

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

“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.

“WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?”

THE section of the writings of Isaiah from chap. xiii. to chap. xxiii. inclusive, in which every fresh prophecy begins with the word “burden,” has been called, not inappropriately, “The book of prophetic burdens.” These burdens begin with Babylon and end with Tyre, and are ten in number. They unfold to us the visions which passed before the eyes of the prophet, when in the days of King Ahaz the judgments coming on the nations were revealed to him as well as those which were to fall on Israel. At that time apostasy and sin on the part of man, and righteous retribution on the part of God, marked the world’s history. In these prophecies, however, indications are given of God’s eternal light which is to follow earth’s dark night, and to dawn alike upon Israel and the nations. It was of that “morning without clouds” that dying David could sing, even amidst the shattering of his hopes and the woe that sin had brought into his own family:

“Although my house be not so with God,
Yet He hath made *for* me an everlasting covenant,
Ordered in all things and sure.”

David knew not how far off the light of that morning was, when the sun should arise with its “clear shining,”

but, like Abraham, he looked forward to that day, and to it the last of the Old Testament prophets refers in the words, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise, with healing in His wings."

As a point from whence to take an outlook into the prophetic future and the historic present, under the guidance of the sure word of God, we would direct our thoughts to the seventh burden in this Book of burdens. It is designated "The burden of Dumah," and is as follows (chap. xxi. 11, 12)—

"He calleth to me out of Seir,
 Watchman, what of the night?
 Watchman, what of the night?
 The watchman said, The morning cometh,
 And also the night:
 If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

We would notice that the place out of which comes the voice that calls is Seir, or Edom, which stands in Scripture as the symbol of religious apostasy. Against this we are especially warned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, after an admonition to follow peace and holiness, the apostle says, "Looking diligently lest any man fail (come short) of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." (Comp. Deut. xxix. 18-29; xxxii. 20-33.) This is God's type of the Christendom of the present day, which for a mess of this world's pottage has sold its birthright, and is now awaiting its doom at the hand of Him who, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and as King of kings and Lord of lords, shall descend from God's right hand in the heavens and make His enemies His footstool.

In the prophecy against Dumah, no one is definitely intended in the expression "He calleth;" it is simply

“one calleth,” and the person addressed is God’s appointed watchman, of whom we read in Isaiah lxii., “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace; ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence.” The word *Dumah* signifies “silence,” and here it is like the silence of death, the silence and stillness preceding a doom that is but half-consciously realized, and which leads men in their darkness, ignorance, and uncertainty to whisper, “Where? when? what?” This death-like silence is broken by a voice that says “*What of the night?*” and in restless anguish seeks to know whereabouts in the night it is, or, as in the margin of the R.V. “What hour of the night is it?” The watchman foretells the coming morning, but he dwells on the solemn fact that the night still rolls on, with all its darkness and woe. The darkness thickens before the dawn, but as it thickens, the word given to faith is, “Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.”

Under similar circumstances the apostle tells the children of God, in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, that while those who are of the night, amidst restless forebodings, are yet crying, “Peace and safety,” ere sudden destruction, unforeseen, unawares, comes on them, those who are the “sons of light, and sons of day” should be on their watch-tower, with girded loins, having on “the breast-plate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” Thus should we become true watchmen to a doomed world ripening for judgment, and be able to give needed direction to those seeking guidance amidst its darkness and gloom.

In whatever way we look at the condition of things around us, whether considered religiously, politically, socially, physically, or intellectually, there are evident signs to the thoughtful child of God which lead him

instinctively to feel that we are nearing the great catastrophe of which prophets and apostles have so abundantly warned us in the Scriptures of truth. It is also remarkable how many a thoughtful writer of the present day, who has evidently never made the word of God his study, looks forward with suspense and anxiety to a crash that seems inevitable, when all the opposing elements of human nature must, sooner or later, come into deadly conflict. We are living in days when years count for centuries, for God, who sometimes makes a day's work occupy a thousand years, at another time carries out what we might reckon as requiring a thousand years, in one day. It is the awful rapidity with which things are consummated in the present day, like the avalanche from the hills carrying desolation before it, that makes the thoughtful tremble, and ought to send the Christian to his knees.

Let us look for a moment at the various aspects of the world's history, already alluded to, and let us seek to gather some warning and some instruction for ourselves and others. Things often happen around us which, from want of reflection, produce no effect on many, and lead them to live on as in a fool's paradise, saying, as many affirm to-day, that everything is on the line of the development of something better, and we have only to go on as we are doing to come to the golden era, for "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Let us consider—

(1.) *The Religious Outlook.*—One of the most remarkable features of the present day is the way in which "The religious question" is coming to the front, even in social or political matters; and while in the spiritually-minded few there is a yearning for that which is spiritually true, ecclesiasticism in one form or another is making itself as distinctly felt among the great majority as in ages past.

We have but to look at the Romanism of to-day, and especially since the passing away of the temporal power of the papacy, and we see that the church of Rome, so far from losing power, has gained and is gaining immensely in increased spiritual dominion. Whatever may be thought of the dogma of papal infallibility, and other dogmas which have been distinctly formulated during the pontificates of the later popes, they are but the avowal of that which all along has been more or less tacitly assumed. This distinct and definite line of policy has given an impetus to papal aggression, which has been marked with signal success, and is in most striking contrast with the indefiniteness and uncertainty with which in most places the Truth is upheld. Let those speak who know what the progress of Romanism in England and America is, and the recital would alarm and terrify all the unsuspecting; and much besides this goes on, of which nothing is known but by the omniscient God. He is permitting an idolatrous and apostate church system to rise again to a condition of prominence and power, and when it dies, it will not die from effete old age, but from violence, which will be resisted, as the Revelation shows us. The harlot who rides upon the beast will, by her usurpations and tyrannies, her assumptions and intolerances, at length cause the beast and his ten horns (the secular power of the Roman earth) to hate her, to make her desolate and naked, to eat her flesh, and to burn her with fire; "for," says the heavenly seer, "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will." Hence we infer that as the religious element of strife and confusion becomes more and more marked, we are nearing that time when the angel shall say, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (Rev. xiv. 8. R.V.)

