemn Scripture which ends with, "And they are *nigh* unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." But to all who have known the constraining power of love we would say, Be not content with anything short of the very innermost circle of that holy communion which has many circles and untold measures; in time and in eternity seek to be among the chosen "three," remembering that of some it was said, "They attained not unto the *first three*."

H. G.

## SHOWING FORTH CHRIST'S DEATH.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."—1 COR. xi. 26.

"*Shew the Lord's death.*" Often as we use these words, and often as we hear them, have we considered what they mean? It is not merely the declaration of our belief in a fact, though it is that. It is not merely the declaration that we boast of One whose body was broken on a cross of ignominy, though it is also that. We know that the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood upon the cross for us; that by His stripes we are healed; but what do we know of the fulness of these truths? The fulness, did I say? Eternity will not exhaust that; for it is like all God's work—infinite. But the right apprehension of these familiar truths may well make us leap for joy, and such joy is the legitimate portion of all the redeemed of the Lamb.

This joy would be greatly increased if we had a deeper apprehension of what *death* means—what it is as God contemplates it—so that the very touch, the very approach of it defiles. (See Numbers vi. 6–9.)

Death is not the mere separation of soul and body, but it is separation from God. Thus death is not just an arbitrary punishment enacted of God because of sin, which He may either inflict or remit, as He pleases, but it is an absolute, irresistible necessity, flowing from the very nature of God, who is the HOLY One, from whom alone all life proceeds. (Gen. ii. 7; Ps. xxxvi. 9.) Sin *necessarily* separates from God. (Ps. v. 4.) And just as God and life are correlated, so are sin and death; "for in the

day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. ii. 17.) Death was not natural to man as he proceeded from the hand of God, but it was *brought in* by the disobedience of one man. (Rom. v. 12.) *Therefore* "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.)

Let us call to mind the following passages: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23); "He hath made Him (*i.e.* Christ) to be sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21); "In due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6); "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (Mark xv. 37); "In that He died, He died unto sin once" (Rom. vi. 10); "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14); "To put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26); "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust . . . being put to death in the flesh." (1 Peter iii. 18.)

Scripture declares a still more wonderful and mysterious result of His work which necessarily flows out of it; for if *He has put away sin* (and note the word *αθετησις*, "putting away," of Heb. ix. 26—a word which occurs only again in Heb. vii. 18—"a disannulling"), then the *consequence* of sin must also be annulled. "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished (or annulled) death, and brought life and immortality to light." (2 Tim. i. 10.) Abolished death; and how? Through death. Is not this great gain? Well may we with joyful hearts "shew the Lord's death till He come."

But there is more. Can this death of His be repeated? No. "Knowing this, that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him." (Rom. vi. 9.) His work, which we thus show forth, is a perfect work, which not only needs no repe-

tition, but under no possible circumstances ever can be repeated.

Behold our glorious standing in Christ. Death abolished, and sin *put away* for ever. Hear His own words in John v. 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation" (εἰς κρίσιν = into judgment); "but is passed from death unto life." Truly we need the strongest assurance that Jesus can give us to enable us to believe such marvellous things; yea, even with His double "Amen" we do but half believe them.

What becomes, then, of the *appointment* declared to us in Heb. ix. 27? Have we escaped it, as though it were now no longer true? No, that is never God's way of dealing; but because we are in Him, and because He has passed through it, *we have passed through it* in Him. It is among the things that are now behind us, all and only because of *His death*. Should we not, then, rejoice most deeply whenever we show forth that death in His own appointed way? This joy will produce humility just in the proportion in which it is entered into. The revelation of God's wondrous love and grace always humbles to the very dust.

And now, dear brethren, partakers of this heavenly calling, and ye who are privileged thus to show forth the Lord's death, what effect shall all these things have upon our lives? The world will tell us that such opinions can only tend to produce carelessness of walk. But it is not so; and we may be quite sure that no doctrine can be according to godliness which involves evil consequences. Let God's word be our guide; it will not mislead us.

We are passed from death unto life, and no longer liable to come into judgment; and now "the life also of Jesus"

has to be "made manifest in our mortal flesh." (2 Cor. iv. 11.) Romans vi. supplies us with glorious and practical logic for the time of our sojourning here below. Let us take and ponder it, clause by clause, and see if it does not search into every circumstance and act of daily life, furnishing us *in Him*, in new resurrection life, both with a motive and a power. Thus we are privileged not only to shew forth His death at the Lord's table, but also in daily, hourly walk, as those risen with Christ, to seek those things which are above where Christ is, and live in the power of the resurrection life which He has given us.

J. G. H.

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#### NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are Acts ix. 7 and xxii. 9 to be reconciled?

The apparent contradiction is to be explained thus: In the first passage, "Hearing a voice" means that they heard the sound of an inarticulate voice; and in the second, "They heard *not* the voice of Him that spake to me" implies that they did not hear what was said, though they heard a sound. A somewhat similar distinction is to be found in John xii. 29, where the people heard a sound like thunder, which to the Lord Jesus was the voice of words.

Does the *baptism of the Spirit* set aside baptism by water?

Certainly not. Read Acts x. 47. Those who reject the latter on the ground of having received the former are guilty of breaking a command of Christ's, given with no common plainness, and enforced by examples all through the Acts. To such we would solemnly call attention to Matt. v. 19, and vii. 24-27.

What is the meaning of "*not imputing their trespasses*" in relation to the world? (2 Cor. v. 19.)

Paul here tells what his gospel to sinners was; namely, that God's present aspect towards the world was one of reconciliation, and not of judgment; of taking sin out of the way as a barrier between God and man, and not of imputing it. It does not thereby imply that there would be no future judgment, or that sin will not be imputed, when that day comes, to all of whom it cannot be said, "Blessed is

he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute iniquity." (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.) To all in Christ sin is a matter settled for ever in the righteousness of God; and to all who are out of Christ, and who are consequently in their sins, it is not now being judicially imputed, through the mercy of God, but in His forbearance is still awaiting the day of future retribution, when all sin that has not through Christ been put away will be made to pay its penalty in "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." (2 Thess. i. 9.)

Are all believers *sealed with the Holy Ghost*? (See Eph. i. 13.)

On this verse it has to be noticed that there is nothing in the original to warrant the word "after." The passage should be read, "In whom having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." Faith in Christ secures the possession of the Holy Spirit, as we read (2 Cor. i. 21, 22): "Now He which stablishes us with you unto (εἰς not ἐν) Christ [as His people and portion], and *anointed* us, is God; who also *sealed* us, and *gave us the earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts." Now all the threefold operations of *anointing*, *sealing*, and *giving the earnest*, stand in the aorist tense, and point to what was true of "all the saints in all Achaia," to whom the epistle was addressed. The measure of the realization of what is involved in each of these expressions depends upon our fulfilment of Eph. iv. 30: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." But it is of essential importance to the Christian that he should never lose sight of his inheritance in Christ, and that involves the gift, presence, and power of the Holy Ghost. Unfaithfulness and unbelief may rob any soul of the joy of its salvation, and of the realization of the riches of its inheritance; but the salvation and the inheritance remain still, with the anointing, the sealing, and the earnest of the Spirit. The marvel hereafter will be, that we have lived so poor a life with such resources at our right hand. The *anointing* indicates power and endowment, the *sealing* points to God's ownership, and the *earnest* gives the assurance of hope for all that is to come; and all this was given to the church at Pentecost, and eternal covenant keeps it as ours to the end, even to the day of redemption. Let us ponder over, "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Did all believers know what it is to be in Christ, doubts and questions would not so often arise as to what we have and are.



## A WHOLE GOSPEL OUR PRESENT NEED.

IN every service in which we are engaged for God it is very important that we tread the path our Master trod before us. In His gospel ministry there was a tenderness suited to man in his weakness and weariness; but there was a severity in dealing with human selfishness and guiltiness which should never be forgotten. To the weary and the heavy-laden His words were, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." To the great multitudes that followed Him (Luke xiv.) His words were, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he *cannot be my disciple*. And whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after me, *cannot be my disciple*. . . . Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he *cannot be my disciple*." (vv. 26, 27, 33.) Terrible words to the impenitent sinner! yet words of sweetness and consolation to the contrite and broken-hearted. To both they speak of loss and sacrifice; but to the one it is a loss too heavy to be borne; to the other, a loss that is all gain.

Are such words of our Lord sufficiently remembered by us in seeking to lead sinners to God, or in building up saints in Christ? The tendency of the days in which we live is to make things easy. "Easy" and "cheap" are the characteristics that mark everything, in every department of life; and there is a danger of presenting the gospel of the grace of God in so one-sided a manner that its depths and its costliness are forgotten or ignored in attempts to make it easier than God has made it. Truly the gospel is easy as from God to us, coming in all the

fulness and freeness of infinite grace, so that we can say to all, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money . . . come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." But it is also true that it comes to man in his self-esteem, and his pride of wisdom, riches, and power, as a two-edged sword, and says, If a man forsake not all that he hath, inwardly or outwardly, he cannot be the disciple of Christ. Yea even when speaking to the weary and heavy-laden the command also is, "Take my *yoke* upon you, and learn of me."

The gospel gives *all*, and claims *all*; yet is it a yoke that love makes light and easy; for "His commandments are not grievous." But what does the Laodicean think of the commandments in Matthew v. vi. and vii., that run counter to the entire current of man's life and thoughts? To him are they not hard? Easy indeed, says the heart that is moved by love, because it measures all according to that everlasting and infinite love of God that has taken a hell-deserving sinner and made him an heir of glory. The man of faith knows that nothing shall be able to separate him from that love, and can truly say, "We are more than conquerors;" for "faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen."

This present substance of eternal things, and this evidence of the unseen, enabled Paul to say of all his many afflictions that they were light and temporary. To him the gospel came with a conviction that wrote every word of Luke xiv. 25-35 upon his soul and upon his life, and that not as a burden, but as a joy—not as a loss, but as an infinite gain, as he tells us in Philippians iii. His aim, on his conversion, was to win Christ: for this he had suffered the loss of all things, and had counted all that he had as loss, and as dross and dung; and he continued so to count it to the end.

The gospel of God's grace had stripped Paul of everything, and left him before the cross a cross-bearer—dying daily, but rejoicing evermore, and able to say, "Most gladly therefore will I glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me." The gospel was to Paul a gospel of salvation—of salvation from self and self-seeking; so that it became a gospel of unlimited obedience to a Master to whom he had said at the very commencement, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and he waited for the answer every day; and as he received it, he sought to carry it out, whether by life or by death.

Our Lord says, in explaining His words in Luke xiv., already quoted, "What man going to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it?" Paul counted the cost, and made his choice. It cost him the loss of all things; but he weighed them in the balance against the infinite "ALL" that in faith he received; and he joyfully gave up the seen for the unseen—a present world for a present God; and that God, whose he was and whom he served, never forsook him. Paul was real to God, and God was real to him; he knew in whom he had believed, and the gospel in its precepts and its promises was God's power for his daily life.

The gospel of some is, all ease and all promise; but the gospel preached by our Lord was a gospel of salvation and of self-sacrifice, of deliverance from sin and of self-renunciation. In it God triumphs over the creature in infinite grace and love, and moulds man into a divine image, re-creating and regenerating him who had been dead in trespasses and sins.

In Luke ix. 57 we again find our blessed Lord giving the fullest unfolding of what following Him involved. One volunteered to be His disciple, and said, "Lord, I

will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" and what was His reply? "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Another at the same time came and said, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home in my house." To which simple request the Lord replied, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

In all this our Lord ploughed deep, pressing His claim to the utmost, disallowing all reservation, and unfolding the pathway of discipleship. A saved person was to become at once a disciple; for he who found a Saviour, found a Prince and a Master too. God contemplates nothing else; Christ's gospel expects nothing less.

It is often said, and truly, what is needed to receive Christ is faith, not feeling; but it is equally true that if the faith that professes to have received Christ has no feeling—if it has no conscious revelation of the Spirit to the soul—it is but a dead faith that deludes to eternal ruin the soul that remains under its influence. There is such a thing as temporary faith—the faith of those who "for a while believe"—illustrated by the stony-ground hearers. (Luke viii. 13.) It has no evidence, no fruit, no feeling; and when it withers, it leaves the soul "twice dead, plucked up by the roots," and as "clouds without water, carried about of winds." It is thus Jude describes the turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness, resulting in a virtual denying of Christ as Lord and Master. It was over such Paul wept. He found them professors in name, but in fact enemies of the cross of Christ—men who minded earthly things.

All through the epistles we see warnings innumerable of what a misappropriation of the grace of God leads to.

It results in delusions, all the more deadly just because souls are rocked to sleep with a form of godliness and a system of Christianity that has neither God nor Christ in it; for where the presence of God is, there is godly fear and trembling, and where Christ is, there is holiness, self-sacrifice, self-denial, and love.

Alas that we should have to warn believers in Christ against holding or preaching a mutilated gospel—a good news of deliverance from hell, not coupled with deliverance from self and selfishness; a gospel that would present a crucified Christ as salvation to any except those who in the reception of Him were content to receive along with Him a crucifying of self. The evil of our day is the same as that which Paul combated, with anguish of heart, in his epistle to the Galatians. He travailed in birth *again* for them till Christ was formed *in* them. (Chap. iv. 19.) There can be no real Christ *for* men without also Christ *in* them, and hence the apostle *stood in doubt of them*. We are prone to consider this epistle as if it were about a going back in doctrine. It was that, but it was far more; it was a practical going away from the inworking power of the Holy Ghost. They claimed the well of life, but they drank not of the water; they professed that the Rock was theirs, but no living water gushed out from it; they boasted of a relationship to Christ very much as Ishmael could to Abraham, or as the rich man in hell might do.

It is *practical* going astray that leads to *doctrinal* error; the latter coming in to justify the former. It is ever so. The natural heart suits its doctrines to itself. Faith submits itself to the doctrine and truth of God.

In connection with this solemn subject of a mutilated gospel, we ask prayerful attention to certain scriptures—Paul's epistle to the Galatians, with his doubts and fears

and anguish of spirit; the solemn warnings against apostasy in the Hebrews, with its curse on the ground watered from heaven, that yielded only briars and thorns; James's epistle, with its sharp two-edged sword, against those who boasted in a faith that had no life; Peter's second epistle, and the epistle of Jude, in which they raise an earnest and mighty protest against grace abused; John's epistles, with their words of thunder, that call things by their right names, as seen and estimated by God; and lastly, our Lord's seven epistles to the seven churches.

Let us remember that the whole gospel is *Christ for me*, and *Christ in me*. All else is but a half gospel, which has ever been Satan's great delusion for ensnaring professors, and with which to make unstable the feet of all God's saved ones who are brought under its withering influence. The gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel, is what we want, and what the enemy is seeking to rob us of.

H. G.

## THE CHURCH IN ITS ADMINISTRATION ON EARTH.

[One of three elementary addresses given at Upper Clapton by the late  
W. H. WILLIAMS, on *Ministry and Rule in the Church*.]

I WOULD make it clear at the outset that I do not wish to enter into the whole subject of "the church" dispensationally; that is, the calling of the church. I shall not speak of the heavenly calling of the church, and its future destiny, its present dispensation, or its formation by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, but simply of the practical working of the church in the present time.

First then let us read Acts ii. 44, the truth of which, I judge, is specially necessary at this time: "And all that believed were together." This seems to give, in very

small compass, the fellowship of the church in actual practice. And it gives us a great deal; for while there may be much theory as to what the church is, there may be little real practice; and, on the other hand, hundreds may be carrying this truth out in simple obedience, while knowing nothing of the real theory of the church. There is no difficulty in understanding this: "All that believed were together." They believed; they were together. It is not simply that they met together on the first day of the week; they met together as much and as often as they could. All who believed were together, and were united together by God Himself; as is made clear in Acts v. 14: "And believers were the more added to the Lord;" and again in chap. ii. 47: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." It was the Lord who added them. It was not the adding together of those who agreed upon a certain point. The church is not a gathering of those who agree to be together. No. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be [or *were being*, which is the true rendering] saved."\*

In the fifth chapter these are put in contrast to people who added or joined themselves to some body. I believe there is reference in the thirteenth verse to the judgment on Ananias and Sapphira. They imitated the actions of people who had faith; but they had no reality. Judgment came, and so people durst not join themselves to them. The hand and work of God was so manifest in the church that numbers began to add themselves to it, even those who had no real faith; it began to become popular; and so, I believe, Ananias and Sapphira were moved by this feeling, and joined them. This was quickly stopped. Those who joined themselves for the sake of respectability were stopped; but those who were to be saved were the

\* The oldest MSS. read, "The Lord added together the saved."

more added thereto. The judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira would naturally make people afraid, but the Spirit of God added such as should be saved.