We would only allude further to the spread of modern scepticism, which runs, not so much in the line of the atheism of the past, that denied all religion, as in the line of religious agnosticism, none the less assumptive because of its boasted ignorance. There is also a pestilent re-vivification of bygone heresies, which is sapping the very foundations of truth in the minds of many who would fain claim to be its guardians. It is by these means that the prince of darkness is rapidly, and yet surely, preparing men's minds for the advent of his false prophet, who will tolerate the harlot-Christianity of the present no more, but will cause the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the beast, which, after having carried the whore, will hate her and make her desolate. (Rev. xiii. 12; xvii. 16.)

(2.) *The Political Outlook*.—Even a casual observer, looking round upon the state of Western Europe, must own that representative government, the boast of the nineteenth century, is passing through an ordeal, and that its inherent weakness is every day becoming more and more manifest; and when any great crisis shall arise, all government based upon the democratic element will assuredly give way. In itself it is subversive of the Divine element of rule, for nations should be governed, and not govern themselves. Such a great emergency is not far distant; it seems to stand upon the very threshold of the existing order of things, and but a spark is required to set all Europe in a blaze. The Eastern question looms in the distance, and each year seems to present a more threatening aspect. Like the prophet's cloud, it may be no bigger than a man's hand to-day, but it will soon gather into blackness, and darkness, and tempest. When God moves, time rushes, and the catastrophe may be nearer than we think. Looked at prophetically, the ultimate form that the government of the Roman earth will

assume is certainly rather monarchical than democratic. A government based on the uncertain and fickle will of a people, especially manifests its powerlessness when it has to deal with the combinations and movements of other nations, and the turn which events are taking indicates that, as ever in the past, the disintegrative weakness of democracy will find its only relief and safety in some absolute despotism. Thus God is daily bringing the boasted political wisdom of the nineteenth century to foolishness, and is paving the way for man's future grateful acknowledgment that God alone can rule, and by creation's miseries and groans He is preparing for the advent of the King who shall reign in righteousness. In the closing days of Judah's national history, God said to its weak and godless king, “I will overturn, overturn, overturn, until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it Him,” (Ezekiel xxi. 27); and He is saying the same to all who bear rule in the present day, whether kings or presidents. The shaking foretold by Haggai the prophet, and yet again referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, has already begun, and will find its fulfilment in these words, “I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations,” and then will God say to the anti-typical Zerubbabel, the Lord of Glory, “I will take Thee and make Thee as a signet, for I have chosen Thee.”

(3.) *The Social Outlook.*—The disintegration which marks the political world, characterizes social life also. The war of classes, the strife of opposing claims, the selfishness of all, is causing its voice to be heard in every land, and the failure of man's wisdom to prevent the collision arising from rival interests is one of the most striking features of our day. Law has hitherto been able, more or less, to withstand the selfishness of human nature;

but the days seem fast approaching when law and order will be trampled in the dust, and social anarchy will call for the strong hand of absolute authority.

(4.) *The Physical Outlook.*—We read that in the latter days there shall be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; that there shall be earthquakes, distress of nations, the sea and the waves roaring; and it cannot have escaped the observation of most, how many premonitions there have been of late of those disturbances in the earth's physical condition which seem to point to a time, not very distant, when God will call the material heavens and the material earth to bear witness to their Creator, as we find abundantly foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament and of the New. God shall then say, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth"; and both will respond to the summons of Him who made them, and bear awful testimony to the wrath of God and of the Lamb.

(5.) *The Intellectual Outlook.*—Intellectual apostacy from God is perhaps one of the most marked and most melancholy features of the day in which we live. The mighty powers which God was pleased to bestow on His creature man, made him "but a little lower than the angels," but now man is using his highest power in defiance of God, for his own exaltation; and we are reminded of the words that God used concerning Babel at the first, when He saw men building their city and their tower whose top might reach to the heavens, in order to make themselves a name, "Now nothing shall be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." Meanwhile, God allows proud man to go on his own way, unchecked, unhindered; but ere long it will be seen that God will interfere, and that, though men think themselves wise and mighty, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men," and "the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Such in a general way is the outlook of things around us, at the opening of another year; and from whatever point of view regarded, the end is, in each case, the same; and man will only prove how awful is his condition “without Christ,” “without hope,” and “without God.” Through Christ’s first coming God sent the gospel of salvation into all the world to gather out His church; at His second coming, when man has fully learnt what he is, what his helplessness, what his ruin, what his misery, God will again send a gospel of mighty saving knowledge, until “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.”

In answer, then, to the enquiry made of the watchman, “What is the hour of the night?” may we not say that on all hands there are unmistakeable evidences that the time is nearing when the Lord shall gather His saints unto Himself in the air, and having allowed the way to be prepared for the development of the Man of sin, He will fulfil, as the “Word of God,” every thing which God hath spoken, and will “in flaming fire” take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of His grace. Then, and not till then, shall a King reign in righteousness, and princes decree justice, and this sorrowing, sin-stricken, groaning earth, shall sing her new, her bridal song, as we read in Psalm xcvi.—

“O sing unto the Lord a new song,
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.
Sing unto the Lord, bless His name,
Show forth His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples;
For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised.”

Then will they

“Say among the nations, The Lord reigneth;
The world also is established that it shall not be moved;
He shall judge the peoples righteously.”

Then, and not till then, will the word be—

“ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad ;
 Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof ;
 Let the field be joyful and all that is therein ;
 Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
 At the presence of the Lord ; for He cometh,
 He cometh to judge the earth :
 He shall judge the world in righteousness,
 And the peoples in His truth.”

H. G.

WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE.

By R. C. CHAPMAN.

THERE may be much communion with God, when there is but little comfort in the soul, and much fruitfulness when there is but little joy and gladness.

We bear fruit when we credit the word of God against appearances, and when we submit our will to His.

I ought never to begin with my own sorrow first, but with the faithfulness of God. God gives me time to profit by my trial, and I am in no hurry to be out of the furnace.

The circumstances which are the most favourable to faith are the best.

The great sabbath-keeper is faith ; the great sabbath-breaker is unbelief.

Faith always carries with it its title to be heard.

How rich are we if unbelief do not make us poor.

Every truth of God is a loaf of bread to the hungry soul.

Christ trusted the very hand which smote Him, to raise Him.

Faith sees Christ crucified, and nothing else is a wonder.

We are poor and needy ; Christ is our storehouse.

There is nothing at all apart from Christ that is worthy of God.

All I have to do is to seek Himself as for cares and anxieties, let them sleep.

We should all be wise but for our own wisdom.

ON HONOURING GOD.*

“Them that honour Me I will honour.”—1 SAM. ii. 30.

In the book of Proverbs we read, “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” Character depends not on what man is outwardly, but on what he is inwardly. Only those can honour God, whose hearts are right with Him. We need to have the heart exercised on true principles, in order to be guided aright in this ungodly world. The one principle in the heart, the one object before the eye, which is alone worthy of a Christian, is *to honour God*. The words in the original of 1 Sam. ii. 30 are peculiarly emphatic and forcible, and contain within themselves a certain prophetic character. All the great subjects of the word of God have been made subjects of prophecy, as, for instance, the first and second coming of Christ; the doom of Jerusalem; the scattering and the future ingathering of Israel. Some prophecies have been fulfilled, some yet remain unfulfilled; but in the passage we are considering, and indeed throughout the word of God, there is another kind of prediction, which is ever and

* This paper is the substance of an address by the late beloved Henry Craik, of Bristol, given at the opening of the year 1854. Of him it may truly be said that he lived as a pilgrim and a stranger, and sought not the honour which cometh from man, but his Master's approval and His “Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” It is well sometimes to recall those who have passed away from among us, and as each year adds to their number, and this year *we* may be added to them, may we see that we honour God by knowing Him more intimately, and by making Christ the friend of our every-day life. Then, if called to fall asleep ere the Lord come, we shall be able to say, as one long since said on his dying bed, that of the many friends known upon earth, none was so well-known as the Lord Jesus. This will make earth nearer heaven, and will make heaven a double heaven when we get there.—Ed.

again finding its accomplishment in the personal history of the people of God; He will assuredly honour them that honour Him. In entering upon a new year, we cannot have a more important guide to regulate our aims, our thoughts, and our desires; and it is therefore very needful clearly to understand what is meant by honouring God. He must be *known* in order to be honoured, and those who set up an inscription to the "unknown God" cannot possibly be in a position to honour Him.

There are a few points which we would name as essential to a true knowledge of God, and therefore to the true honouring of Him.

1. He must be known as a God of love, who is *reconciled* to us in Christ Jesus, and then as pardoned sinners we must *own* His love, leaving ourselves in His hands to be guided and led in whatever way He may see best. This, the natural conscience of man will never enable him to attain unto, for the consciousness of sin, however feebly that sin may be comprehended, will cause man to tremble at the presence of God, and, like Adam in the garden, to seek by any means to hide himself from His presence, and on no account, if possible, to leave himself in the hands of a holy and righteous God. But all this is changed when God is known as revealed in Christ, for in the gospel grace reigns *through righteousness* unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. He must be known as a *faithful* God; and to honour Him in His faithfulness, is to believe that He is leading us by a right way, not only when appearances indicate it to be so, but when all things seem to be so dark that no escape into the light appears possible, and no solution of the problem likely. Even then we should be able to say, with the blessed Lord Himself, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

3. He must be known as a God whose *authority is absolute*. To honour Him thus, means in every thing to submit cheerfully to His will. So shall we learn what we are often told in Scripture, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." If the absoluteness of God's will be recognized, and God's revelation of that will in His word be owned, we shall have no creed but the word of God, and no desire but implicit subjection to His will.

The ambition of every child of God should be to honour every word of the living God, and to be content with that honour which cometh from God only. To such a one the crowns and sceptres of earth, its glories, dignities, and riches, are esteemed as toys not worthy of grasping at, for he has learnt with Paul to say, "I do count them as dross and dung, that I may win Christ." Our Lord says, "If any man *serve Me*, him will my Father honour," and here is found the clue to true honour; not that which comes from man to man, but that which comes now in measure to the faithful servant from the living God, and will come yet more manifestly and openly in the great day of eternal recompence which awaits the faithful soul at the judgment seat of Christ. This serving of Christ is seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, believing that all other things will be added, because God has said so. To believe in God's love, and faithfulness, and authority, is that which truly honours God; for faith takes up the promises of God, be they great or small, be they for time or for eternity, be they for the outward or for the inward man; it takes them and holds them as sure and sacred because of Him who has spoken them. Faith knows that He who made the universe concerns Himself also with the smallest things of our lives, for the very hairs of our head are all numbered, and a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our

Father. Many of God's dear children who have known what it is to bear heavy trials in quietness, sustained and helped and comforted by God, are yet ruffled and disquieted by the little annoyances and troubles of daily life. But we honour God when we receive every little discomfort as coming from Him, and as sent in infinite mercy, for the trial of our patience and of our faith. Thus every little thing becomes great and important, because fraught with deep and solemn lessons to our souls, seeing it comes touched with the finger of God. Let us, then, see God in everything that befalls us, and use each occurrence as it passes to show forth that submission and obedience to His will, which He seeks at our hands. Let us dwell on the honour that is reserved for those who honour Him, who endure unto the end in simple faith and trust. To the overcoming ones, of whom we read in Rev. ii. 10-17, glorious things are promised—a "crown of life," "the hidden manna," "the white stone, and in the stone a new name written," and a seat with Christ on His throne, even as He overcame and has sat down on the throne of the Father.

In honesty of purpose, in singleness of heart, let it be our aim to keep these joys and glories before our eyes, that they may become to us mighty, precious, and living realities. Let us not be content with a vague, indefinite grasp of the promises of God; let us make them our very own, for thus only can we honour the Giver, and get joy and comfort to our own souls. We have the promise, "Ask and ye shall receive;" and again, there is a mighty promise contained in the statement, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." Truly an honest belief in such a word as this, will make one who honours God by believing His word, feel more safe in bestowing his goods to feed the poor, or in spending his means for the honour

of his God, than the worldling does when he places his money in a bank for use at some future day, or invests it in some good speculation. It is thus that we honour God, taking Him at His word, and acting on His word in whatever He commands us to do. May we learn during this year quietly to submit ourselves to His rule in all things, and patiently seek to do His will, remembering our Lord's words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me let him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour."