It is remarkable to notice the passive voice here, "they were added;" not, they added themselves. The Lord added them, not any man. Thus it is that Christian fellowship is *not* upon the basis of any agreement on certain points. When I came to years of discretion I found myself in a family, and surrounded by brothers and sisters. It was not by agreement; I had no voice in the matter. It was a simple fact that I belonged to the family. So when you were converted you found yourself among brothers and sisters, you knew not how. It was not that you agreed to become one with them; you could not help it. Whether you liked it or not, you must be so. Of course God expects that you will see that it is your place, and that you will like it. Thus we see that it is a fellowship that God has formed, and that it does not arise from our agreement on this, that, and the other point.

This is where I take exception to the formation of some professing bodies who take their standing upon some certain point. They say, "If we agree upon some specific truth, say baptism, we will unite." Not so. "All that believed were together." Why? Because "the Lord added" them together.

Notice again, they were "added to the Lord," not simply to one another. The linking-point was the Lord Himself; the Spirit Himself was the link. They were not added to any earthly name, or sect, or truth, but to the Lord Himself; so that the only name they could accept was that of the Lord Himself. We have several names given in the Acts—"believers," "brethren," "Christians"—but the last is the special name. So we have here not only the truth that the people were brought together, not only



that they were believers, not only that they were added of the Lord, but "*all who believed were together.*"

Now we are looking at the beginning, at Jerusalem, where the first sounding forth of the gospel was, and where sinners were being converted; and here we find that, as concerns the church on earth, it is composed of *believers*, and specially of all in one place who believe. Looking around us we see the necessity of pressing this important thought, so that on the one hand we may guard against *latitudinarianism*, accepting those who do not believe, and on the other hand against the danger of having the basis of our fellowship narrower than God would have it. We can only be guided in such matters by the Scripture, and the only rule is—"all that believed." Christians who wish to carry out God's principles—and oh that every Christian would seek to do this!—find that they must keep close to His Word; not to explain away or ignore any part of it, but to accept it as His, and act upon it. All who wish to please God with regard to church fellowship must understand that God Himself is the centre, and that the early church was composed simply of *all who believed*. That was the starting-point, and it is true now. The church of God, as described in the Acts, was composed of "all who believed," and the church of God to-day is the same. We dare not substitute anything else; we must take the same truth as in these early days—"all who believed." So the church in this neighbourhood, or this city, is composed of "all who believe," and it cannot be narrower or wider than that. It must not go beyond or fall short of "all who believe." This guides us, with regard to fellowship with Christians who meet, as you do in this place, and seek to follow out God's will as concerning His worship. You meet as believers, and you will not be

satisfied with anything less than a credible profession of Christ. It is not at all that the person to be received must pass a certain examination as to whether he knows this, that, or the other thing. No. The inquiry is, "Has he life in Christ?" "Has he really believed?" As soon as I make that discovery, then I am in fellowship with such an one. If he is a true believer in the Lord Jesus, he must be in fellowship with me. So those who meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus seek to have the fellowship of *all* believers, and do not seek to know whether such an one agrees on this point or that.

But some will say, "You who meet in this Iron Room are not *all* the believers in this district." That is true. You do not assert that these walls contain *all* who believe in this district. There are, doubtless, many believers who never enter this room. And so in this sense those who meet here are not the complete church of God. Therefore, to make the assertion that you are *the* church of God in Clapton would be a gross mistake—an assumption that would not meet with God's approval. But while as an assembly of Christians you would refuse to make such an assertion, yet you refuse to meet on any other ground than that of the church of God. As believers, you meet in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and so, while we are not the *whole* church of Christ, we know no other ground than the gathering together of *all* who believe. Thus you meet, so that every child of God around you can meet with you in this place. You know no other ground upon which you can meet. It is blessed thus to meet; yet it is wholesome to remember that you are not the whole church of God. You meet as a part of the church of God, doing His will, and in the fullest desire that *all* the church of God should so meet together. It is very important that you and I should be deeply convinced that God would

have us so meet together. It is not a mere matter of choice ; but it is simply the only way in which I can meet with fellow-believers, so as to please God. Of course, I am not called upon to judge my fellow-Christians, however I desire that they might so meet ; but I am called upon to turn aside from their way, and am convinced that this is the only true basis of fellowship. I can recognize no other, and conform to no other. But while recognizing no other basis, it is well to humble ourselves, because of our weakness and divided state. When I remember that the Lord Jesus Christ prayed that we might be *one*, even as He and His Father are *one*, I am grieved that it cannot now be said that "all who believed were together." Never, it may be, "till He come," shall this be said of us ; but it shall be true then.

Now remember it is not simply an occasional meeting together for some particular purpose—coming together, never perhaps to meet again—but it is a regular habit. In Acts ii. 42 we find that they kept continually heeding and earnestly attending upon "the apostles' doctrine" (that is, when the apostles stood up to teach, the whole church gathered together to be taught) "and fellowship" (that is, communicating to the poorer among them). And not only were they together at the fellowship meeting, but also at the "breaking of bread" meeting, and also *at the meeting for "prayer."* Wherever they could, and whenever they could, they had teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. You observe they continued "daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house." They were together as much as possible, and as often as possible ; so that it is not simply on certain occasions, but it is that *all* believers in any one place ought continually to meet together in *all* that belongs to Christian fellowship—learning together, having fellowship

together, having the Lord's Supper together, and praying together. This is the church in actual administration on the earth. How simply it is put here, in the very smallest compass! We have simply *believers*, and none others. Lower down it is added, "such as should be [or *were*] saved." In those happy days of simplicity they did not understand any one believing and not being saved. Believers are called *saved ones*. They accepted God's word very simply: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." They believed and were saved, and consciously so. Then as such they "were together" for these different objects. They happily knew no narrower ground, and no wider ground, than "all that believed."

One thing more. If in our day *all* who believe do not so meet together, have we any right so to meet? If you cannot get *all* who believe so to meet, have we, a part, any right to do so? Most of us have read the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. I trust we have all received profit therefrom; for profit can be received from these books in a dozen different ways. There is one thing, however, that runs through these books—we have a mere remnant, a very handful, coming together and building the temple, and serving God, even as if they were the whole nation, as in David's day. We read in Nehemiah viii. that they laid themselves out to keep the feast of tabernacles. How many objections must have been raised! "What, you, a miserable handful, a mere remnant, about forty-two thousand, lay yourselves out to keep the feast of tabernacles—the very feast of joy! The idea of a mere handful of Israel like you to keep such a feast! What presumption!" Yet these faithful few cared nothing for such mockery. "God says we are to keep the feast of tabernacles in the seventh month. We know no other rule than the word of God. The enemy and the Samaritans may laugh at

us; but, weak as we are, we should as far as possible carry out God's will." "But," say some, "you have no Son of David on the throne; you are instead under the domination of Gentile power." "Still we have no other rule but the word of God, and, as far as is possible, shall seek to carry it out; we shall do what we can."

Let us keep the example of the little remnant thoroughly in our mind, because in these days Christians are substituting the thoughts and ways of men for God's Word. Oh, remember that the only true way of carrying out God's mind in ministry, rule, and fellowship, as in aught else, is to carry it out according to the Scriptures! It is no argument to say, We have not this, that, and the other thing, which the church of old had; we have not the gift of tongues or miracles. That is no argument for the child of God. We can seek to do His will; and if we desire to do that, and to profit our brethren, we must take the simple course of following out God's mind, as revealed in the Scriptures, whether in ministering or in rule.

But now a kind of appendix, with regard to all who believed being in fellowship. The portion which we read from Acts xv. seems to answer the question as to those who are not meeting as we do. Supposing my fellow-believers do not see as clearly as I do how God would have them act, what am I to do? The rule is, "All that believed were together." Remember, I am not entering upon the question of discipline. There are cases where a person, even one who believes, is to be removed from fellowship for his own good. I speak simply of fellowship, and it is very plain that it is all who believe. Remember the state of the church of God at Jerusalem in those early days. Many of you are doubtless familiar with an idea that is not strictly true. I mean, that all the members of the church at Jerusalem and at Antioch were agreed to-

gether on every point. It is not so. In Acts xv. and xxi., to say nothing of Galatians, we see plainly that it was not so. There were two distinct parties in the church even then. But the Jewish party did not separate from the Gentiles; while the Gentile party, who were nearer the truth of God, never thought of separating themselves from those who conscientiously followed certain things. This applies very particularly to us nowadays, when practices which God has not ordained are observed. Yet it behoves us to have calm, quiet forbearance in regard to much which we see in our fellow-believers, and thus God's name shall be glorified, and the Holy Spirit less grieved.

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### NOAH'S LIFE AFTER THE DELUGE.

IN a previous paper we have seen Noah leaving the ark after more than a twelvemonth's sojourn in it, and his solemn entrance upon this earth again as a worshipper, and his family with him. His first act, as we have already noticed, was to build an altar, and use it for a *sacrifice* and a believing *worship* that was full of glory to God for his salvation, and was rich with surrender to God of the best that he had to give. No wonder God was well pleased; for what else can possibly please Him so well as His finding in His children "the fruit of the Spirit," as the result of His own grace to us? There was neither self-pleasing nor worldliness in that worship of Noah; it manifested the simplest trust in God, as well as gratitude to God. He could have at hand but a very small flock at best of the clean animals with which to begin his re-possession of the earth; for only seven of male and female had entered the ark a twelvemonth before. Worldly prudence would have bidden him give his earliest attention

to folding them safely in from the lion and the bear, the tiger and the wolf, which he had also just set free from the same ark; but Noah's first work was neither a sheep-fold for his little flock, nor stalls to protect his few cattle. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee," was as true then as it is now. And in the peace which this simple faith gives, Noah's heart and hands were free for that worship of his God and Saviour which was then filling his soul.

"Make thou His service thy delight,  
He'll make thy wants His care."

It was true that Noah's position at that moment was one of responsibility far beyond the mere wants of himself and family. He was to be the supplier (under God) of flocks and herds for the emptied earth. God had said to him, "Go forth of the ark . . . bring forth with thee . . . of cattle . . . that they may breed abundantly in the earth" (Gen. viii. 17); yet his first action was to kill and offer them as burnt-offerings on the altar. He was not bidden to do so, that we know of, by any outward ordinance; but the desire sprang up within his soul, as it did in believing Abel before him when he brought an offering to Jehovah "of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof." (See Gen. iv. 4.) And this freeness and liberality of Noah's worship was not impeded by any distrust of God as to the weighty stewardship committed to him of replenishing the earth. He believed God could take all the more care of the still fewer clean animals left, and could multiply them but the faster if he used up a *first-fruits* of them on God's altar.

Very precious to God is this trust of Him in His children when he commits to them the knowledge of His will and any measure of service for Him. Thus it was that

Abraham so pleased God in his sacrifice of Isaac. It was not only because God knew how *dear* Isaac was to Abraham—"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, *whom thou lovest*;" but Isaac was also the only channel for the fulfilment of the promise as to his being multiplied exceedingly, and becoming what his God-given name "Abraham" meant; viz., "a father of many nations." Hence the special excellency of the worship that could put even the promises of God into seeming peril, by readiness to kill and burn the only living heir of them.

Noah's life in a new world began with believing worship, and he was in consequence made a world-wide blessing—a blessing that continues to this day in the return of the seasons of the year, and in every corn-field we see around us, and in the regularity of even the day and the night.

But Noah's *meal tables* after the flood are a lesson to us as well as his worship. It was then that God first gave to him, and to mankind through him, the flesh of animals for food (see Gen. ix. 3, 4), in addition to the subjection of the brute creation, both in fear of man and for man's use. "Into your hand are they delivered." This supply of Noah's table with flesh-food had a voice in it to remind him of the God who gave it to him; for Noah and his family and descendants were not to eat it with "the blood thereof." In the garden of Eden man's food had a similar law in it. One tree was reserved by God to Himself: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." The lesson is the same in both cases. God must be owned by us at *our meal tables*, and His teachings must even there also be our delight. At his altar Noah had poured out the blood of the burnt-offerings as part of his worship; and now, in the familiarity and ease of his family meals, he must still remember his altar of worship,



and must not eat anything "with the blood." In both he was to know himself as one redeemed from the doom of the ungodly antediluvians, and redeemed also *to God*.

This lesson about our daily meals we greatly need. How many a child of God has forgotten it, and, alas, how often ! Too frequently the joys of soul we have had at early waking, and our worship then, through Christ our living Altar, have been lost by levity or pride at the meal table, or by bodily indulgence. We have sat at dinner or at supper, forgetful of that "precious blood of Christ" by which we have been redeemed, not only from a future hell, but also from "all iniquity" (or "lawlessness") in "this present world." We may have scrupulously abstained from eating any flesh-food that has not been properly bled, but we may all the while have sadly forgotten that lesson which the abstinence from blood was intended to teach. Our self-control in so common a thing as eating and drinking has more to do with health of soul, and growing "in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," than many seem to think. Satan's success against our first parents was in the matter of eating—the tree was made to seem to them to be "good for food"—and it was in the matter of hunger and of eating that his utter defeat began when he tempted our Lord ; for hungry though Jesus was, He would not take food before God gave it to Him ; He would not turn the stones into bread.

It was by laws respecting their *food*, as to clean and unclean meats, that God so separated the nation of Israel unto Himself outwardly, and from all other nations. It was by refusing to eat *Babylon meat* that youthful Daniel witnessed for his God at all hazards, and began that course of blessed godliness, in the very last scene of which we find him standing aloof from Belshazzar's *feast*, and called in to it only to pronounce the doom of the carnal rioters.

And it was over a matter of daily and ordinary meals that Paul had to withstand Peter at Antioch, and refused any ground whatever of eating and drinking in company with others, except that of faith in the Son of God. "I," said Paul, "am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh" (*i.e.* his daily habits) "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here we see one who did not, and could not, forget—no, not even at a meal table—that he was redeemed by blood. And this is the truth of 1 Timothy iv. 1–10, where Paul teaches Timothy, and would have Timothy teach all others, that "every creature of God is good" if "sanctified" by believing worship. He adds that this "faithful saying" is "worthy of *all* acceptation"—that is, of acceptation over all the things of this life, and at every meal table at which we sit. And, oh, what abiding in Christ there would be, and what growth in grace amongst God's children, were but the meal tables of each day's life seasoned with this heavenly salt! Well may Solomon say, "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what [or rather 'him who'] is before thee: and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." If Solomon thus claimed of guests sitting at his table as an earthly monarch that they should not be so taken up with the viands as to forget the presence of the king, how much more should we eat our meals in the felt presence of our Redeemer and Saviour-King! Surely we should daily hear our resurrection Lord saying to us, "Come and dine," as they did for whom He so graciously prepared the fire of coals and the bread and fish at the lake of Tiberias. (See John xxi.)

God's ordinance of *government in the earth* also was taught to Noah after he left the ark, and was through

him established. We get it in God's word to him: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, *by man* shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man." Murder was to be punished by the death of the murderer; for before the deluge Cain, the first murderer, had been suffered still to live, and as a result the reason given for the destruction of all the human race is this: "*The earth is filled with violence through them.*" In Israel also no murderer was allowed a place in any of the "cities of refuge;" they were only for such as had killed another without intending it. No nearness of family tie in the murderer to the God-ordained ruler, was to exempt the ruler from executing him; "at the hand of every man's *brother* will I require the life of man," was God's word to Noah. And we know what David suffered, and what injury he brought on God's people Israel, through allowing Absalom the murderer to live after he had slain his brother Amnon.

We also, as children of God, of the heavenly calling, are taught to be "subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." That punishment *unto death* (that is to say, of the murderer) is still one of the God-appointed duties of the earthly ruler, is evident from Paul's word, "He beareth not the SWORD in vain."

Our being raised up to heavenly places in Christ has taken us far away from any *using* of the magistrate's or monarch's sword-power ourselves; for we cannot share power *with* Cæsar, nor accept it from him. We are called to fellowship with Him who stood at the bar of Pontius Pilate (Cæsar's representative) as a prisoner, but never sat on Cæsar's judgment-bench. God graciously gives us many benefits in our time, and in this country of Britain, through Cæsar's rule; but were it otherwise—were we as

much persecuted by it as we are now protected—we should still have to be unresistingly subject to the powers that be, as ordained by God—for we are subjects under their government, although we are not citizens of their earthly polities. In vain let them invite us to share with them the present popular form of Cæsar-power—we look to share power with the Lord Jesus ere long, at His coming and in His kingdom. At present we have but to suffer; for we too much honour government in the earth, as an ordinance of God, to be willing to accept it for our own use from any hand but God's own hand through Christ.