THE LORD'S TEMPTATION BY SATAN.

MATTHEW iv. 1-11.

WE cannot tell what Satan may have known of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, but there can be no question that from childhood the Holy One was the object of his special observation and attack. The Child whose behaviour showed that in His heart was no folly, the Youth who sought no pleasure except in God and His Word, the Man whose delight was to serve Him and do His will, must have drawn forth in a very especial manner the deep enmity of the great adversary of God and man. Long previous to the time of His baptism as well as during the whole of His public ministry, our Lord was doubtless tempted by the devil, though in every temptation He was the victor.

But it has pleased God to give us the record of one particular season of temptation, as a sample of what the

Lord endured, and that we may learn how He repelled the enemy. This special season of temptation followed His baptism and anointing. As soon as He was publicly owned as the Son of God by the voice from heaven, and anointed by the Holy Ghost as the Messiah, He was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil"; a fact which may remind us that as soon as we *become* children of God, and are sealed by the Spirit, we stand exposed to the attacks of him from whose authority we have been delivered. The Lord did not *seek* temptation, or run into the conflict unbidden; He was led to it by the Spirit, or, as Mark expresses it, "the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness;" not implying any resistance on His part, but showing that He was under a mighty impulse of the Spirit, and indicating how entirely He was subject to the Spirit's guidance.

What a contrast we see in the circumstances of the first man and of the second when tempted, as well as in the result of the temptation! Man in Eden was surrounded by every token of the love and goodness of God, every *visible* expression of His care, and assurance of His favour, yet when temptation was presented to him he yielded to it and became a sinner. The Man in the wilderness, on the other hand, was surrounded by everything that spoke of solitude and loneliness; to all appearance He was forsaken and left to His own resources; the presence and care of God were not evidenced by a single outward token, but were simple matters of faith; and yet He listened not for a moment to the tempter, He consented not for an instant to one temptation, but came forth from the conflict as He entered it—the Holy One of God.

But let us never forget that "He *suffered*, being tempted." We are apt to lose sight of the *deep reality* of temptation to the Lord Jesus, because we so little

apprehend the reality of His person. Do we not often vaguely think of Him as something *between* God and man? Such an idea is a very false one, for He verily was *man* as really as He was God. Though He did not, and could not, cease to be what He ever had been as the Son of the living God, yet He became as truly man; and the very perfection and purity of His manhood made Him feel all the more keenly the assaults of the foe. The tree that bends not to the storm feels most of its fury, and the waves dash with far more violence against the rock that moves not an inch, than against the boat that is carried by their force. So the perfect resistance of the blessed Lord, and the fact that He never yielded for an instant, caused Him to feel all the more keenly the awfulness of the temptations presented to Him. The energy of His love to the Father, the strength of His devotedness to the will of God, and the firmness of His determination to accomplish that will, made Him view in its true light any effort to turn Him from the path upon which He had entered.

Therefore, while on the one hand we dare not dishonour Him by thinking for a moment of the possibility of His falling, let us be careful that we do not on the other detract from the glory of His victory by throwing any shadow of unreality around the narrative of the temptation. It is not from any *sham* fight that lasting honour is won, nor is it from any *semblance* of a conflict that the blessed Lord reaps the glory of defeating the foe—a foe who could bring to bear in his terrible attack all the subtlety and craft acquired in a warfare of at least four thousand years.

It is definitely stated in Luke that the Lord was tempted during all the forty days, but it was at the close of them that the three recorded temptations were pre-

sented. Having fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards hungered, and taking advantage of His state and circumstances the tempter said to Him, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." He tempted Him to prove His Sonship by independence, and show His power to minister to His own necessities. Is there not too a touch of Satanic irony in the word? As though he had said, "Thou—the Son of God—hungry! The object of His delight left alone! If Thou art He, help Thyself." This was the challenge! how was it met? If the Lord did not *seek* temptation, He *expected* it, and was prepared for it. He was full of the Holy Ghost, whose blessed fellowship had not been disturbed during all this conflict, and shall we err in saying that that Spirit furnished Him with the word He needed? There was no response to Satan's challenge, no reply, "I *am* the Son of God," no assertion of His dignity and glory, but rather the reply of perfect dependence and faith, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The force of the Lord's reply to Satan is often missed, because through lack of attention to the passage which He quotes (Deut. viii. 3) it is taken to mean, "Man not only needs bread for the body, he also needs the word of God for his soul." This is most true as a statement, but it is not the interpretation of this passage. God led Israel in the wilderness, and suffered them to hunger, and fed them with manna, that He might make them know that He can sustain man's life by anything or in any way He pleases; not by bread alone, but by whatever He appoints. Its reference is purely to man's physical life, and the Lord in the wilderness becomes the example to His people of absolute dependence upon God, and sub-

jection to Him, in whatever circumstance He may place us as we pass through the wilderness of this world. The very contemplation of this perfect example always strengthens, though at the same time it deeply humbles us by making us conscious of how far we come short of the absolute dependence and perfect trust of Him who would not stretch out His hand to relieve His pressing necessities, but would wait till God should be pleased to send Him relief.

Defeated in the attempt to shake the Lord's trust in God, the enemy now appeals to that very trust, and tempts the Lord to give an ostentatious display of it, and to do what God did not call upon Him to do. He takes Him to the giddy height of the pinnacle of the temple, "and saith to Him, If thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." Satan can use Scripture, but he both misquotes and misapplies it. He leaves out the important words "*in all Thy ways,*"—those ways which were not self-chosen ways, but ways of God's appointment, and ways in which He was led by the Spirit. But it is more particularly in the mis-application of the promise that we have evidence of Satanic cunning: 'Cast Thyself down, for no harm can happen to Thee.' Have the children of God no similar temptation to this? If they are established in the grace of God, and their hearts are truly reposing in Him, does not the enemy often seek to draw them from the narrow path of watchfulness and prayer to paths of ease and self-indulgence, with the suggestions that there is no danger? Happy for them if, like the Lord, they have the weapon ready, even "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and are able to meet Satan's misuse of the

word with that word rightly used, and to answer his "it is written" with "it is written *again*."

A second time, the Lord passing over the "If Thou be the Son of God," takes the place of the true Israel in the wilderness, and makes use of the book of the wilderness. The charge of Moses to Israel was, "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God as ye tempted Him in Massah." (Deut. vi. 16.) Now we learn from Ex. xvii. 7, that they tempted the Lord by raising the question, "Is the Lord among us or not?" The Lord's use of the word here intimates that to do anything that God has not commanded, simply to prove His presence and care, would be tempting Him. To trust God in danger is faith, to create danger is presumption; to rest upon His promise in circumstances of difficulty is to honour Him, to seek by any act of ours to test and prove the truth of that promise is to tempt Him.

Once more is Satan foiled, and once again he returns to the attack, this time presenting a temptation that had special reference to the official glory of the Lord as the Messiah. He who could quote Psalm xci. must have known from prophets of old that to the Messiah should be given the nations for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, and he must have seen that the exaltation of the Christ meant his own abasement. We cannot suppose that he ever forgot the solemn threat that the Seed of the woman should bruise his head, even though he may have been as ignorant of the way in which it should be done as the Jews were of what would be the result of the crucifixion of Him whom they rejected. But if he could prevail upon the Lord to accept the throne of earth on his own terms, his dignity would be preserved. This he attempts. As one has said: 'He will lay down his sceptre, and suffer Jesus to take it

up. In one great gift he will make over his whole right of empire over these kingdoms of the world to Christ, suffer Him at once to enter upon possession of them, and clothe Himself with all their glory. This is his glittering bribe, and all he asks in return is that Jesus shall do him homage, as the superior by whom the splendid fief was given, and under whom it is held.'

That there is some truth in the words "that is delivered unto me" seems implied in the solemn titles given to Satan when the Lord calls him "the prince (or ruler) of this world," and Paul speaks of him as "the god of this age" (John xiv. 30; 2 Cor. iv. 4), but however that may be, the *I will* of the next clause—"to whomsoever I will I give it"—is limited by a will that is above his. He will be permitted to give it to one who will render to him the homage he seeks; for to the antichrist the dragon will give "his power and his throne and great authority." (Rev. xiii. 2.) Thus was the Lord tempted to receive at once from the hand of Satan what He knew in due time would be His as the gift of His Father, and the fruit of His cross. He was even then treading the pathway that led to Calvary, and the dark shadow of the cross was ever before Him. Would He, instead of going forward to reach the goal in God's appointed way—the pathway of humiliation and suffering, receive the kingdom, without further conflict, as the gift of the foe?

Truly Satan knew not Him to whom he spake. What were the kingdoms of this world, and all their glory, to Him whose meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him? What was any prospect of earthly grandeur and magnificence to Him whose sole business was to glorify the Father? He had not come simply to obtain a kingdom; but rather "that He might destroy the works of the devil." His mission was to judge and cast out the prince

of this world, to subdue all things to Himself, and establish the Kingdom of God. Therefore upon the bold disclosure of what Satan sought, the Lord addresses him in a tone of authority, and once more repels him with the two-edged sword, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Satan tempts the Lord's people with that world which he spread out in all its attractiveness before the Lord Himself, and we, alas! are often ensnared by that which had no charm for Him. It is a solemn thing to remember that we cannot have the world without rendering homage to its prince and failing to fulfil the word, "Him *only* shalt thou serve." God looks for the *whole* heart, and with nothing less can He be well-pleased. Someone has said, "Those who educate children to think this world's glory the chief thing, do the devil's office." And in contrast with this kind of training the fact is not without significance that the Lord answered Satan with Scriptures which were most familiar to Jews from their childhood.

Thus He stood as the Conqueror, "for the devil leaveth Him," and that to which He would not help Himself was brought to Him by willing hands, and those ministries which He would not command were His at His Father's bidding, for "angels came and ministered unto Him."

Let us "consider Him" as the One who "in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, is able to succour them that are tempted;" let us think of Him as our example in the conflict, His only shield being the shield of faith, and His sole weapon the sword of the Spirit; and let us remember that for us too, it is written, "Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF THE LATE
DR. J. B. MULOCK.

“I am sure there is blessing to an assembly when it is cast upon the Lord Himself, and one would desire to see and acknowledge the wise purpose of the Lord in the temporary absence (from sickness or other cause) of any gifted brother from their midst. As Paul in effect says to the Philippians, ‘You have hitherto leaned on me, but now that I am cast into prison, you will have to bear trials and temptations alone, which, I am assured, you will do much more than when I was present with you.’ May this be true of the assembly at ———. Let us pray that the resources which are in Christ may supply all their need in the way of ministry, or that grace be given to wait upon Him *till* He supplies it and then there is sure to be blessing.

“I have learned, I trust, that the secret of all true ministry is to cast the saints from yourself upon Christ the Lord Himself, so that they can do without you. As for ourselves, beloved brother, may the religious activity and human arrangements which practically shut out the Spirit of God, more and more lead us to covet the human weakness and divine power which made Paul triumph in every place.

“What a difference between doing what I think He would like me to do, and doing *His will!* All intelligent service (Rom. xii. 1) must be learned at His feet where Mary sat, as a learner, as a mourner, and as a worshipper—a place the flesh in us cannot endure.”

“More and more I ask myself if I am living for eternity. With my precarious and renewed lease of life, what am I living for? What tenants-at-will we are, beloved, in these poor tabernacles! The Lord help us to occupy to the last, until He come, or take us to Himself, for otherwise we lose our passing opportunity for ever. J. B. M.”

NOTES AND REPLIES.

*How does the doctrine of non-eternity of punishment dishonour the person and work of Christ?**

1. Because it lessens *the magnitude of the guilt of sin*. Sin in Scripture is likened to a debt; and if we want to know the indebtedness of a person whose liabilities have all been met, we have but to ask what was paid to liquidate them. God's Christ is heaven's liquidation of the sinner's debt; and if God's claim be less than infinite, that which met the claim must be equally so. Christ's payment does not exceed God's claim. If less would have sufficed, less would have been demanded, and less have been paid. Man has no conception of what sin is. Christ's cross alone reveals it. An infinite sacrifice tells us that sin is infinite, and we have no other measure by which to estimate it.