God knew also that Noah's sky would not be always bright whilst as a saved and ransomed one he was still living on this earth for God, nor his horizon clear; for this is not the "better world" of which the hymn speaks—

"No clouds e'er pass along its sky,  
Happy land!  
No tear-drop glistens in the eye,  
Happy land!  
They drink the gushing streams of grace,  
And gaze upon the Saviour's face,  
Whose *brightness fills* the holy place,  
Happy land!"—

And God knew that clouds *would* darken over Noah's head, child of God though he was, and heir of glory too; and when they did, fears might rise in Noah's mind of yet another deluge. Hence God's gracious gift to him of the *bow in the cloud*, and His word with it: "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 look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." (Gen. ix. 14, 16.)

But this bright and heavenly type of God's faithful grace, both to this guilty earth and to His waiting saints in it, must be the subject of a separate paper, if the Lord will. Meanwhile, whatever cloud of sorrow may rest upon the hearts of any of us—whether in personal or family matters, or in labour for God in His precious Church—may our faith always discern the bow of God's present love to us as a token of His quickly-coming deliverance.

H. D.

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## THE SCRIPTURAL POSITION OF SERVICE.

[We extract this paper from a recently-published volume entitled, *Letters of Mrs. H. W. Taylor*. The letters addressed to her Bible-class, when absence prevented her speaking to them, and those to the individual members of the class under the varying circumstances of every-day life, manifest a loving and watchful care which we would warmly commend to all who seek to serve the Lord.]

GRACE is the foundation of Christian *service*, and any service not based upon grace cannot be acceptable to God ; moreover our service, as believers, is one of *liberty*. These two points give us, I believe, the scriptural position of service.

Our salvation is an absolute, perfect salvation—a salvation by grace, which can neither be added to nor improved by any amount of service on our part, however faithful. Therefore if our service is based upon the supposition that it can add to our safety, or to our acceptableness in God's sight, it must be dishonouring to Him ; as Paul says to the Galatians, "Are ye so foolish ? having begun in the Spirit, are ye made perfect in the flesh ?" "We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

The very grace which delivers us from every yoke of bondage, makes us servants for ever. "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." "Mine ears hast thou opened [or bored]. Then said I, Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Ps. xl. 6-8.) "The love of Christ constraineth us." "Ye are bought with a price: *therefore* glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. vi. 20.) This is the willing service of those who have been washed from their sins in the precious blood of Christ; love is its foundation. "We love Him, because He first loved us;" and then we receive and act upon His last request, "If ye *love* me, keep my commandments." Thus we become servants in the Church and in the world. In the Church we are "ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake;" and in the world, "according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." (2 Cor. iv. 5-13.)

What then becomes of our liberty? It is still rejoiced in, but it is kept in subjection. "As free, but not using our liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." (1 Peter ii. 16.) "For we have been called unto liberty;" only we "use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (Gal. v. 13.) All things are lawful unto us, but we will not be brought under the power of any. (1 Cor. vi. 12.)

There are one or two other points connected with the service of the believer. The Lord has need of *all* His members to do His will; not one of them does He put out of His service, though He may lay them aside for a time to prepare them for it. The head does not say to the foot, "I have no need of thee." (1 Cor. xii. 20-25.) There is a preparation for *service*, too often sadly confounded with preparation for heaven, which we can have

only in Jesus, and which we have in Him from the moment we believe. (Col. i. 12.) There is such a thing, however, as purging ourselves from all which would hinder the Lord's work, that we may be "vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." For this Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway;" not certainly as to his soul's salvation, but as to his service.

Success is promised to all service done "in the Lord." "Ye *know* that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58); "Ye shall reap, if ye faint not." (Gal. iv. 9.) The Lord is to be the Judge of this service, and not man; this is clearly stated. (Rom. xiv. 4, 10-12; 1 Cor. iv. 3-5.) And, lastly, there is a future reward. 1 Cor. iii. 12-15 gives us the judgment of service, plainly referring only to those who have built upon the one foundation, which is Jesus Christ (v. 11). Therefore even of those whose work, being nothing but "wood, hay, stubble," is all burned, we read that "they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire." The "gold, silver, and precious stones" (work done *in the Lord*), on the other hand, abide the "fire," and for them there is a "reward" (v. 14). The same judgment is referred to in 2 Cor. v. 9, 10. May the Lord give us to be more faithful servants; for "it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful."

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### NOTES AND REPLIES.

Does Leviticus xvi. imply that Aaron was previously able to come at *all times* into the holiest?

We think not. The death of Aaron's sons occurred at the very commencement of the Aaronic ministry, and God probably linked the exclusion of Aaron with the sin of his sons, to show that it was

because of sin that man was shut out from His immediate presence—Aaron from the holiest, and the people from the priesthood. The reason of Aaron's exclusion is given by the apostle in Hebrews ix. 8 as arising from the character of the dispensation: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." The death of Aaron's sons only revealed a general principle, and as such is alluded to in Leviticus xvi.

Why was Aaron to put on *linen garments* only when going into the holiest? (See Lev. xvi. 4.)

The proper high-priestly garments, called in verse 24 "his garments," were those specially associated with the names of Israel (see Exod. xxviii. 9, 12, 21, 29); whereas in the entering of the high priest into the holiest, the truth to be brought out was sin in relation to God and His holiness. Aaron enters in as it were on God's behalf, and having put away sin, and presented his atonement in God's presence in the white garments of resurrection glory, he comes forth and puts on the garments in which he stands before God as Israel's mediator and representative. He now stands in an accepted atonement *for them*, as previously he had stood *for God*. God's claim for atonement, and God's need of it to carry out His purposes of grace, are too much overlooked; and this ceremonial seems designed specially to teach it, to bring it into prominence, and to give it precedence of any other consideration. The presentation of Israel's burnt-offering, which represented Israel as perfect before God, follows immediately on this. (See Lev. xvi. 24.)

What is the typical teaching of the "*running water*" in Numbers xix. 17?

"Running water" is in Hebrew always "living water" (see margin), and this throughout Scripture is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. The dust (or ashes) of the heifer points to the death of Christ, who for our sins was laid in the dust of death, and this put into the living water symbolizes the death of Christ brought in the power of the living Spirit to the conscience of a believer who has been defiled by sin. We would connect this with the threefold witness of the Spirit, the water and the blood alluded to in 1 John v., which together testify to the work of Christ on the cross and at Pentecost.

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# “THOSE EIGHTEEN.”

LUKE xiii. 4, 5.

*“Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”* Such was the use the Lord Jesus made of a painful *accident* (as men say) of His own time; and the fearful losses of life in England lately, by calamitous events, both on land and water, have doubtless recalled these words of His to many of our readers. They serve to show that our Lord noticed passing events, and turned them to spiritual profit for survivors.

The context of these words shows still more forcibly their meaning. Luke xiii. 1–9 should not have been separated from chap. xii. 54–59. In the closing verses of chap. xii. our Lord had warned the great crowd (see chap. xii. 1.) then around Him of the *fixedness* and the *speed* of the divine laws of action. He showed this to be true, both in natural things and in things spiritual. It was a fixed law in created things in Palestine, that a cloud rising “out of the west” brought “a shower,” and brought it “straightway” (*i.e.* speedily), as it also was that “the south wind” brought “heat.” And men on all hands were observant enough and obedient enough to know this, and to prepare accordingly.

Then follows His rebuke of them for not equally discerning the shortness of His time, that is, His *brief season* of warning them, and the solemn certainty of God, as Judge, doing “what is right” in the case of rebel man, viz., condemning him for ever.

Man's use of the power of the "magistrate" is next brought forward; and the *little time* there is for the debtor to satisfy the *just* claim of the angry creditor against him before the dark walls of the debtor's prison shut him in, and payment of the debt is for ever hopeless.

All this was deeply solemn public preaching. It showed God's punishment of sinners to be very sure, and brought it very near. And to the eye of Jesus it was always sure, and always near; as it also is to the eye of *faith* in His disciples, although as to fact the prison-house of the sinner's punishment is not fully entered till the coming "resurrection to damnation."

Men, however, are always ready to see others as the sinners and the debtors, rather than themselves; and those who are themselves in ease and prosperity are apt enough to *merely* pity the miseries which others suffer from man's cruelty, or from some present calamity, and regard such ones as especially guilty before God. Thus Job was judged of by his three friends, as we know; and we also know how wrongly. It was in this natural, shallow, and self-excusing spirit that some of our Lord's hearers at once brought forward the case of some Galileans lately slain by Pilate at their own altars. They thought it a just judgment of God upon these executed Galileans, and imagined themselves to be in harmony with our Lord's discourse in naming it, and supposed they were aptly illustrating His meaning. Was not this an instance, thought they, of justice infallibly doing its work, and that also speedily? And thus they pushed aside from *themselves* the whole force of His teachings.

How soon He undeceived them! and what occasion He took by the case of these Galileans to renew to His large audience all His former solemn appeals! Nor by their case only. Our Lord brings forward death by accident

also. He reminds the crowd of the apparently well-known calamity that had befallen "those eighteen" in Jerusalem, by the falling of the "tower of Siloam." Far from allowing these things to be proofs of any special sin in those slain by the sword, or in those accidentally killed, our Master points to their death as only a specimen of the similar doom of all the impenitent around Him, whether of Galilee or of Jerusalem. His one care was to use these things as God's solemn voice to *survivors*. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

We thus see our Lord Jesus using, in the course of His preaching, a public calamity of His own day—a calamity only known to us by His mention of it. How truly, as Solomon says, "the wise man's eyes are in his head" (Eccles. ii. 14); and his wisdom teaches him to use his observation of passing events for the blessing of the living, and for God's glory. Surely servants of Christ also may well remind the busy millions of these British Isles of a similar voice from God to them from these recent terrible events. The sword doing its cruel work in Eastern Europe, and deluging in their own blood the worshippers of Mahomet on one side, and the professed worshippers of Christ on the other, should warn the self-pleasing English readers of each day's news of their own coming doom, except they learn "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And now the warning voice takes the other shape of public distressing calamity, and comes on England's own soil by her railways, or beneath it in her fiery coal-mines; and still more terribly on the bosom of her busiest river, as well as lately on her sea-shore. Surely the sinking so lately of one of England's boasted "men-of-war" on her own shores, with scarcely one soul rescued, may not only well check the too boastful national song, "Britannia rules the waves,"

but may warn British sailors and British people to enter the living Ark, that they may really be

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on His gentle breast."

Observe also that our Lord's warning words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all *likewise* [that is, in like manner] perish," are as *accurate* as they are solemn. The *sword* of Pilate reminded Him of another "sword" that will one day have to proceed from His own mouth. (See Rev. xix. 15, 21.) He well knew that that very land of Palestine, and that very city and neighbourhood of Jerusalem in its Jehoshaphat valley, would one day be the gathering-place of the "armies of the beast," to be slain by a more terrible, because a more righteous, sword than Pilate's. He knew also of those "treasures of the hail" reserved by God "against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war" (see Job xxxviii. 22, 23), every stone of which shall be "about the weight of a talent" (that is, more than a hundredweight—Rev. xvi. 21). Those falling stones of a Siloam tower crushing "those eighteen" were to Him a presage of what that "great hail out of heaven" will be upon impenitent Babylon. Mark, it is upon those who have had the gospel of God's grace *commanding them to repent*, but have not obeyed it, that these judgments of God are coming (see 2 Thess. i. 8), and not upon the less favoured and less guilty masses of mankind in heathendom.

And if our Lord likens the favoured Jewish nation, under His brief ministry, to a "three years" barren fig tree, with only one year more allowed it, what shall be said of the guilt of impenitence and spiritual barrenness in this Christendom part of earth, and in this favoured British nation? Like Capernaum, it is indeed "exalted to heaven" with privilege, and must sink to a correspondingly deeper doom. And surely the "signs of the times" show us that its doom is not far off.

But these public calamities help on heavenly thoughts and hopes in God's children, as truly as they also warn the impenitent. Even these are part of the "all things" which "we know . . . work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." These railways and steamboats and coal-pits are but parts of that busy world around us, all the wheels of which are used by God for helping on the conforming of His saints to the future and predestinated "image of His Son." God's dear children are not taken "out of the world;" they are not delivered from the need of lawfully using any of these things; nor are they exempted from these catastrophes which occur in connection with them. Nor need we wish to be. They can only take the suddenly-removed saints and fellow-workers in God's work to be the earlier "with Christ, which is far better;" and even the bitter tears of bereaved Christian relatives, and sorrowing servants of Jesus who are left, shall be only as an eye-water to clear our vision of the things which are unseen and eternal; and the sorrow of these sudden losses of dear ones in Christ shall but gird our loins more tightly both to run the race and fight the good fight that yet remain.

"Should coming days be dark and drear,  
We need not cease our singing;  
That perfect rest nought can molest,  
Where harps of God are ringing.

"Let sorrow's rudest tempest blow,  
Each cord of earth to sever;  
Our King says, 'Come;' and there's our home  
For ever—oh, for ever!

"For, oh, we stand on Jordan's strand!  
Our friends are passing over;  
And, just before, the shining shore  
We may almost discover."

H. D.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

## THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

Read Exodus xxv. 23-30; Lev. xxiv. 5-9; 1 Cor. xi. 17-29.

(Continued from page 128.)

LET us remember the word of Jehovah in the former part of Exodus xxv. (v. 8): "*Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*" God would have a dwelling-place with men on the earth, where He would not be a stranger or a guest, but where He must be *at home*—"that I may dwell." If it be a dwelling-house, it must not have walls only, but it must have a table furnished for His guests. Therefore he says (v. 23), "*Thou shalt also make a table of shittim-wood.*"

God not only has a house in which He dwells, but He is there as the Father in the midst of His family, and as a Father He provides for His children a table spread and well furnished.

It will be well to notice at the outset, that while it is the Father's table, or the table of Jehovah, it is also typical of the Lord's table, or the table of the Lord Jesus. It was the habit of the translators of the Old Testament to render "*Jehovah*" by the word "*Lord*," which makes the two titles indefinite and confused. The word Jehovah represents *God* in the everlastingness of His existence; but the word Lord is expressive of Mastership or Lordship, and in that sense it is in the New Testament generally applied to the Lord Jesus.

The table in the sanctuary shows us God's table for His children. It is the table of Jehovah. The parable of the prodigal son furnishes us with an illustration.

When the poor prodigal was away in the far-off land, wandering as a stranger in poverty, he remembered the overflowing table of his father's house, where there was "bread enough and to spare." The well-furnished table of the *father* was before the eye of the prodigal *son*, and it was that which attracted him. The father's thought also was on the table, as well as on the returning son; and when the robe, the ring, and the shoes have been got ready and put on him, the father says, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." Before the father says a word to the returning prodigal as to his future behaviour or conduct in the household, he makes provision for the table by causing the fatted calf to be brought forth. So after God had given instructions for the tabernacle, and before He gave any instructions as to its services, He desired that a table might be made.

We shall have no energy for work if we are famishing for bread, nor strength for our wilderness journey, except we gather manna; and if our souls are not continually nourished with the new corn of the land, we shall be unprepared for its conflict. God would have us feed on Christ, the living bread, morning by morning, just as the children of Israel in the wilderness had to gather fresh supplies of manna every morning. How many of God's dear people there are whose souls are famishing through neglecting to read God's word! It is "bread," says the psalmist, "which strengtheneth man's heart." (Ps. civ. 15.)

The table was to be of shittim-wood, the same material as that of which the ark was made, which gives us another type of the Lord Jesus as the Word made flesh, the incarnate Son of God. The table is typical of Christ as the centre of communion to the family of God. Had Christ not come in the flesh, we could never have sat at God's table; had He not lived, suffered, and died for us,

we could never have possessed the hope of living ~~for~~ ever in His presence in the glory. The slain Lamb is the provision of our Father's table.

We notice a slight difference in the measurements of the table and of the ark as to length and breadth, the ark being two and a half cubits, the table two cubits; but its height was precisely the same—a cubit and a half. We may see no reason for this; but God does. Everything was devised and ordered by Him in infinite wisdom. In preparing His table, the Father has made it sufficiently large for the entertainment of all His guests; and it is at this table that the Father meets and gladdens the hearts of His children with the sweet remembrances of His divine love. We have no right either to extend or contract the divine dimensions of the table; they are fixed by God Himself. The table is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father has provided a place at His table for every one of His children, with Christ as the centre of communion; but He has not left room for anyone who is not a child of the family to take a place there. At the gospel feast the word is, "*Compel* them to come in;" but the dimensions of the Father's table are fixed, and there is no place for those who are not in a condition to discern the Lord's body.