2. Because it lessens *the costliness of the atonement*. The atonement measures the sin, even as the mercy seat, or propitiatory, was exactly of the same dimensions as the ark that contained the symbols of the holiness of God. Sin is the violation of that holiness, and the propitiation made by Christ meets its claims, and no more.

3. Because it lessens *the punishment of sin*. Of the punishment our Lord solemnly speaks when he tells us of one who was cast into God's prison—"Thou shalt not come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." (Matt. v. 25-26.) In these words that fell from the loving lips of Him who was to be the mighty Sacrifice, and who knew what payment of sin's demerits really meant, there is a divine severity that makes them awfully searching and terrible.

It deserves notice here that in the Hebrew Bible the same word is used for the *sin*, the *punishment of sin*, and the *atonement for sin*, or the *sin-offering*. In the following passages the identity of the sin and the punishment will be seen by comparing the text and the marginal readings: Gen. iv. 13; Lam. iv. 6-22; Zech. xiv. 19; and whenever "sin-offering" occurs, it is always in Hebrew simply "sin." Let us ponder over these identities in the mind of God, and we shall have no doubt that the doctrine in question dishonours the person and work of Christ. Man rebels against God's estimate of sin, does not take God's estimate of the sin-offering, and therefore cannot accept God's estimate of the punishment demanded. All three are raised or lowered together. Hence the vital importance of God's truth in this matter in these days, when sin is a trifle, atonement a fiction, and hell a falsehood. God keep His saints walking in the old paths. Amen.

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“ONCE” AND “FOR EVER.”

OUR God unites together the brief almighty *moments* in which He accomplishes His works with the *eternal ages* in which they endure, and are both His joy and His praise. Time and eternity are His in this as in all other ways, and as God's sons and heirs we also can say—

“Time and eternity are ours—
The world, and life, and death ;
The heaven of heavens, the throne of God,
And depths of hell beneath.”

“Once” and “for ever” are expressions to remind us of two divine realities.

“Once” points to that which is definite and precise—a thing of a day, it may be, or an hour, or a moment. It also points in Scripture to a thing finished, and needing neither addition nor repetition.

Such, for instance, was this creation. A six days' succession of almighty words spoke it into being—each utterance complete in itself, and the creation-work it effected standing in all its solidity all the “for ever” of its divine Creator's pleasure. “He spake and it was done ; He commanded and it stood fast.” (Ps. xxxiii. 9.)

Such, again, was the mighty truth that “the Word became flesh.” (R.V.) His conception by the blessed virgin, through the Holy Ghost, was *one* marvellous act ; but “Immanuel,” “the Man Christ Jesus,” remains the Man of God's right hand—“the last Adam” “for ever”—blessed be God !

Such, too, was His glorious redemption work in death. How emphatically does the apostle both in Romans and Hebrews speak of that work as being only “once.” “In

that He died He died unto sin *once*." "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many;" and He "entered in *once* into the holy place." How precious to our hearts and consciences is that word "*once*!" How completely it throws all the guilt and condemnation of believers in Jesus behind their backs, as they journey on to God and heaven, even as God sees it not against us before His face above! And this "*once*" finished work stands "*for ever*:" *i.e.*, not only lastingly, as contrasted with Old Testament annual offerings; not only for our life-time, each of us, as believers; not only for all the church's sojourn here below, but in the fullest sense of "*for ever*," when all the redeemed are "*with the Lord*:" for the Lamb "*once*" slain will by His ever-present wounds be our title to be "*for ever*" with Him and "*for ever*" like Him.

But "*once*" and "*for ever*" has its dark side as well as its bright one. The doom yet to be pronounced on the Christ-rejecter will be "*once*" uttered—but alas, it will stand "*for ever*!" "*Depart, ye cursed*," will need no addition nor any repetition, for the "*great gulf*" betwixt the rebellious and the obedient will remain "*fixed*" "*for ever*!" To quote Hebrews again—"It is appointed to men *once* to die; but after this the judgment," *i.e.*, the eternal judgment. Well may we say to the unsaved:—

"Cursed by the law, and bruised by the fall,

Christ hath redeemed us *once for all*.

'Once for all,' O sinner, believe it;

'Once for all,' O brother, receive it."

One more instance remains of "*once*" and "*for ever*." It is the "*promise*" made to us as God's sons and heirs of a "*new earth and new heavens*." The very setting-up of Christ's great white throne will as truly banish from before it, as in a moment, this sin-stained, six days' work of creation, as all His people's sins were blotted out by the blood

of His cross. But on that very throne He also says, “ Behold, I make *all things* new.” And His handiwork then made stands “ for ever.”

Oh may the joy of the word “ once,” and the strength of the word “ for ever,” be richly with us all our journey. Amen. H. D.

Alexandria, Jan. 6, 1887.

“ FEAR NOT.”

To lonely Abram, a stranger in that promised land which was still held by the Canaanite, came God’s word of comfort, “ Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.” (Gen. xv. 1.) To the trembling children of Israel at the Red Sea, with the waters before them and the pursuing hosts of Pharaoh behind them, came similar cheering words through Moses, “ Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” (Exodus xiv. 13.) To the former Scripture we turn for strength and comfort as individual believers ; to the latter we may turn as members of God’s great company of redeemed ones, with our backs towards Egypt and our faces Zionward. But to get the full force of the “ Fear nots ” of Scripture, we must remember that God’s silence may be as much fraught with deep teaching as His speech. In the first recorded instance of the workings of *fear*, we find Adam trembling before His Creator, and making to Him the confession, “ *I was afraid ;* ” yet no comforting “ Fear not ” was given upon this declaration. In what, then, did Adam’s position differ from that of Abraham or that of Israel ? Of Abraham we read, “ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out . . . obeyed ” (Heb. xi. 8) ; of Adam, “ By one man’s *disobedience* many were made sinners.” (Rom v. 19.) God called Abraham His “ friend,” and we read,

"Abraham stood yet before the Lord; and Abraham *drew near*" (Gen. xviii. 22, 23); but Adam sought to *hide* himself from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden. Abraham yielded up to God the dearest object of his love, and spared not his only son; but Adam took not of the abundance which surrounded him, and laid hands on the one and only thing which the Lord had reserved to Himself. Obedience, in like manner, characterised the children of Israel in the hour of their trial in Egypt, and they accepted God's deliverance from the bondage of Pharaoh, whereas Adam had voluntarily put his neck under the yoke of Satan; the Israelites sheltered themselves beneath the blood of the slain lamb, while Adam had but a few fig leaves to cover his nakedness.

Thus we see that, whether individually or collectively, it is only as we are walking in the path of *obedience* that we have any right to lay hold of those "Fear nots" which were addressed to God's faithful ones, but which many persons so often indiscriminately apply to themselves, whatever their state before God may be. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee," says the Lord; but since God asks the question in Amos, "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" it is evident that such a precious assurance of His presence can only be realised as we are consciously desiring to be brought into true fellowship with Himself. Even to His children God's mercy is not measured out apart from His justice; and they, too, when disobedient, must discover the truth of the ordinance that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If we have sown to the flesh, God does not intervene with a "Fear not" to take away all the evil consequences of our sin: and this is a truth made manifest in the life of even him who was a man after God's own heart. When David's heart sank within him at the words, "Thou art the

man,” the prophet did not interpose a “Fear not,” but painted his sin in its true colours and foretold what the painful consequences thereof would be. God tempered His justice with mercy, for the confession of sin was followed by the gracious words, “The Lord also hath put away thy sin,” though its bitter fruits remained; and this sorrowful story should be a warning to ourselves not to transgress against the Lord. God’s word to backsliding Israel, in Jeremiah ii., was: “Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts.”

Thus we learn the secret of walking with God, and of being able to lay hold upon His mighty “Fear nots.” If we would not be afraid of the future, afraid of our circumstances, of our fellow-men, or of God Himself, let us have His fear in our hearts. “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” (Eccles. xii. 13.) “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov. ix. 10.) “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; . . . and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” (Mal. iii. 16, 17.)

Finally, we should know, that when God speaks, His word may be fully relied on. The treacherous “Fear not” of the wife of the Kenite, lured Sisera to his doom; but our God is not like those who say “Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” The mistaken “Fear not” of the women who stood by the mother of Ichabod, was meant to raise hopes that were never fulfilled; but our God can command the future, and “where the word of a King is, there is power.” (Eccles. viii. 4.) Let us ever remember that “every word of God is *pure*,” and that “all His com-

mandments are *sure*," though we hear of the denial of eternal punishment for the sinner, and the venomous tongue of the atheist, and the smooth tongue of the moralist, alike preach, "Fear not." These are words of solemn portent spoken by Him who wept over those whom He would have gathered to Himself had they not rejected the message of His grace: "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him, who, after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him." (Luke xii. 5.)

W. G. S.

THE ANOINTED ONE

IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH.

WE are told that it was as One "*full of the Holy Ghost*" that the Lord "*was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*" to be tempted by Satan, and after the temptation we read that He "*returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.*" It is well to read these statements together, and to learn the blessed lesson that through all that time of great and sore temptation the perfect fellowship of the Spirit was never once broken. The dependence of the Lord upon, and His trust in, His Father were perfect, and so was His resistance to the enemy. Having overcome Satan in hidden and personal conflict, He went forth to deliver others from his power.

Most are aware that the order adopted in the Gospels is not always chronological; that is, things are not always related in the exact order in which they occurred; and when the order of time is observed, there are frequently breaks or gaps in one Gospel which are filled up in the others. Men have endeavoured to correct this by forming what are called *Harmonies*; that is, making a continuous narrative from the four Gospels. But such attempts some-

what ignore the fact that God in His infinite wisdom gave us *four* Gospels, and that He must have had a purpose in setting things forth in a different manner from that which man, if left to himself, would have pursued. God's word is not given to answer and satisfy all the curious questions we may raise, but in order that we may know Him and His will; and the Gospels do not profess to give us a narrative of *all* that Christ did, nor yet a biography of Christ, but rather a perfect picture of the Holy One, so that we may still see Him, as those who were with Him on earth saw Him, and may gain acquaintance with Himself; and the Gospels give us such a fourfold view of Christ as no one narrative could have given. On this we will not now dwell, but simply speak of its importance.

At the same time it is for our profit to pay attention to the order of events, and we should not read this fourth of Luke without considering that the events related in John ii.-iv. really occurred between the Lord's temptation and His visit to Nazareth, which is here so fully recorded. He had already been teaching and working miracles; and had become known in Jerusalem, as well as in Samaria, and some parts of Galilee, and "there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about."

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up." He went to carry to the people of Nazareth some of those blessings He had been bestowing upon others; but only to prove, in its fullest sense, the truth of the word "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." How suggestive is that familiar expression "brought up!" It casts us back upon His days of childhood and youth, concerning which Scripture is so silent. Yet it is a fact that such days were His. The Lord of glory grew up as a child in a humble home in that place which, as a traveller has said, "is so completely shut in by the sur-

rounding hills as to give it that air of complete isolation and seclusion which so entirely corresponds with the hidden character of the private life of Him who, for so many years, made it His abode." There He found shelter from the house of Herod (Matt. ii. 22, 23), even as He had found shelter in Egypt from Herod himself; there He was subject to Mary and Joseph; and there He worked at the trade of the latter. It pleased God that while both Joseph and Mary fully knew the *fact* of the miraculous conception, or the incarnation of Him who was the Son of God, they should not so comprehend its deep meaning as to introduce anything not natural in their treatment of their precious charge; and He who knew all (Luke ii. 49), even in days of youth, did not permit His knowledge to affect His perfect subjection, or the simplicity of His walk in that path marked out for Him. While we know nothing as to His mode of life during those years, we do know that in childhood, youth, and manhood the Scriptures were His delight, and His fellowship with His Father was perfect.

One fact is related in Luke iv. : it was His *custom* to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. That was the appointed place for the Scriptures to be read, and there He was ever found. How this *custom* of the Lord should speak to our hearts, and lead us to consider whether we are as diligent as we might be in going to those meetings where we unitedly worship God, and get help from His word. Slackness in this matter, while it betrays dulness of soul, is calculated to increase that dulness. It is the word of God that quickens the soul, and that word alone can sustain the life that has been given through it.

On this particular Sabbath the Lord entered the synagogue, and it may be His very presence there, after what had been heard of Him, filled people with curiosity.