The table was to be the same height as the propitiatory or mercy-seat; viz., a cubit and a half. Everyone who is the object of divine mercy through faith in Christ, and can come to the mercy-seat, has the right to a place at the table. God has placed it so low, that the very smallest child in the family can come up to it. But although the table was the same *height* as the mercy-seat, it was not *co-extensive*. This shows us that we are not to number the children of God by the number of communicants. There are many who feed on the heavenly manna, but who



fail to take their places continually at the King's table. Some perhaps are, like Mephibosheth, lame on their feet. Of some, too, it may be said, as Saul said of David, "Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean." (1 Sam. xx. 26.) Some perhaps, either from their own illness or that of others, are confined to a sick-room; and many are also prevented by the various and necessary duties of their earthly calling. But whilst on the one hand the Father's table is the place for every child of God, on the other hand there are many whom we do not see there, but whom we shall meet in the glory with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and drink together the new wine of the kingdom, when we shall see and be for ever with Him who is the First-born among many brethren. The table as well as the ark was overlaid with pure gold, setting forth to us a suffering Christ, and also Immanuel—"God with us."

*"And make thereto a crown of gold round about."* (v. 24.) This crown of gold may remind us not only of a suffering Christ crowned with thorns on earth, the centre of communion of the family of God, but of the one who is crowned with glory and honour in heaven. It was from the ascended Christ in the glory that the apostle Paul received instructions as to the Lord's table. (1 Cor. xi.)

*"And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand breadth round about."* (v. 25.) At the gospel feast, as we have said, the doors are thrown wide open, with the proclamation, "*Ho! EVERY one;*" but when it is a question of the Lord's table, there is a *border* round about. This is of divine importance. God not only commanded a border to be made, but He gave its exact dimensions—"an hand breadth." Just as we have no right to make the table longer or shorter, so we have no right to make the border any higher or lower than God has defined. God has fixed

the extent of the table and the height of the border. Take an illustration. An hand breadth is four fingers in extent. Let us say that these indicate four requisites, of which the *first* may be saving *faith* in Christ. Paul says: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" When he says "*we*," he speaks of genuine believers. The next *three* requisites may be illustrated by the Lord's own words in Rev. iii. 7: "These things saith He that is *holy*, He that is *true*, He that hath the *key of David*, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."

If the first requisite is faith, the *second* guards the *holiness* of the person of Christ. When the Lord Jesus instituted His own supper, He first of all, as it were, put the border round when He said, "One of you shall betray me." Then commenced their self-examination, when they each began to cry, "Is it I?" and when the point was pressed a little farther, at the request of Peter, Jesus gave the answer through John, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it." Thereupon, Christ having thus guarded the table, and having brought out that exercise of heart which was requisite, Judas went immediately out into the darkness. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.) If one who has committed sin sit at the table he has no communion. "The soul that toucheth any unclean thing shall be cut off from his people;" that is, he is cut off from the communion of saints. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

But, *third*, the *truth* of Christ must be maintained as well as His holiness. He is "*holy and true*." "A man

that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." (Titus iii. 10.) If any man come, and bring not the doctrine of Christ, "receive him not . . . neither bid him God-speed." (2 John 10.)

Our aim and object should be to confess Christ, and walk worthy of His name; to maintain the sacred truth of His person; and, *fourth*, to be subject to His *Lordship*. It is He "that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Paul says, in his second letter to the Thessalonians (iii. 14), "If any man *obey not* our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him."

There was to be a border to the table *all round*; there was to be no gap whatever. When gaps are left the little foxes enter, and spoil the grapes; and the cunning fox gets over the broken wall, as the apostle Jude says, "There are certain men crept in unawares."

"*And thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about.*" (v. 25.) God puts divine honour on the border; the jealousy which guards the table brings glory to God, and honour to the name of Jesus.

"*And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold,*" &c. (v. 26.) The rings and staves of the table were similar to those of the ark. As they adapted the ark to the wilderness journeyings of the children of Israel, so these adapt the table to the wilderness communion of the children of God. Where two or three are gathered together to the name of Jesus, there they may break bread in remembrance of Him. Just as the disciples were privileged to have His manifested presence, not only at Jerusalem, when the company of disciples were assembled, but at Emmaus, where He made Himself known to the two.

"*And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal:*

*of pure gold shalt thou make them."* (v. 29.) Everything connected with the table of God was not only to be of gold, but of pure gold. Holiness becomes God's house, and purity His table. The apostle Paul says to Timothy, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. ii. 21.)

*"And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me alway."* (v. 30.) See also Leviticus xxiv. 5-9. There were to be twelve cakes, or pierced cakes, of two-tenth deals each. "Pierced cakes" (so the word signifies) would be similar to some of our biscuits, which are unleavened, and pierced through with holes. This presents to our mind Him whose "visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men"—the "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Whilst this shewbread was for the provision of the priestly family, it *first* passed into the sanctuary, into the presence of God. Mark the word—"Thou shalt set shewbread before ME alway." This is suggestive of a precious truth: "Ye do shew the Lord's death." It is a shewing forth, not only before men, but before God. We often lose sight of this. God wants to have the presentation of Christ's sufferings *before Him*, and He wants us to keep up a remembrance of those sufferings in His presence. The table is the Father's table, and what is set upon it is set forth before *Him*. In a family the servant not only spreads the table for the children, but for the father also. How unseemly it would be if there were no place and no provision made for the father! So it is with God's table—"Shewbread before ME alway." "Let US eat and be merry."

## STAGES AND STEPS TO EBENEZER; OR, GOD'S HELP, AND WHERE TO FIND IT.

God's word is all fraught with instruction to us, and it is all needed, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Let us meditate on Ebenezer, and on the path that brought Israel to it. May our God help us to find the pathway of hopefulness; for it is not found everywhere, but it becomes the portion of those who believe in the God of hope, and diligently seek Him (Heb. xi. 6) in the appointed place, and in the appointed way.

There was much that seemed particularly helpless and hopeless in the position of Israel at this time under the oppression of the Philistines. God had allowed them to be smitten before their enemies, and gave up "the ark of His strength" a prey to the Philistines; yet He had vindicated His own honour, and brought His ark back from its captivity, and had made those who had taken it away in triumph see how utterly helpless they were in its presence. Israel likewise had felt the mighty hand of God when the men of Bethshemesh died for looking into the ark. This led to its finding a temporary resting-place in Kirjath-jearim, of which we read that "the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel *lamented after the Lord.*" This describes the condition of the nation at the time we are about to consider.

There was something very despairing in this twenty years' lamentation. There was not the cry of faith, there were not the tears of hopeful penitence, but there was verily "the sorrow of the world that worketh death;" and not "the sorrow according to God," which "worketh

repentance to salvation not to be repented of." (2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.) This needs to be remembered by all whom spiritual declension and consequent impoverishment has brought under the power of the enemy.

It is important to notice the distinction to be drawn typically between Egyptian bondage and Philistine bondage. The former is an irresistible authority exercised by Satan over fallen man; the latter is a usurped power that Satan exercises when faith in God, and obedience to Him, have failed. Faith leads out of Egypt; for Israel had no call to drive Pharaoh from his throne. God only can do that, and will do it in the final conflict between the prince of this world and Him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords. But when the usurper comes within Israel's border, faith is commanded to expel the enemy; and this David realized when he saw the Philistine champion in the valley of Elah. Of the one we read, "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;" and of the other, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Here we find the Philistines triumphant, and Israel wailing over their blighted hopes. It had been thus with Samuel's mother. For ten long, weary years she was made to fret; she wept, and would not eat. Is it so with any who read this paper? The Lord help them by His precious word out of sorrowing helplessness into sorrowing, yet rejoicing, hopefulness, through simply coming to an end of themselves, and beginning afresh with God.

Into the midst of Israel's lamentation God sends Hannah's son, whose very name, "Heard of God," might awake a ray of hope; for Samuel's birth was a witness to what they needed. After his mother had given herself up to ten years of misspent sorrow, she at length "in bitterness of soul . . . prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore." How different these tears of sorrow, and this trustful

"pouring out of her soul before Jehovah," from what had gone before, the result showed; for "she went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad."

The first steps of Israel's return to God were taught them by Samuel occupying the place of the *prophet*; and let us mark the whole-heartedness that was insisted on: "If ye return unto the Lord with *all your heart*." Alas for the half-heartedness that robs us of our choicest blessings! for the double-minded man need expect nothing from the Lord. (James i. 6-8.)

Whole-heartedness, then, is the condition essential to all real return to God, and to this three steps are assigned.

1. *Put away* the strange gods from among you.
2. *Prepare or establish your hearts* unto the Lord.
3. *Serve* Him only.

These three points claim the prayerful consideration of each one who wants to come to Ebenezer; for the way is often missed. The devil puts up many false sign-posts on this journey, and gives many false lights to beguile and lead astray those unable to read God's writing, or to discern God's light.

The first step is the putting away what is known to be not of God, and until this is done God's help will not be reached. Oh, let us beware of those strange gods! those idolatries of the heart that come in as a veil to shut out God, those right hands that have to be cut off, those right eyes that have to be plucked out, if we would fully know what the help of God is.

Then there is the preparation of the heart, or rather, the establishing and fixing of the heart. The word here used we find in that psalm of penitent sorrow, the fifty-first, where the sorrowing one, full of hope, and speaking of being made "whiter than snow," prays, "Renew a right

[i.e. a constant or fixed]\* spirit within me." (v. 10.) Departure from God and apostasy is the result of the non-establishment of the heart in God.

The last point brought before Israel was the serving the Lord *only*. Israel had sought to serve idols and God, as we read of the Samaritans afterwards, "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods." (2 Kings xvii. 33.) We are prone to forget the absoluteness of the demand God makes. He *only* is to be served, and is to be loved with *all* we have and are.

We next have the account of Israel's obedience; and this prepares the way for further progress on this blessed journey from hopelessness to hope. Samuel now gathers Israel to Mizpeh, the "watch-tower" (derived from a verb signifying "to look out"). It is probably the same place as is mentioned in 2 Chron. xx. 24, where God gave Jehoshaphat that memorable victory over the Moabites, and brought him back with joy from Berachah, the valley of blessing; "for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies."

We now read that Samuel takes the place of *judge*. He judges Israel, and in spirit brings them before the judgment-seat of God.

As in the first stage described in verse 3 there were three steps indicated, so here three separate acts are noticed:

1. The *drawing water*, and pouring it out before the Lord.
2. The *fasting* and afflicting themselves before God.
3. The *confession of sin* to Him.

\* This word is used of the heart in the following passages: Ps. lvii. 7, "fixed;" cviii. 1; cxii. 7. God's complaint of Israel in Ps. lxxviii. 37, was that their heart had no fixedness of purpose, but that their desires for good were as the morning cloud and as the early dew—soon come and soon gone.



The first is significant of utter helplessness; that they were as "water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." (2 Sam. xiv. 14.) The judgment of God had taught them this, and their act acknowledges it; but it is a helplessness that is confessed before the great and mighty Helper; for the water is poured out "*before the Lord.*" It is thus with all profitable confessions of weakness and want; but, alas! how often do we helplessly pour out the water before others, and not before Jehovah! Is it then a wonder that help is far off, and that at length despair well-nigh lays hold of the helpless, because their need and nothingness has not been brought into the presence of the living God? Thus the evil spies poured out their confession of weakness before the people, and began to rebel against God. There is a great secret of success here, and one that must never be forgotten if our need is to find help in God.

Then we are told they fasted as humbled ones before God, as those who had no claim but on the mighty covenant grace of Him who had promised, and who would fulfil.

Thus emptied and humbled, they confessed their sin "against the Lord."

The enemy will not long leave those alone who have rallied round their God at Mizpeh; and well is it for us when the enemy finds us in the presence of God. Israel is in a true state before God; and we now come a stage further in this holy pathway of return to God, and find in priestly sacrifice and intercession God's covenant mercy secured. We have then,

1. Dependence on God in the cry, "Cease not to cry unto the Lord *our* God for us."

2. The offering of the sucking-lamb for a whole burnt-offering.

3. The intercession of Samuel.

Here Samuel occupies the *priestly* place. In the previous steps the prophetic and judicial characteristics were more prominent; but this beautifully unfolds the office of our great High Priest. All real intelligent dependence on and confidence in God, in man's fallen condition, is connected with priesthood and its advocacy. This is illustrated in the events before us. In the previous scene Israel had confessed their nothingness; in the present Israel confesses their dependence on the provision of God's altar. In the whole burnt-offering Israel is presented substitutionally as acceptable in the sight of God. It is this when fully understood that gives such confidence in intercession, and such assurance of faith; for we have a great High Priest who represents us, and presents us perfect before God.

Samuel stands here, as Moses had done on the mount when Joshua and Israel were fighting with Amalek in the valley; and the response is given in these simple words, "And the Lord heard him." What less could be said? What more was needed? The answer came; for we read that "as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel."

The victory is gained, and we see the closing verses of Romans viii. realized: "More than conquerors through Him that loved us." The victory is His, and He has made it ours, and He has helped. It was here Samuel erected the stone between Mizpeh, the watch-tower, and Shen, the teeth of the enemies from which the people of God had been delivered, and called its name "EBENEZER," the stone of help. Here will our help ever be found. God has marked out its locality, that faith may never be

at a loss where to find it; and as surely as we tread the path pointed out, we shall come to what will prove a precious memorial of an ever-present and ever-faithful God, who will meet us at the appointed place, and enable us to take up the song of Psalm xlii.: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;" or better, "a help easily found." Yes, He is not hard to find, nor is He far to seek, though in our unbelief we often think otherwise, when, like Israel, we have mourned days, and months, and years in vain. Our privilege is to "abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost," and that because we have "the God of hope" as our God, able and willing to "fill us with all joy and peace in believing;" and to this end "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we," says the apostle, "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. xv. 4, 13.)

May these pages help some sorrowing, feeble child of God into the path which will surely lead us, and lead us speedily to Ebenezer, for the journey from Kirjath-jearim is not long; and then, in the language of the psalm just referred to, we shall sing to our once troubled hearts, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

H. G.

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SATAN has power to tempt us as children of God, but not to destroy. The Lord would put Satan to shame by enabling us, who were once his slaves, to triumph over him. Each child of God should be every day a conqueror in Christ. But we must begin where God begins. He looks on Christ, and on His triumph in Christ, and so must we. (Col. ii. 12-15.)

## IDOLS:

A WARNING AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT.

EZEKIEL xxxvi. 18-38.

(NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE W. H. WILLIAMS.)

THIS chapter shows us some of the dealings of God with His people Israel in the time of their failure and departure from Him. We see His judgments on account of their sin: "Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: and I scattered them among the heathen." We also learn that His delivering power will yet be manifested for His "holy name's sake," in restoring them to their own land in their coming day of blessing: "From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." But this Scripture contains an important lesson for us also.

Israel's highest blessing was their dwelling in the land of Canaan; yet there they were found sinning against God; and their idolatry caused them to be cast out, and to be "dispersed through the countries."

The first warning God gave them was that contained in Exodus xx. 3-6, in the command to have no other gods, and not to make any graven image; but they heeded it not. While Joshua lived the people were free from idolatry; but no sooner had he departed than back they went to their idols again; and in this matter Jeroboam seems to have been the worst man amongst them; for he acted Aaron's sinful part over again, and "made Israel to sin." Thus Israel lost their blessings.

This comes home to all God's children in the present

dispensation. We are promised rich blessings indeed. See the encouraging words of the Lord Himself recorded in John xv. 7 : "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, *ye shall ask what ye will*, and it shall be done unto you." Again, 1 John i. 3, 4 : "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us : and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." Also 1 Cor. i. 9 : "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

The great blessing of the Israelites in the land of Canaan was peace and quietness. For the Christian, the highest blessing is fellowship with the Father and the Son ; communion of thought and interest in everything ; so trusting God, at all times and under all circumstances, as not to have an uneasy thought concerning the present, or a misgiving regarding the future.

John knew the meaning of this by blessed experience ; and it is our privilege not only to know that we are saved, called to eternal life, having blessing after blessing from his hand, but it is ours to have full fellowship, real communion with Him continually. In the book of Leviticus we are told that the priests presented the peace-offerings, and God fed upon them, and they also had their portion. So should it be now—God and His children feeding upon the slain Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, continually. If the believer enjoys Christ all day long, feeding constantly in the green pastures of His love, he knows what it is to be "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." (Rom. xv. 29.)

In the land the Jews were to enjoy *rest* ; and Christ says to us, in Matt. xi. 29 : "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall

find REST unto your souls." God in grace guards *us* against the sin of Jeroboam in 1 John v. 19-21: "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness [in the wicked one]. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God, and eternal life.* Little children, *keep yourselves from idols.*"

Worship is the result of a soul being occupied, filled, absorbed with some object, having the thoughts centred upon it in admiration; that is, to worship it. So is it with the believer when in communion with God. On the contrary, the *natural heart* can never love the Lord Jesus. It is engaged with some other object, and anything which occupies the heart is an idol. For example—the world, its pleasures, music, dancing, the love of dress, or of position in society; the arrangement of the household, or even the house itself, may prove a snare, against all which we have the solemn words of warning in 1 John ii. 15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

If we are out of communion there must be some idol occupying the heart, to our serious loss, and to the great dishonour of God. Therefore the exhortation, "Keep yourselves from idols." There should be no room for them. The Lord Jesus must be the only possessor of our hearts, and we must be *wholly* His; for He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Gal. i. 4, 5.)

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is "*fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*"? (Eph. v. 11.)

Fellowship with evil may be in two ways ; either in the committing of it oneself, or in taking pleasure in the evil done by others. In speaking of the evildoers in the Gentile world, the apostle says, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." (Romans i. 32.) The latter manifests a greater depth of evil than the former, as marking a more deliberate choice of it. The one doing the evil is usually led by passion ; the one who follows the evildoer, and consents to his ways, is actuated by a deliberate choice. (See Psalm i. 18.)

What is the explanation of Luke xxii. 35-38, where the apostles are told to *buy a sword*? And how is it to be understood in relation to Matt. xxvi. 52?

In verse 35 our Lord asked the disciples, with reference to His care of them while He was with them, "Lacked ye anything?" The answer is, "Nothing." In the following verse the Lord says, "But *now*." It is impossible for us fully to estimate the force of that terrible now, with all its altered circumstances, when the Prince of Life was to be numbered among the dead. There are mysteries around that period during which the Lord of all was delivered into the hands of man and devil that we can never solve. The unutterable change which this would involve, our Lord could not unfold, but He sought to awaken their minds as to their danger by saying that *now* they must care for themselves. He who had kept them, fed them, and been as a wall around them, was to be slain, and therefore they could only rest, as saints in the Old Testament had done, upon their sword and their God. Did we realize more deeply what it is to have Christ with us, we should understand better what is implied by being without Christ. This is what our Lord seeks to teach, and thereby to quicken their consciences and their hearts, as to the darkness of that night into which they were to enter, when throughout the universe of God the brightness of God's glory was to be eclipsed, when He who had ever been the delight of God was to enter body and spirit into the experiences of Psalm xviii. 4, 5. These verses in Luke give us a faint glimpse into our Lord's consciousness of what those days of darkness involved, which He emphatically calls "*your hour and the power of darkness*," and to which He refers in verse 37,

when He was for those three days to be "reckoned among the transgressors," and the things concerning Him were to have an end. But while the disciples would have been justified in using their swords for their own defence, they were equally unjustified in using them on His behalf; for He who was to be reckoned among transgressors had to take the place of subjection to authority, and not of resistance. Hence in Matthew xxvi. our Lord tells them that they who take the weapons of the flesh in spiritual warfare will only find those weapons turned against themselves. In the kingdom of Christ God is the power that defends, and the sword out of His mouth is all that is needed. Thus those who follow Christ in Revelation xix. come forth unarmed; they follow Him on white horses, and the two-edged sword comes out of His mouth, and is not placed in their hand.

Is the account of the *rich man* and *Lazarus* in Luke xvi. a parable or a history? and does it refer to the present or the future?

Our Lord not unfrequently speaks in parables beginning in the same way, "There was." See, for example, Luke xv. 11; xvi. 1. But it is not improbable that He had some well-known case before His mind of which He drew aside the veil. That the condition of bliss and of suffering refers to the state immediately after death, and prior to resurrection, admits of no doubt, when we remember that the rich man had then five brethren alive in his father's house. This also answers another question often raised as to the sleep of the spirit. The expressions "fallen asleep," &c., are often used in Scripture of the death of the righteous, the thought being naturally suggested by the closed eye and motionless form of the departed. It is so used among all nations, whatever view they take of the future state. But there may be spiritual consciousness apart from any bodily consciousness. For Scripture testimony on the subject note our Lord's words to the dying thief, "To-day shalt thou be *with* me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43); and Paul's words, "To depart, and to be *with* Christ; which is far better." (Phil. i. 23.) Isa. lvii. 1, 2 is also very interesting on this point, where we read, "The righteous is gathered in (as elsewhere, "gathered unto his people," &c.) from the evil; he goes into peace; they rest on their beds, walking in their uprightness." Compare "he goes into peace" with Genesis xv. 15, when God says to Abraham, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace." We find a similar expression used of Josiah, "Thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace." This cannot refer to a peaceful death (as such expressions are frequently understood), but to the far deeper and more blessed truth of entering into peace beyond the grave; for Josiah was slain in battle. Let it be remembered also that peace in the Old Testament never implies a mere negative condition of freedom from trouble, but always a positive condition of enjoyment and blessedness. At the same time God would direct our faith to the resurrection, and not to the intermediate state. About the latter He says but little, yet quite enough to convince us that while the believer will only be glorified in resurrection, he nevertheless enters into rest at death, and is conscious of the presence of Christ, and mindful of the circumstances of those left behind.



## THE BOW IN THE CLOUD.

IN former papers on Noah's life after the flood it was shown how fully God accepted his *worship*, sanctified for him his *daily food*, and instituted under him *government* in the earth for the protection of human life.

But this was not all. Security and *permanence* were also to be given to the newly-granted blessings of the restored earth. The sweet savour of the sacrifice at Noah's altar had caused God to say "in His *heart*" that He would not again "curse the ground for man's sake." And now God also made a *covenant* with Noah, thus additionally assuring him of all He had already promised—not a covenant of works; for it rested not on any obedience of Noah, or of us, his descendants, but upon sacrifice, even those burnt-offerings which showed Noah's faith in the one great Sacrifice that should one day be offered.

A permanent TOKEN of this covenant was also given, by looking on which the unbelief that so sadly lurks even in God's believing people might be overcome. This token was the *bow in the cloud*, which should constantly show itself whenever the heaven began to darken again over the heads of Noah and his family.

God knew that whenever during Noah's life, or afterwards, He might have to "clothe the heavens with blackness," or "make sackcloth their covering," then would be the time of unbelief-fears in the hearts of even such as Noah, lest His promise was about to fail, and a world-wide deluge was again coming. How well God knows us! and what pains He takes to subdue our stubborn hearts to Himself, and to His love! And which of us does not

know that it is when enemies are strong and many, both around us and within us—when dangers increase, and helpers fail—that then it is we so need the *bow in the cloud*; viz., a sight of Christ Himself at the right hand of God as a living and abiding token that God is “for us,” and that none can succeed who are “against us”? These triumphant words at the close of Rom. viii. shine out the more clearly because of the dark truth of what our flesh is at the close of Rom. vii., and what a hostile world is (Rom. viii. 18), with all its “sufferings of this present time.” Noah needed the literal bow in the cloud whenever a darkened heaven was overhead; and we need it spiritually in all conflicts of soul, and under all earthly trials. And as the sacrifice of blood on Noah’s altar was the ground on which this token of the covenant was given him, so it is God’s “sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin,” that gives us the victory in every dark and trying hour, and enables us to say, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”

God’s *way* of giving the bow in the cloud also instructs us. It can only be, as Ezekiel says, “in the day of *rain*.” (Ezek. i. 28.)

Three things are necessary to any bow being seen. The sun must be shining, rain must be falling, and there must be a dark cloud in a quarter of the heavens opposite to the shining sun. Let either of these three conditions be wanting, and there can be no bow visible. If the sun be not then and there shining, if the rain be not at that very time falling, or if the dark cloud gets dissolved, the beautiful bow is looked for in vain; God’s bright and peace-speaking token is not to be seen.

So it is with the spiritual bow of forgiveness, and peace, and acceptance with God. There are similar conditions

to its enjoyment in the soul. Three things are absolutely necessary : God's sin-hating holiness *must* be shining out to our view ; we *must* be taking Paul's place of, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18), and John's place of, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful," &c. (1 John i. 9) ; that is to say, we must be in our own eyes as the dark cloud, and the darker the better ; for so much the clearer and brighter will then be the shining of the bow upon it. But to this end there *must* also be as a third thing, the descending grace of God in and by Jesus His Son, "who," as Paul says, "loved me, and gave Himself for me." And this grace of God, "exceeding abundant" in Christ Jesus, must be interposing *between* the sun-light of God's holiness and the sin of the sinner, as seen and confessed in God's presence.

In Psalm li. we see all three of these experiences. David saw himself in God's unveiled presence, and said, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight ;" while in the words, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean," his faith took hold of all that "doctrine" of Moses in the book of Leviticus, which did indeed "drop as the *rain* . . . as the small *rain* upon the tender herb, and as *showers* upon the grass ;" and as a sure consequence of these three attitudes of his soul, he saw the bright and blessed "bow in the cloud." Peace and joy were again made his, and he could say, "O God, Thou God of my salvation : my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness." (Ps. li. 14.)

But there is much in us naturally that dims and weakens the joy of the spiritual bow in the cloud. Very feebly do we discern the dazzling, sun-like brightness of God's holiness. "God is *light*, and in Him is no darkness at all," is a "message which we have heard" from Jesus Christ His Son, but it has as yet so little entered us ; or

else the "abundance of grace . . . by one, Jesus Christ," that "plentiful *rain*" from above, has been by our hearts so little credited; that any sense of our own sinfulness gets but little lit up with the rainbow-beauty and distinctness of joy in Him in whom "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Or, what is equally bad, our Pharisaism—the subtle self-esteem of our hearts—lessens to our eye the darkness of our "transgressions," which should be to us "as a *thick cloud*," and our sins "as a cloud;" and thus again we lose the beauty and clearness of God's bow of peace and pardon. Paul said, "Sinners, of whom I am chief;" and therefore he could also tell of a "grace of our Lord" that "was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. i. 14.)

But, as we have already said, there are the dark clouds of our *sorrows* as well as those of our sins. On these clouds of grief and woe the love of our God gives the rainbow-like sense both of present peace, and of the "blessed hope" of eternal glory soon. Yet here also similar conditions must be fulfilled. The grief and pain must be a real and felt one, and then the heavier it is the sweeter will be the love of God to us in Christ; only the grief must be brought straight into God's own holy and loving presence, and His provision of a divine, yet human, High Priest "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," must be believed in. We must know and own the *descending* grace with which He came on earth, and lived a lifetime of acquaintance with our *circumstances*, as well as that yet deeper grace in which He made our *sin* and punishment His own upon the cross. And if these three things be really brought together by us—God's love to us in all our matters, Christ's sympathy, and our sorrows here below as a stern reality—then the lesson of the bow in

the cloud will be given us in our griefs, all through this "vale of tears," as truly as in the matter of our sins. As one has well said, in a hymn of triumph over the grave of fellow-saints—

"Once Jesus could weep—He forbids not the tear

At winding the clay in the shroud !

Yet speaks from His throne to the circumcised ear,

Reminds us how quickly the Lord shall appear,

And points to the *bow in the cloud.*"

It is instructive also to notice the *different places* in Scripture in which this object of the bow in the cloud is brought before us. Besides this ninth chapter of Genesis, it is also in Ezek. i. and Rev. iv. and x. In each place it is the token of divine and almighty GRACE triumphing over all man's sin and his deserved doom, but in different spheres. In Gen. ix. it is the assurance and pledge of God's patient grace toward the *entire human race*, and also to the brute creation, both day and night and all the year through ; and this gives time and place for the blessed gospel to all mankind. In Ezek. i. 28 it is the same pledge of omnipotent grace toward *Israel* as a nation. Hence here it surrounds the throne of their Messiah, and is "the likeness of the glory" of their unchanging Jehovah, whose "gifts and calling are without repentance," and who is still "as a little sanctuary" to them in the day of their dispersion, whether in Ezekiel's time or now. But in Rev. iv. the rainbow encircles the heavenly throne of God and of the Lamb. John's vision of it stood connected with *ourselves* as the sadly weak and failing churches of God of this dispensation. Out of the seven churches to which messages had been given him to send, five had more or less declined in their spiritual life, and had been called upon by our Lord to repent ! What grief to John as a father in Christ among them ! but, oh, how cheering

to his heart to have at once a vision of them as the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in the midst of and around the rainbow throne of God and the Lamb! The "rainbow round about the throne, in sight like to an emerald," told him, and still tells us, of that "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness" by which sinners saved "shall *reign in life*" (compare the words "*living creatures*"—Rev. iv., &c.) "by one Jesus Christ." And the costliness of this grace is learned in the new song (chap. v. 9), which they all unite to sing before the throne and to the Lamb, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

In Rev. x. 1 the rainbow is seen on the head of the mighty Angel, who holds in His hand the "little book," and claims the sea and dry land of this earth below. It is Jesus, our Lord, as the Angel-Jehovah of God's covenant with the Israel nation; and the rainbow on His head teaches that His ground of calling and blessing that people is sovereign grace, and not anything in them naturally, whether of birth or of conduct. The lesson here is the same therefore as in Ezek. i. 28.

These few but precious Scriptures reach from Genesis to Revelation. They show us in what various ways God may still be said to "look upon" the bow in the cloud, and thereby to "remember" all those promises of covenant mercy to which He has so graciously bound Himself. Surely *our* part should be to praise Him and serve Him better, whether in the gospel to be "preached," as Paul says, "to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. i. 23); or in Paul-like yearnings over Israel, that "they might be saved" (Rom. x. 1); or in John-like faithful words to our fellow-saints, that they may so "abide" in Christ "that, when He shall appear, we may have confi-

dence," because we have them in some measure as our joy and "crown of rejoicing" around that rainbow throne, before which all will cast their crowns, and gladly own that it was grace that wrought heavenly service IN them and BY them, as well as wrought FOR them, when at the first it saved them from an eternal hell. H. D.

"Our God, Thou wilt look, for Thy mercies endure,  
On the *bow in the cloud*, and Thy covenant keep,  
Which to earth does her seed-time and harvest ensure,  
Till the last **trump** awakens the dead from their sleep.

"To all kindreds and nations the rainbow appears  
After storms have abated on land or at sea;  
It speaks in all tongues, all beholders it cheers,  
They confess it Thy workmanship, worthy of Thee.

"Yet its sevenfold glories a mystery show,  
Which the wisdom of earth is not able to learn;  
To Thy chosen Thou givest Thy secret to know,  
And Thy name in the cross of Thy Son to discern.

"The dark cloud is our guilt—we were sentenced to die;  
But the rainbow proclaims Thy perfections combined  
To bless us in Christ, who came down from on high,  
And His life for His members so freely resigned.

"With its token of peace, oh, how lovely Thy throne!  
We can worship in holiest liberty there,  
Since Thy grace by the heavenly rainbow is known,  
And the hues are all blended Thy name to declare."—R. C. C.

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### "THE SECRET OF THE LORD."

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant."—Ps. xxv. 14.

ALL Scripture furnishes illustrations of this truth, and if we would seek them in a condensed form we have but to read the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, where we find that the many who in various ways "obtained a good report" had this testimony in common—that all was "by faith." Of Noah it is said he was

"moved with fear;" while of "Jesus, the author and finisher of faith" (xii. 2), it is recorded, in chapter v. 7, that He "was heard in that He feared."

But let us refer more particularly to him of whom it may especially be said that he "stopped the mouths of lions." In Daniel we have a striking and encouraging instance of the walk of faith, for truly "he believed in his God." (Dan. vi. 23.) As a reward God gave him honour in two manifest ways: He caused him to stand in high position "before the king," and, that which Daniel doubtless valued more, he "had understanding in all visions and dreams." (Dan. i. 19; v. 17.)

In chapters ix. and x. Daniel is addressed as "greatly beloved." The translation is not inaccurate, but the marginal reading, "man of desires," conveys the meaning more distinctly; that is, not that he had desires, but that he was one whom God desired.\* Why, then, was Daniel a "man of desires"? and is it possible for us to be so greeted by our Father in heaven?

Amongst the points in Daniel's character and ways which pleased the Lord we may consider four:

1. *His purpose of heart.* This is noticed at the outset (chap. i. 8), and comprises the first two links of Peter's chain—"faith" and "virtue." (2 Peter i. 5-7.) Here too he is in fellowship with Enoch, who, though surrounded by the "ungodly" (Jude 15), yet "walked with God." (Gen. v. 22.) Paul also, while acknowledging when writing to Timothy that he owed all to "the grace of our Lord," is at the same time able to speak of his own "purpose." (1 Tim. i. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 10.) Is not our failure again and again to be attributed to a lack of this

\* See chap. x. 3, where the same idiom occurs in the margin—"bread of desires," which the translators have made more intelligible by the rendering, "pleasant bread."



“purpose”? Especially would we in all affection commend this point to young believers, that they may not seek “knowledge” before “virtue;” but let them remember that the first necessity is to believe, the second to obey in heart, the third to know, and then to obey in practice. In the present day God’s children commonly allow circumstances to set aside obedience. Not so Daniel. True, he was not in the land of Israel, and he was a captive. These facts, untoward as they were, could not countervail the commandment of God. To Daniel’s mind Lev. xi. and xvii. must be observed not less in Babylon than in Jerusalem. An even greater trial of faith is found awaiting Daniel in chap. vi. than in chap. i., but his purpose remains unshaken, and he is as steadfast for God under the Persian king as under the Chaldean.

2. *His humility.* All of us must confess how difficult we find it to bear honour, and too many of us have fallen, as did David and Peter, through the uplifting of our minds when the revelations given us and the honour bestowed upon us should have the more brought us to the dust. It is there we see John in Rev. i. 17, and there we see Daniel throughout chapter x., where, so much does he tremble and fear that it is (if we may so speak) with difficulty that God strengthens him for the vision described in the two following chapters. This humility is again seen in chap. ii., where, coming before Nebuchadnezzar as a revealer of secrets, he yet plainly acknowledges “this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living.” Those who possess this Daniel-like humility in the presence of God and man, are amongst His “greatly beloved” ones.

3. *Faithfulness.* We must not seek to please men, but God. What God revealed and taught, that Daniel spake. Nebuchadnezzar was told not only of the increase of his

kingdom, but also of its destined overthrow. (Chap. ii.) Even after Daniel's elevation, and consequent indebtedness to the king, he did not withhold from his master (chap. iii. 27) the word of faithful rebuke. Let us be careful how we suit our message to different audiences. "All things to all men" we certainly should be, though not for the sake of finding favour with them ourselves, but simply to win them for Christ. Difficulties we may have in so shaping our course, but the name of the Lord is the sure test to which we may apply our ways. If men speak well of us, our presentation of the truth has not been ~~what~~ it should be. May we be so led by the Spirit as ever to put into the foreground Christ's person and work, that so the judgment of men may not be of us and our manners, but of the name and doctrine we preach.

4. *Prayer and supplications.* These are recorded continually in Daniel's history, both concerning himself and "his fellows," and the dispersed nation so dear to his heart. Jerusalem's walls were broken down, the temple destroyed by fire, but God remained the hope and refuge of all who sought His face. So Daniel confesses, fasts, and prays, and it is particularly in this that he appears as the "man of desires." Now it is that Gabriel is "caused to fly swiftly," and now that he "alone saw the vision." Do we in these days of bustling activity give ourselves sufficiently to prayer, with its attendant fasting? Have we not much need to seek thus the face of the Lord for ourselves, while by no means overlooking supplication for our brethren and for all men? Let none suppose that service should take the place of prayer. Epaphras, "a faithful minister of Christ," laboured in prayers, yea, "fervently;" and Paul, who speaks of his own labours as "more abundant" than others, manifests again and again in his epistles how much he prayed for fellow-saints, and

how much he valued their prayers for him, "praying always" himself (Col. i. 3), and exhorting them in the same words. (Eph. vi. 18.) One more example may be given—that of Elijah. The history in 1 Kings xvii. and xviii. speaks of the famine in Israel as coming and as ceasing by the purpose of God. Thus it was, doubtless; but James shows us the fellowship of Elijah in the matter, in that both the drought and the rain were in answer to his prayers.

It is easy to covet, and easy to seek knowledge; but it is important to know the true path by which to attain it.

May God our Father in Christ Jesus give His blessing to these few lines, so that they may help some to follow Daniel, and to enjoy experimentally the knowledge of "the secret of the Lord."

J. C.

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## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

### THE CANDLESTICK.

Read EXODUS xxv. 31-40; LEV. xxiv. 1-4.

*"And thou shalt make a candlestick [lampstand] of pure gold."* In our version the translators have used the word "candlestick," but the original signifies *"lampstand."* A person may say, "What is the difference? What does it matter whether it is styled a candlestick or a lampstand?" The difference is very material. The truth indicated by a candle and candlestick is one thing, and that by a lamp and lampstand another. Candles are abundantly used in the religious services of Roman Catholics, who say that the burning of a candle signifies the same as fasting. As in the burning of a candle the tallow is consumed, so by fasting the flesh is consumed. They therefore regard the

burning of candles and the wasting of the body by fasting as meritorious acts by which the favour of God may be purchased. Wherever Romanism abounds, whether genuine, or counterfeit as in ritualism, there we shall find candles used in religious services. The awful conflagration sometime since at Santiago, when the splendid cathedral was burnt to the ground and many precious lives were lost, was caused by the burning of candles.

But you may say, "When a lamp burns, is not the oil being consumed?" Yes; but while tallow is but an emblem of human nature, oil is the emblem of the divine unction of the Eternal Spirit. On the one hand human energy is consumed to the honour of man, but on the other the Spirit of God furnishes light to the glory of God. If there be no oil there is no light, according to the mind of God. The word for lampstand in the original is *menorah*, taken from the root *neer*, signifying "a lamp."

"*A lampstand of pure gold.*" In this we get another provision of the Father's house. God first of all desired a sanctuary; then He required a separate place for Himself, the holiest of all, and the ark of the covenant with its golden propitiatory or mercy-seat as the centre of His own dwelling-place, thereby conforming the earthly pattern to the heavenly model, and setting forth Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant. Then he would have the table of shewbread; but He does not stop there—He must have a lamp also. The veil which shut everything out from the shekinah-glory, excluded its light from the sanctuary. But God would not have His children in darkness. I well remember many years ago visiting the father of a large family who by means of gas had a very bright light in his room. "What a great light!" I remarked. "Ah," he replied, "the *children* like *plenty of light.*"

We may apply this to ourselves. Do we like plenty of light? Too often preference is given to that dim religious light which causes everything to be enwrapped in gloom, but in the presence of God there is an abundance of light, making all things manifest. So in His sanctuary there is plenty of light from the lampstand with its *seven* lights. This number, as is well known, is the symbol of perfection, and here signifies light in its divine perfection. These vessels of the sanctuary, patterns of the heavenly things, are the embodiment of the divine thoughts with Christ for their centre.

What, then, are God's thoughts concerning the lampstand? and what would He communicate to us by it? As the ark sets forth Christ as the centre of the family of God, and the table His flesh as meat indeed, so the lampstand, taking it as a present type, sets Him forth as the centre, source, and subject of communication of divine truth, or Spirit-taught ministry—ministry received from the Spirit of an ascended Christ, and revealing God's mind and will in Christ Jesus concerning us. The central shaft of the seven-branched lampstand typifies Christ, and sets forth the Lord Jesus in His especial character of Light-giver. Whilst He was on earth He was not only the Tabernacle in which God manifest in the flesh dwelt, the true Ark of the Covenant come to do His Father's will with His law within His heart, but He was also the great Communicator of Light to this dark world; as He says (John ix. 5), "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

"*Pure gold*," an emblem of that which is divine, indicates the ministry of Christ according to the will of God. Christ's ministry whilst on earth was entirely and purely divine. "All things that *I have heard of my Father* I have made known unto you." (John xv. 15.) "My

doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." (John vii. 16.) All true ministry is of that character, and according to the ability which God giveth. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter iv. 10.)

Christian ministry after the divine mind is not the exercise of cultivated human wisdom, sagacity putting forth its noblest efforts, or imagination in its splendid and extensive range. It is not the result of midnight toil (when the body is wasted and the brain consumed) to furnish a rich intellectual feast to intellectual hearers, to the honour and glory of the preacher and the people. True divine ministry is that furnished by the Spirit of God, indicated by the pure gold. Take the word of Peter (1 iv. 11): "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God:" here we have the golden lampstand. Or again, that of Paul (2 Cor. iv. 5-7): "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Here we have the ministry of God; he that ministereth doeth it according to the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

*"Of beaten work shall the lampstand be made."* There is a well-grounded objection to extempore preaching. It is too often a person standing up to talk who likes to hear his own voice, and can talk by the hour; but true ministry is the result of laborious research and patient meditation. Ministry by the Spirit of God, is the giving forth of that which has been learnt on our knees in the closet by the hour, the day, and the year. If there were more beaten

work in the lampstands (light-bearers or diffusers) of the present day they would be more glorious ornaments in the church of the living God, and they could not be despised.

*"His shaft and his branch"* (not branches). In chap. xxxvii. 17 our translators have themselves corrected the mistake they made in this verse. But it may be said, "What difference does it make whether we read branch or branches?" We may be sure that if the Spirit of God is particular it is not without a special reason. The lampstand, properly so called, is the *centre shaft*, and its *branch* springing upward from it; on either side are the *branches* proceeding from the shaft. The centre shaft is a type of Christ as the centre, source, and subject of all true Christian ministry.

*"His bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the lampstand out of the one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side."* Notice particularly the fact that the branches come out on opposite sides of the shaft. Man might say, "Why should they not be in a circle?" Not so, because if any were in front the centre would be hidden, and thus in type prominence would be given to the preacher, and Christ be kept in the background. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." We stand aside that Christ may be seen.

It may also be asked, "What is signified by the *three* branches coming out of each side?" Facts are the best interpreters of types; and the best way of interpreting Old Testament types is by New Testament truths. In Eph. iv. 7-13 we have this beautiful type explained. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And He gave some, apostles;

and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

In the inspired scriptures the apostles and prophets have laid the foundation, and now there are the three branches of ministry according to God — evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These are the three standing branches of Christian ministry until we all come to the perfect man. The under branch, which has the longest range, may represent the evangelist with his wide sphere of labour, acting on the commission of the Lord Jesus, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." God gives him the world as his parish, and he cannot get outside it.

We then get the pastor, who has not in one sense so wide a sphere as the evangelist. But Paul says (Rom. i. 14), "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." The pastor has to feed and watch over the sheep of God's flock. His commission is in Acts xx. 28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the little flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." The pastor has to take the oversight of the sheep, to feed them when hungry and in sickness, to comfort them, and to go after and bring back those who have gone astray. God bestows the pastoral gift that it may be exercised for all, whether high or low, without distinction or partiality.

We next come to the teacher, represented by the uppermost branch which is nearest to the centre. Who



is he to teach? The whole family of God as opportunity may be given to him. The teacher is one who leads on the children of God to a deeper knowledge of Himself, though his sphere is narrow.

*"His knops."* Altogether there are seven of these. The knop represents the distinct gift of each, whatever it may be. But there is also a knop under each pair of branches. The evangelist, the pastor, or the teacher, contemplating the service expected of them, may say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The answer is, "Our sufficiency is of God," treasured up in Christ. The knops in the centre shaft symbolize the sustaining power for work to be found in Christ, the great Evangelist, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He takes to Himself too the title of Pastor in John x. 11: "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep;" and we find Him as Teacher in John iii., in the address of Nicodemus: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God." The officers of the chief priests too could say of Him (John vii. 46), "Never man spake like this man." For all service we are complete in Him; we receive all from Him, and are filled up to all fulness.

The six branches out of the sides were in pairs. This gives us the thought of fellowship. When Christ was on earth, He sent out His disciples "two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come." (Luke x. 1.) But whether together or apart, if the ministry be from Christ, and by the one Spirit, there is fellowship. Teachers, pastors, and evangelists all acknowledge Christ as the only centre. The Spirit testifies of Christ; and as stewards of the manifold grace of God, they minister the supplies of inestimable value committed to them from God.

## THE GIFT OF GOD;

OR, THE MEASURE OF DIVINE LOVE.

JOHN iii. 16.

WHO is sufficient to treat this mighty subject—the power of love? Surely none can do so with a thought of accomplishing more than an attempt to set it forth! “God only knows the love of God,” yet would we delight to speak of it, and seek to know it more perfectly, admire it and worship.

There are four little words often repeated in the New Testament—love, grace, mercy, and peace. All these are true in Him, yet each differs from the others.

LOVE is the nature of God, it is God; for “God is love.” He is the self-supplied source of all blessing—of rest, joy, and delight. The manifestation of love is the revelation of God; it is the source of all the rest—“God *so* loved that He *gave*.”

GRACE is the manifestation of favour to the undeserving, not looking for merit in its object. It is the free favour of God. Everything better than the worm that never dies, and the unquenchable fire, is a favour from God, and could only be bestowed through the cross; and it is this grace of God that bringeth salvation from these. “It is of *faith*, that it might be by *grace*,” and therefore *sure* to all who receive it.

MERCY points to the real condition of its object as being miserable, out of which state mercy raises it, delivering from misery.

PEACE describes the state to which God in His love, grace, and mercy raises His object; viz., reconciliation *to*, and peace *in*, Himself.

Divine love, ever true in God, is true in all who believe—they love. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” “We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.” (1 John iv. 16.) “God is love,” and of Him, of His love, we long to know more and more.

With this desire to know more of that love which passeth knowledge, let us enquire what He has effected—what is the *power* of love?

The God of love purposed from eternity to reveal His love, *i. e.* Himself; and in the foreknowledge of the creature’s ruin by sin, determined to bring in redemption, and that through the gift of His Son. In due time He sent Him, giving His Son for the salvation of every one who believes, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Having given Him He did not spare Him from death, but “delivered Him up for *us* all.” Thus wrote a believing man, an apostle, to his fellow-believers, “for *us* all.”

The Son of God loved in fellowship with the Father, and gave Himself for the Church, redeeming by Himself, to Himself, and to the Father. Such was the mighty achievement of divine love, unequalled love.

Beloved reader, we desire to fix your thoughts and faith on this precious subject, leaving you to trace it downward to the simplest token and display of its power. This gift insures every other good; this victory, obtained by love upon the cross, pledges every other true deliverance. It is the unanswerable argument for God against every enemy, and should silence the clamour of unbelief. God *so* loved that He gave His Son; hence the exulting exclamation, “How shall He not with Him freely give us all things?”

This love of God, beloved fellow-Christian, is indeed an ocean vast, without bottom, without shore, free from rocks, from shoals, and reaches, in which we may swim, dive,

and take our heavenly pastime without fear. This love of God is our rest, our delight. *In this, and by it in us*, we shall "have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He (God) is, so are we in this world." (1 John iv. 17.)

This love moreover, in its manifestation, is our pattern, as He said who manifested it perfectly, "that ye should love one another, *as I have loved you*." If He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us." (Eph. v. 2.)

Of the power of this love in us, in men of like passions with ourselves, we have many striking examples in the word of God, both in the Old Testament and in the New, in Israel and in the Church of God. Brevity forbids our enumerating many illustrations; indeed it is not necessary. One specially bright example of love as a mighty incentive stands on record in the Old Testament—one often referred to, oftener perhaps than imitated in principle. I mean the loving, loyal deed of David's three mighty men, who on hearing him express his longing for water from the well of Bethlehem, jeopardized their lives, and brought it him. They did indeed surrender their lives for him, and he so regarded their conduct; for he would not drink the water, but poured it out before Jehovah, saying, "Shall I drink the blood of these men?" And further to prove his estimate of their service he placed them first in honour; they ranked first among his mighty men; others were promoted, but none attained to *their* rank.

Many are the recorded acts of daring courage performed, advantages surrendered, and sufferings endured, all proceeding from love; love prompted and sustained, and in the service found its reward.

In the New Testament also many bright exemplifications of the power of love might be singled out. Peter loved

much and ardently, and at the end of his course proved it, enduring a measure of suffering which he avowed himself ready for even before he was called to it, suffering ultimately unto death.

John also, if he did not lay down his life as a martyr for Christ, laid it out (and that a long one) in patient service and suffering for His name—a severer trial, perhaps, than that of death. These were bright examples; but for combination of character, conduct, ministry, and service, we judge Paul to have been the first, and nearest that of the blessed Master, manifested in his elevation as to truth, with lowliness of mind and meekness of spirit; in his tender bowels, prayers and tears for Israel, with uncompromising boldness in the truth against their unbelief; in his deep, tender, nurse-like care for the saints, even for the weakest, with unflinching faithfulness in reproving their faults, even those of an apostle—love which led him to say, “Most gladly will I spend and be spent for you; notwithstanding the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved;” which also enabled him to say, “I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you. . . . I declared unto you the whole counsel of God;” and again, without hypocrisy, to testify, “If I be offered [poured out] upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.” Yet he spared not either false doctrine or practice, nor overlooked their wrong thoughts or ways.

Such as these were prominent witnesses to the power of divine love *in* them, and doubtless the day of Christ will reveal many examples which have been hidden from the eyes of man. Our David, Our Beloved, sees all such faithful workers, estimates duly, and will openly declare in that day His value of and delight in them.

We know a little of that which love has effected *for* us, and are desirous of knowing it more fully, and believing

it more simply. We also know somewhat of the power of divine love *in* us, and we pray that it may increase more and more. Let us then, as a means to that end, contemplate oftener than hitherto His love to us, and believe it more confidently; so shall our love increase and abound, and manifest itself in a more Christ-like walk in the midst of our fellow-saints, and before the unsaved world around us.

Blessed be God, there *are*, even in our day—a day of weakness, worldliness, and division—many fair witnesses to this great truth, the love of God, who with simplicity of mind believe it, and in their lives exemplify its power. Let us, then, endeavour more earnestly than ever to “forget those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

H. H.

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#### NOTES AND REPLIES.

What are we to understand by the *wrestling* in Eph. vi. 12?

In order to make the meaning of the verse a little more definite we would slightly alter the translation, and read, “For the struggle to us is not against blood and flesh” (as in an earthly conflict between man and man), “but against principalities, against authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against spiritual [agencies of] wickedness in the heavenlies.” The verse unfolds the organized and giant power of the spirit of darkness, the god of this age, the prince of this world, which we are prone to think too little of. It is against the “wiles [schemes or plans] of the devil,” laid down with consummate skill and carried out with unceasing watchfulness, that the believer has to struggle, and to guard against “the fiery darts of the wicked one,” which are indeed “sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.” (Ps. cxx. 4.) To counteract all these he needs to be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” and to “put on the whole armour of God,” so that he may be able to stand. Satan acts against us through the flesh within and the world without. Com-

munion with God withers up the flesh as grass on which the breath of God blows, and robs the world of its attractions and its power to ensnare; for no sooner is the Lord of the glory known and seen by the unhindered revelation and teaching of the indwelling Holy Ghost, than the schemes of Satan are laid bare and the fiery darts extinguished. While the light of God's presence is ever revealing more and more of the darkness and evil within, it reveals more fully still the cleansing power of the precious blood. The great dragon, the old serpent, the devil and Satan, is overcome by "the blood of the Lamb," and by the word of faith's testimony that bears witness to God and to the sufficiency of His grace, and we can say in all things, "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Notice the emphatic words "*darkness*" and "*wickedness*" which characterize the sphere of our struggle.

What is the meaning of "*there is one that seeketh and judgeth*" in John viii. 50?

God is the one who seeks the glory of Christ, and He is the one who judgeth all who refuse to honour the Son; for "he who honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him."

Why did the Lord say to Mary, "*Touch me not*"? (John xx. 17.)

This passage is, we think, explained by, "Though we knew Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." Mary, in the outflow of purely natural affection, had to be taught that she must now know Him "after the flesh" "no more." Christ was not glorified till after the ascension (Acts i.); and during those mysterious forty days between the resurrection and the glorification His disciples had to be reminded that, though the glorification was still for their sakes in abeyance, it could not be lost sight of. Hence there is no contradiction between the command to Mary, "Touch me not," and the apparently opposite command to the doubting disciples, "Handle me, and see." The contrast lies between the *natural* outflow of Mary's heart and the *spiritual* incapacity of the disciples to own what their eyes saw and their hands might handle, and hence the opposite treatment each received.

Is James v. 13-16 to be regarded as an abiding ordinance in the church?

Certainly. The passage is of great importance as bearing on the judicial character of sickness in the Church of God. Prayer, con-

fession, and healing are connected together. The ordinance of anointing is directly given as a church ordinance, and not as pertaining to any individual. It is not to be performed by any but "the elders of the church," at the request of the sick person. "Let him send." On this account we regard as unscriptural the use made of this passage by some in establishing houses for "healing by faith," and of others in going to such places as if God were a God afar off, and not a God nigh. That God answers trusting faith, even when the written word is misapprehended, we fully own; but the disappointments to some are often very terrible in their effect when they have indulged vain and delusive hopes of recovery. The prayer of faith anywhere is heard and answered, but there is often in such matters more faith in the faith of another than in the direct power of God. Compare this passage with 1 John v. 15-17.

What is the death mentioned in 1 John v. 16, 17, "*There is a sin unto death*"?

The death here intended can only be death of the body, as connected with chastisement for sin, as we read, in 1 Corinthians xi. 30, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Weakness, sickness, and death were sent in judgment on those who failed to judge themselves. Verses 30-32 need to be well pondered, not only in the particular matter of unworthy partaking of the Lord's supper, but in respect of the general principle involved. Such dealings of God are taken too lightly, too little as indicating in many cases a judicial act of God that might be averted by self-judgment. The passage in 1 John implies a spiritual intelligence little contemplated in these days, when second causes carry but too surely the eye from God. Our civilization finds causes for every thing; but He who uses these causes, or sets them aside according to His own will, is forgotten.

*How often was Paul in Rome?*

Twice, at any rate. The first as intimated in Acts xxvii., after which he was set at liberty. In Titus iii. 12 we find him wintering in Nicopolis, and in 2 Timothy he is again in Rome; but we have no Scripture record of anything beyond the fact that he was there, and had been brought before the emperor, and was awaiting his martyrdom. (See 2 Tim. iv. 6, 16-18.)



## A WARNING MINISTRY.

THE voice of warning is not heard, we fear, in most of our ministry as it should be. There are precious unfoldings of God's grace, and beautiful pictures of the hopes that lie before the redeemed in Christ; but this is not enough, and may even be dangerous if not accompanied with an unfolding also of His judgments, which are a great deep. (Ps. xxxvi. 6.) It was thus Paul laboured, not shunning to declare "ALL the counsel of God," as he tells the Ephesian elders. "Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to *warn* every one [each one by one] night and day with tears." (Acts xx. 31.) He saw wolves coming in from without, and perverse men rising up from within; and he early sounded the alarm, and sought to prepare the Church of God, as the purchase of His blood, for what was even then arising among them and around them. The prophetic voice was one of warning, and the evils to be dreaded were of such reality that sleepless nights and a tearful ministry pressed the soul of the man of God for the three long years of his sojourn in Ephesus, which was then the centre of the idolatrous worship of Asia. One result of all this holy day-and-night warning, we find from Acts xix., was that many who believed came forward boldly, and confessed their deeds, and burned their sorcery books valued at 50,000 pieces of silver. Thus "mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

Indeed throughout *the entire Word* we find the warning voice raised by God. The books of Moses are filled with it. All the writings and actings of the earlier and the later prophets sound the same note. They were

God's watchmen set on high, commissioned of Him to "blow the trumpet and warn the people." Such too was the voice of John the Baptist, that prophet in the wilderness who was greater than any that had been born of women. He told of the axe laid to the root of the tree, and called the nation to repentance. Such also was the voice of the one "greater than Jonah," and that not only in regard to His personal ministry to Israel, but more pointedly still in His ministry to the Church. His was a voice of warning intended to arouse both sinner and saint to watchfulness, calling on each to be ready, and specially reminding his own servants that their Master would soon come, and take account and see what they had done, and how they had been occupying with that which He had entrusted to them.

In the same way all the epistles abound with warnings indited by the Holy Ghost, telling us that God is not mocked, but that as we sow we shall reap; and that if we sin against one another, God is the avenger of the wronged. (1 Thess. iv. 6; Rom. xii. 19.) We are warned of "loss" to be incurred, of "the fire" that shall consume our labour, of "shipwreck," involving the loss of all but life itself. We are cautioned to take care lest someone take our crown, and we be as those ashamed away from the presence of the Lord at His coming. There are words of consolation to the overcomers, but also words of solemn warning to those who "add to" or "take away from" the words of God's prophetic revelation.

Of such things, as we have said, the word of God is full; but is ministry in the Church of God in the present day equally full of this scriptural note of warning? We think not, and would recall to the memory of teachers in the Church of God the solemn words of Ezekiel xxxiii. 7, "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel;

therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and *warn them from me* ;” and then God adds, “ If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

There are evils and wickednesses in the world that are hastening sinners down to eternal ruin ; but there are also evils and wickednesses in the Church of God which are robbing God of His honour, and of the service that now is His due, and which will through eternity deprive unfaithful servants of what might have been theirs, had the warning voice sounded in their ears, and had those who knew the truth used it faithfully towards them.

It is no little thing to know the will of the Master ; it involves a responsibility to Him and to our fellow-servants little contemplated. God’s estimate of Israel’s watchmen was that they were “ *blind, ignorant, dumb, sleepy, and greedy* ” (Isa. lvi. 10, 11) ; and this description is given for us to take heed that we be not like them. In contrast with such, let us tread in the footsteps of those who have proved themselves true watchers and wakeful shepherds, prepared to meet and combat every form of evil.

The word of God points out the hope set before us, in all its glory and in all its fulness and security. But while this is blessedly true, our pathway lies through a land of fiery flying serpents, of scorpions, and of drought. Around us are the emissaries of the adversary who “ as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour.” Him and his angels we are called upon to resist, and the promise is, “ He shall flee ;” but the battle is very real, and he only who knows and uses the whole armour of God (Eph. vi. 13) will *stand* in “ the evil day.” It was thus Paul stood, keeping under his body and bringing it into subjection, lest teaching others aright, he might himself be disap-

proved (*αδοκιμος*, "castaway"). Surely such words need to be resounded again and again in our ears, and need to be re-echoed far and wide in the Church of God, in order to arouse a sleeping Church to the dangers of the present and the terrors of the future. It is easy to sing, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," but are all the saints consciously there while they sing it? If they were, should we not see in them a holier and more separated walk?

There is an Eli type of Christianity around us that is not altogether dead to the shameful things done in the house of God, or tolerated in the name of Christ. It raises a feeble testimony, and says, like Eli to the guilty intruders into the hallowed things of God's house and service, "Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people." But there is no fire in the rebuke, and no restraining power. (1 Sam. ii. 23; iii. 13.) What was God's word of solemn warning to Lot-like Eli? "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle." God did it in due time, as the history of Eli's house shows. And God has done the like in His Church again and again, and so will He yet do, and will make an end of the iniquity when at Christ's coming an Eli-like Laodiceanism shall have swept over the length and breadth of professing Christendom, and Laodicea, like Shiloh of old, shall be spued out of the mouth of Him who is "the Amen, the faithful and true witness."

Eli days require a Samuel witness. They call for men to whom the Lord can reveal Himself "by the word of the Lord;" men who, like Samuel, shall have God with them, who will let none of their words "fall to the ground." Thus God raised up Elijah in the closing days of Israel's apostacy, and then he raised up Jeremiah and Ezekiel when Judah was driven into captivity. There is much in

the call of these men of God to the prophetic office, as given in Jer. i. and Ezek. i.-iii., that might well occupy the thoughts of teachers in the present day. Jeremiah, like Samuel, was young when called of God to prophetic work, and he shrunk from the work, saying, "I am a child." But God's word to him was: "Say not, I am a child . . . be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee." The man of tears and tenderness would fain have left to another the work of rooting out and of pulling down, but it is our tears and sympathies that fit us most to deal with vengeance and wrath, in sympathy with God, as the followers of Him who wept over Jerusalem while He foretold its woes.

In the preparation of Ezekiel the steps are more strikingly depicted. Before "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," he says, "I fell on my face." Thus will it be if we are ever to become watchmen in God's house. Till the glory of God is seen, and has laid us in the dust, there is no power in the voice of warning; it becomes Eli's voice, and not Ezekiel's. The prophet had afterwards to eat the roll wherein were written "lamentations, and mourning, and woe." It is one thing to read prophecy, and quite another to eat the roll as Ezekiel did, and thereby bring one's self into the fullest and most inward sympathy with the ways of God.

We would particularly call attention to the presence and power of the Spirit in the case of Ezekiel. "The Spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing" (*v.* 12. Compare Acts ii. 2; iv. 31). Again, "So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit" (as in sympathy with his mission of warning and of judgment); "but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me" (*v.* 14).

There were false prophets then, proclaiming "Peace,

peace ;” there are false teachers now doing the same thing. The place, therefore, of the true teacher now, as of the faithful prophet then, is to take the word from the mouth of the Lord direct, and not to use his own lips and then say “He saith.” The voice of the false teacher is like the syren’s song, that flatters of peace when there is none ; and the place of the true is to stand in God’s counsel, and to cause his people to hear His words. (Jer. xxiii. 22.) The external character of God’s counsel is mercy preceded by judgment, for “judgment must begin in the house of God,” as Peter tells us ; and he adds, “If it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?” (1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.) The very immutability of grace necessitates this judgment. It was thus the Corinthians were judged, that they might not be condemned with the world.

These apostolic and prophetic warnings are to be uttered by us with no uncertain sound ; but, alas ! so many, fearing to mar the freeness of redeeming grace, throw into the shade God’s righteous judgments, forgetting the words, “*Our God*” (not their God) “is a consuming fire.”

Alas for those who seek to make their “calling and election sure” in any other way than by “giving *all diligence* to add to faith virtue (courage), to virtue knowledge.” (2 Peter i. 5–8.) A warning needs to be raised now when so many rest their personal salvation on texts of Scripture, and not on the truth of the Scriptures received in living power. They search the Scriptures, like the Jews of old, and think they have in *them* eternal life, rather than in Christ Jesus, *whom to know* is life eternal. Eternal life possessed is a blessed reality, in which dwells the love of God ; and he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.

The epistles of John throughout are one solemn warning against the unreal—the saying and not *doing*, the talking and not *having*, the professing and not *being*. Concerning any such John says, “He is a liar.”

If there were deeper ploughing of the conscience in these days, the work in the soul would be less shallow, the life and walk would be more lowly, the communion with God would be nearer, and there would be fewer backsliders, and fewer stony-ground hearers, deceived with the idea that they are true believers. As it is, they are too often misled by the hasty assurances of well-meaning but shallow persons, who are too ready to be content with a mere change of feeling in fresh converts, instead of a manifestation in them of the *power* of a divine life.

All believers also need to be often reminded that “each one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. xiv. 10–12), as Paul tells the Corinthians, “We must all be *made manifest*” (a better rendering than simply “appear”) “before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” (2 Cor. v. 10, 11.) Would that there were more now of this divine persuading of one another, in prospect of the heavenly ordeal through which saints will have to pass.

These things being so, surely it becomes us to have a deeper tone of warning in our ministry, that the souls of the unsaved be not lost, and that believers be not allowed to suffer loss for ever, because they have not been warned, and have hoped to glide into heaven without suffering and loss. The apostle tells us that he sought to fulfil his ministry by “warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom,” that he might “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto,” he says, “I also labour,

striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."

God grant that concerning faith no "shipwrecks" may be caused by our lack in any of these respects, but as those who would deliver their own souls may we be found faithfully warning, and, like Paul, even with tears.

H. G.

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### NOAH'S VINEYARD.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent."—GEN. ix. 20, 21.

PREVIOUS papers on Noah's life after the flood would be untrue to the Bible narrative if no mention were made of Noah as "a husbandman." God's biographies are as faithful as they are brief. They tell the failings of God's children as well as their faith and their godliness. God's pages allow no flesh to glory in His presence, and they present to the world neither our honoured first parents, nor any of us, their children, as heroes of strength, or courage, or virtue of our own. To this rule the record of Noah's life is no exception. Father of us all though he is by the preservation of our race through him, his sin of being drunk is as faithfully recorded as is the disobedience of Adam in the garden, who was the head of the human race by creation. Verily the Bible is an honest book, and in it God does "stain the pride of all glory." (Isa. xxiii. 9.)

We would not, however, dwell as much upon these *spots* and *stains* of fellow-saints as we do upon their faith and godliness, but only sufficiently to magnify in our eyes the grace that saves sinners, and keeps them after they are saved; sufficiently also to be ourselves warned against similar yielding to temptation and sin. For God's word



gives the larger place to their graces, and so should we. In Heb. xi. the apostle's delight in recording the brighter side of Old Testament lives is a lesson for us to this effect. Noah shines in that chapter for his faith and patience in preparing an ark "for the saving of his house," while the scene of his being drunk "within his tent" is accounted by the apostle to be already sufficiently recorded; and the same may be said of all New Testament notices of Noah.

Noah's advanced age at the time of this stain upon his conduct, and the solemn things of mercy and of judgment he had so lately witnessed, add not a little to its painfulness. The fruits of the earth were not new to him, nor the need of using them with caution unknown. He must have mourned over many a scene of carnal indulgence in the antediluvian world; but neither his six hundred years of observation and experience, nor the perishing of the former world and the ushering in of another, could change the natural heart. It remains the same whether in the unregenerate or in God's own children, and Noah apparently quickly fell under what we might call a slight temptation. Sad indeed was his fall, and the stumbling also of his son Ham, whose downward course was helped by his father's sin.

But where sin abounds—even in God's children—His grace much more abounds; as of old, He caused light to shine when darkness was on the face of the deep. God never forsakes His saints; and even while Noah lay in his shame, He moved Shem and Japheth, in filial reverence for their father, to make no talk about it, as Ham had done, but to turn their eyes from the sad sight while they covered him. Oh for more of the same love in the family of God!—the love that "rejoices not in iniquity," but "covers a multitude of sins."

God was also with Noah as soon as he awoke, and

spite of his sinful failure at once maintained him in his proper place of parental authority. God speaks by Noah, and those lips that had been so lately given to the wine-cup pronounce a punishment for Ham, and blessings on Shem and Japheth, which are being fulfilled to this day. How speedy is God's restoring grace, and how rich! Thus quickly was "the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain" seen on the dark facts of Noah's sinfulness. His tent became as rich with God's present blessing in it, and with glorious prophecy of the future, as it had been darkened and defiled by sin and Satan's power.

Thus also Abraham was cared for by God in his hour of failure, before Pharaoh (Gen. xii.) and before Abimelech, king of Gerar. (Gen. xx.) Thus Jacob was guarded when at last at Mahanaim he stood in the presence of Esau, whom he had wronged. (Gen. xxxii.) David too was not forsaken of God, not even when out of fear he lied to Ahimelech the priest, nor when, in similar fear of his life, he feigned himself mad before Achish, king of Gath. (See 1 Sam. xxi.) Psalm xxxiv. was composed after his escape, and blessedly shows how truly and how speedily God restores the souls of His erring saints.

But these things "written aforetime" are written also for yet another object. They serve the blessed purpose of quickly raising the fallen, and strengthening them again for the journey and the fight; but they are also, as Paul says, "our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted."

In places of dangerous navigation, or of sunken wrecks, men fix buoys and build up costly lighthouses to render, if possible, all after-voyagers safe from their predecessors' dangers. Oh for grace to use in this way the humbling but most godly narrative of Noah's vineyard! H. D.

## THE VESSELS OF THE TABERNACLE.

THE CANDLESTICK—*continued.*

Read EXODUS xxv. 33-36.

*"Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick [lampstand]."*

We notice that there were *four* bowls in the centre shaft, or lampstand proper (v. 4), and *three* in each of its branches. The first question that naturally presents itself is, What is the instruction conveyed in the special form of the bowls, and why were they made "like unto almonds"? We shall find an explanation of this in Jeremiah i. 11, 12: "Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an *almond* tree. Then said Jehovah unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it." The Hebrew word for almond signifies both *to watch over* and *to hasten*, giving us the two ideas of watchfulness and speedy accomplishment combined. The almond tree is one of the very first to blossom in the spring, and the almond shape given to the bowls seems therefore to indicate preparedness for the work of the ministry whenever called for, and watchfulness in its accomplishment. "*Watch* thou in all things." (2 Tim. iv. 5.) "*Be ready* always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (1 Peter iii. 15.)

The *one* knop and *three* bowls in each branch may teach us that the minister of Christ, the servant of God in Spirit-taught testimony, is to stand watching and ready for service in a threefold point of view. The evangelist has his special

gift, as shown by the knop, and his service is to preach the gospel to every creature; yet he must be prepared also to act as a pastor when opportunity offers, while at the same time he must so gain knowledge of the Word of truth as to be able to instruct the saints therein.

So also with the pastor. In addition to his own special gift, he must be ready and watchful for opportunity to preach the gospel, and also to teach as occasion presents itself.

The teacher must likewise be ready for varied service. Take Timothy as an example. He was a teacher, yet Paul says to him: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. . . . But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Tim. iv. 2, 5.) He was to give himself to the ministry of the word of God, and while his knop or special gift was that of a teacher, he was also to watch and exhort, and to do the work of an evangelist.

In the Lord's words to Peter—"Feed my lambs," "Shepherd my sheep," "Feed my sheep"—we may discern the threefold work of the evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher. The way in which the evangelist is looked at in Ephesians iv. is in connection with the Church. When gathered together as there contemplated, the evangelist may communicate the Word to the little ones, the lambs of the flock, and give milk to the young ones when necessary, in his own peculiar way, which others could not do; while the pastor is carefully to shepherd the sheep, and the teacher to lead them on to deeper truths, and assist them to climb the wondrous heights of the love of God.

In large establishments there is a special servant for each particular sphere of service, each knowing and doing his own work; but in smaller establishments it is different. There the servant must be prepared to turn his hand to

many things. So is it in the household of God. In some of the larger assemblies there may be an evangelist, a pastor, and a teacher, each engaged in the exercise of his own peculiar gift; but in smaller gatherings it is not so; there the servant of Christ must be prepared to turn to either sphere of service, as occasion may require.

To each branch of the lampstand there was a *knop* or seed-vessel, and also a *flower*, reminding us of the Lord's words as to the scribe instructed in the kingdom of God, who is prepared to bring out of his treasures things new and old. The flower conveys a very important and precious truth—the unfolding of the truth contained in the gift. “The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.” (Eccles. xii. 10.) And we read that “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. i. 21.) But let us remember that this is very different from *foolish preaching*. God has no fellowship whatever with the vain talker, who has a few ideas floating in the mind, and repeats them over and over again for the sake of talking. But what God delights in is the seed-vessel with its precious deposit prepared to come forth in its fairest form, so that there may be a beauty and force in preaching that cannot be gainsaid.

As the six branches were to be made to come out of the sides of the lampstand, so with fruit-bearing and testimony for Christ, according to His word in John xv.: “I am the true vine. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” This is true of ministry, as well as of other kinds of fruit-bearing.

“*And in the candlestick [lampstand, or centre shaft] shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers.*” (v. 34.)

The Lord Jesus Christ was, we know, the great Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher. But more than that, He was the Prophet and Apostle sent to communicate the things received by Him from His Father. Thus we have four knops in the centre shaft, the type of Christ in testimony.

*"And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same."* (v. 35.) This gives us a very precious thought. The knops (or gifts) in the central shaft (Christ) sustain the six branches. There was a knop in the shaft corresponding with a knop in each branch. Thus the evangelist, wherever he is, can fall back on and find sustainment in the Lord Jesus, and get example, encouragement, and power from Him, the great Evangelist. So also the pastors or under-shepherds can obtain their blessings from the great and chief Shepherd. The teacher, too, can get power and grace and strength from the one great Teacher who came forth from God. Thus each diligent servant is sustained by, and finds "grace for grace" in, Christ Jesus.

*"All of it shall be one beaten work of pure gold."* (v. 36.) Let that word come to our hearts—"See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." All ministry should be as of the ability which God giveth, and not merely the result of cultivated intellect or the wisdom of man. It is often said that the Lord Jesus chose fishermen to be preachers of the gospel. But the apostles and evangelists were not all fishermen. Matthew, who wrote one of the gospels, was a tax-gatherer. It is not known what calling Mark followed. Luke was a physician and a literary character of no common order; and Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the greatest teachers of that day. But while God has His own way of preparing the instrument, the ministry of the Word should be of the ability which God giveth, and

learned in the school of God. Ministry which costs no labour in preparation is not according to the mind of the Spirit of God, and is not worth much. The lampstand was to be of *beaten work*, which signifies labour bestowed on God's word, or the word of God elaborately brought out. Whilst no single sentence of the servant of Christ should be elaborated beforehand, yet that which is given out should be the result of patient searching and communion in the closet with God.

"Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels." (v. 39.) A talent of gold is computed to be about 114 lbs. in weight, and about £5475 in value. Ministry according to God in the exercise of the gifts of His Spirit, and having Christ for its centre and subject, is a *weighty* and *valuable* thing. That which gave to the lampstand its weight and value was the pure gold of which it was composed; whilst the highest order of *natural ability*, however cultivated, is, without the Holy Spirit, but as inferior metal, and can never be acceptable to God. It is the grace of God, the gift of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost, which give to ministry its true dignity and value.

T. N.

## FAITH IN EXERCISE.

(NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE W. H. WILLIAMS.)

GOD loves bold faith, and ever discountenances unbelief. In Matt. xvii. 19, 20 we read: "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast Him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." And when Peter asked the Lord Jesus to bid him come to Him on the water, He said,

"Come." He did not discourage him. Nor, when Peter's faith failed him, and "beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me," did the Lord rebuke him by saying, Wherefore didst thou *come*? But the question put to him was, "Wherefore didst thou *doubt*?" Some may be ready to condemn the act, and chide Peter for his rashness; but he took the right course. The Lord had said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be *thou*, bid me come." And when the command was given he came down out of the ship, and "walked on the water, to go to Jesus." But, unhappily, his eye was turned from the Lord to the waves, his confidence forsook him, and "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid." (Matt. xiv. 27-30.)

Bold faith honours God. We have a picture of it in Caleb, who from the beginning took God at His word. The ten spies who went up with him, and "searched the land," said, "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we . . . there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." But what said Caleb? He "stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." (Num. xiii. 30, 31, 33.) Whence this confidence? Caleb had heard the word of the LORD, and *he believed it*.

How solemn a contrast is seen in the experience of those who went with Caleb to spy out the land! In their fear and unbelief they "made all the congregation to murmur" against Moses "by bringing up a slander upon the land;" and what was the result? "Those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD." But Joshua and Caleb, "which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still." (Num. xiv.



36-38.) And what is Caleb's testimony after nearly half a century's residence in the land? These are the words he used to the honour of God: "And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, *as He said*, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day. . . . And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance . . . because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel."

Caleb did not stop at Kadesh-barnea, nor at Gilgal; but, remembering the promise of God, "To him will I give the land," he sought to obtain possession of the mountain, and his faith prevailed.

Hebron signifies fellowship, communion; and our greatest blessing, as God's children, is to be in fellowship with Him—to enter into God's thoughts about His Son; to have no cloud between ourselves and Him; for "God is faithful, by whom ye were *called unto the fellowship* of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. i. 9); and "the LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him." (Nahum i. 7.)

As those, then, whom Christ has, in wondrous love and grace, described as "all fair" (Song Sol. i. 15), it is our privilege to be feeding on His excellencies and beauty all day long. God has delight, rest, refreshment in His Son, and He expects us also to be full of joy in Him continually. God would have the eyes of our heart "enlightened; that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward *who believe*." (Eph. i. 18, 19.) This fellowship with God, and delight in His Son, is our Hebron. "Fear not," said God to Abram: "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Gen. xv. 1); and in Psalm lxxxix. 6, 8, the psalmist exultingly exclaims, "Who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? . . . O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?"

These examples of confidence in God, and clinging to His word, notwithstanding the power of opposing influences, or the magnitude of surrounding difficulties, are given us for our encouragement, lest we should suffer the enemy to deprive us of our Hebron—our inheritance; viz., communion with God; for so surely as we are called to a heavenly inheritance, for which we are waiting, so surely are we called to "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," as a present possession.

Those who walk by faith, and not by sight,  
Who dare to look on things in heavenly light,  
Whose prayers and silent efforts God employs  
To do the good, while others make the noise,  
Shall be rewarded for their work of love  
By His own welcome in the home above.

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FELLOWSHIP.—If my soul be engrossed with the Son of God (like the apostle in Philip. ii., iii.), my fellowship with God will surely reach onward to the coming of His Son. There is not an error, not a flaw, in the working out of God's counsels, and I shall see that everything, however seemingly adverse, is but fulfilling His purposes. As I learn out this divine fellowship I shall easily have fellowship with my brother, and increasingly be a savour of Christ to God, to the Church, and to the world.—R. C. C.

## NOTES AND REPLIES.

IN what sense is God the "*Saviour of all men*"? (1 Tim. iv. 10.)

In verse 8 we see put together "the life that now is" and "that which is to come." To the former "bodily exercise" is conducive, but "godliness" has the promise of both. So in verse 10 God is seen in Christ as the Saviour of the life that is in all men, while in a special and a deeper sense He is the Saviour of those who believe. As pointing out man's dependence on God's saving mercy in temporal matters, read Ps. xxxvi. 6; Dan. v. 23; Acts xvii. 26-28; xiv. 17; and compare with 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, where God as the Creator is said to have given all that He made for man to be received with thankfulness. If to these passages be added Gen. viii. 21, 22, where God's continuance to "all men" of harvests and of daily bread is made to rest on the "sweet savour" of the sacrifice, we see plainly how God is through Christ the Saviour of all men, whether they ever believe in Christ or not; but He is specially (*i.e.* spiritually) the Saviour of them that believe. Thus Joseph was, in a temporal sense, the saviour of all Egypt; but he was also a spiritual blessing to his own brethren. The word *salvation* (*σωτηρια*) is also used in a temporal sense in Acts xxvii. 34, where it is translated "health"—"this is for your *health*;" and the corresponding verb (*σωω*) is frequently used in connection with bodily healing.

What constitutes a "*heretic*"? (Titus iii. 10.)

The word "heretic" comes from the Greek *hairetikos* (*αἰρετικός*), and this is derived from the verb *haireomai* (*αἰρεσμαι*), signifying "to choose," which is found in Phil. i. 22; 2 Thess. ii. 13; and Heb. xi. 25. Hence a heretic is one who, instead of holding to all the truth of God as revealed in Christ and in His word, acts by partiality and chooses for himself. His choice may lie within the range of orthodoxy, and he may become a heretic by placing some acknowledged truth as a centre of union, gathering disciples round him and it; or his choice may lead him beyond the range of the truth, and be stamped with heterodoxy. Such were those who brought in "damnable heresies," of whom Jude writes. The *heretic* is a *schismatic*; the former word points to the self-willed state of his mind, the latter to the divisions he makes among the saints. Of such Paul speaks in

Acts xx. 30, as men "speaking perverse things [perverted things, *i.e.* perversions of truth], to draw away *the* [so Greek] disciples after themselves." Such persons Titus is commanded to admonish *twice*; and if the admonition is not regarded, he has to reject or refuse to have any intercourse with them; and this command is given to teach us how we are to "behave in the house of God" with respect to all that leads to heresy and schism. So also writes the same apostle to the Romans: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions [*διχοστασία*—a standing apart; see 1 Cor. iii. 3, and Gal. v. 20, where it is rendered "seditions"] and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them [*ἐκκλίνατε*, go out of their way, eschew them; used also in Rom. iii. 12, and 1 Peter iii. 11]. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Note—*Hatresis* (*αἰσείσις*) occurs in the following passages, and is rendered "*sect*," Acts v. 17; xv. 5; xxiv. 5; xxvi. 5; xxviii. 22; "*heresy*," Acts xxiv. 14; 1 Cor. xi. 19; Gal. v. 20; 2 Peter ii. 1. *Schisma* (*σχίσμα*) is rendered "*division*," John vii. 43; ix. 16; x. 19; 1 Cor. i. 10; xi. 18; "*schism*," 1 Cor. xii. 25; and "*rent*," Matt. ix. 16; Mark ii. 21.

What is the "*taking away*" of John xv. 2?

The main question, if not the only one, in the parable of the vine is fruit-bearing, and consequently the "*taking away*" (v. 2) or the being "*cast forth*" (v. 6), refers to God's judicial setting aside of the fruitless branch. This is done either *outwardly*, by sickness or death (see 1 Cor. xi. 30–32); or else *inwardly*, by withholding the Spirit's blessed whispers and workings. Israel was once God's fruit-bearing vine in their own land; but was "*taken away*" and "*cast forth*" from being such, both by being driven out of their land altogether, and by being given up to idolatry whilst still in it. "Ephraim is joined unto idols; let him alone." This casting forth of a child of God as a branch corresponds with Paul's words about a disapproved servant in 1 Cor. ix. 27, who would become "*a castaway*;" *i.e.* disapproved as to his service, but not cast away as to his life. Compare also 1 Peter iv. 17; as well as the judicial action of Christ as High Priest over the house of God seen in Rev. i., and heard in His word of warning to Ephesus, "I will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent." (Rev. ii. 5.)