When the time came to read the lesson from the prophets He "stood up for to read." This any person of good repute was permitted to do, and the officer at once handed to Him the roll of the prophet Isaiah. This He unrolled to what we call the sixty-first chapter, read a short portion, and sat down. This does not mean that He resumed His former seat, but rather that He sat down in the chair of the teacher, and this explains the statement that "the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him." The passage He had read was not simply a prophecy about Him, but was really His own language:—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And, having read it, "He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The Anointed One, that is, the Christ, stood in the midst of them, and was prepared to do for them what He had done for others. His words had already brought gladness to the sorrowful, healing to the sick, and liberty to the poor captives of sin and Satan (John iv.), and they would do so still if received. But would the hearers receive them? They listened with wonder, they heard such teaching as they had never listened to before, and "they all bare Him witness, and wondered at the words of grace that proceeded out of His mouth;" and it may be that some burdened heart, taught by the Holy Ghost, may have said, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured out upon Thy lips" (Ps. xlv. 2), but with the many the tone soon changed. They began to ask "Is not this Joseph's son?" Is not this he who left us not long ago as the carpenter? What pretensions, then, are

these? The Lord further saw in their hearts the rising of jealousy; they were saying within themselves, Why does He go to other places and do His mighty works, and not do any of them here? The Lord sees their frowns, reads their hearts, and interprets to them their reasonings, adding, "Verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country."

He further tells them that it is not the first time that some at a distance have reaped benefits which those who had them easily within reach could not appreciate; He also intimates the sovereignty of God in bestowing those benefits, and shows the state of heart needed to receive them. There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah and yet he was not sent to them, but over the border to the Gentile widow of Sarepta; and there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha and none of them were cleansed, while an alien who *sought* cleansing found it. Was not this a solemn warning to them that they might easily lose the blessings which He was so ready to bestow; and also a gracious assurance for others that the rich grace of God was not limited to that people who had been made by His will the depositaries of "the oracles of God"? Instead, however, of regarding the warning, they were roused to wrath by the mention of the possibility that Gentiles might receive blessings which Israel missed, and they at once sought to vent that wrath upon Him whose words had so recently filled them with wonder. They endeavoured to hurl Him from the top of the hill down a precipice; but His time was not yet come, nor was this the death He was to die; therefore they were powerless, and "He passing through the midst of them went His way."

On the passage from Isaiah let us observe that when the Lord read "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Me," and said

“This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears,” He presented Himself as the Anointed One—of whom all anointed ones of old had been but figures, of whom prophecy was full, and to whom all types had pointed. The very utterance, too, from His lips is a blessed expression of what we should ever consider—the perfect fellowship of Father, Son and Spirit in the great ministry and perfect work of which the Gospels give the record.

Further we note that He selected a passage that describes the character of His whole mission, not indeed setting forth His sufferings and death, but *involving* that death as being the only ground on which He could exercise grace amongst men, and distinctly setting forth their need under the description of poverty, brokenheartedness, bondage and blindness—need which He, as the Anointed One, is able to meet.

“The acceptable year of the Lord” has special reference to the year of jubilee, when debts were forgiven, slaves were released, and possessions were restored to those who had lost them. And it has often been noticed that the Lord stopped in the very middle of a sentence; He did not read “the day of vengeance of our God,” for He had come as the gracious Herald of mercy, and not as the messenger of judgment. But before His ministry closed He warned men that the day of vengeance would come. There may be a space of well-nigh two thousand years between the fulfilment of two sentences which are separated only by a comma in the Scriptures, but as surely as the first has been fulfilled, the second will receive its accomplishment in due time. If we have with the ears of the heart heard the joyful sound, we may well be glad and give the glory to Him who has by His Spirit attracted us to Christ; and may any reader who knows not the voice of the Good Shepherd be moved to listen to that voice

while it is the day of salvation, and before the dark night of wrath comes.

“ Time’s sun is fast setting,
 Its twilight is nigh ;
 Its evening is falling
 In cloud o’er the sky ;
 Its shadows are stretching
 In ominous gloom ;
 Its midnight approaches—
 The midnight of doom !

Then haste, sinner, haste, there is mercy for thee ;
 And wrath is preparing,—flee, lingerer, flee.”

W. H. B.

"JESUS ONLY."

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE J. L. HARRIS.

WHEN the great question, three hundred years ago, was "How can a sinner be made righteous?" the watchword of the Reformers was, "*The Lord* our Righteousness;" and our watchword to-day should be, "*Jesus only*."

In Matt. xvii. we see three disciples upon the Mount of Transfiguration, and they are "sore afraid." Moses was there, the representative of that law which God used to show man what sin is, but which never could quell the fears of man. Elijah was there, the stern prophet of God. But Moses disappears, because "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth," and Elijah is seen no more, and the fears of the disciples have departed, for they find themselves with "Jesus only." Man's song in heaven will be "Thou art worthy," Thou alone. Would that it were more so even now! It is Jesus whom the Holy Ghost always glorifies, for "to Him give all the prophets witness," and He is ever the prominent one in the Gospels. Of them that are born of women no greater had arisen than John the Baptist, yet when Jesus

comes forward, John retires into the background, and his testimony is: “He that cometh after me is preferred before me. . . . He must increase, but I must decrease.” When John’s work is done, he sinks into obscurity, and so it should be with servants of Christ now; we are not left here to be made greater, but to bear witness to that glorious One who is “disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.”

The sufficiency of Jesus shines forth in that stormy scene upon the sea of Galilee (Mark iv.), where the waves are beating into the boat, and Jesus only is found able to bring peace to the troubled disciples, as He silences the wind and reduces the waters to stillness. Again we see this, when Peter was walking on the water and was “*beginning* to sink;” it needed no rope to sustain him; “Jesus only” was near, and the grasp of His hand was sufficient; there is no fear of a saint’s drowning when Jesus is hard by.

In Corinth there were those who thought human wisdom was needed in addition to a crucified and risen and glorified Christ, but the apostle Paul was contented to have “Jesus only.” “I am jealous over you with godly jealousy,” says the apostle in 2 Cor. xi., “for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” Anyone who now seeks to lead on the saints of God, should have this same godly jealousy for their purity of heart and spirit, for God Himself is a jealous God. If persons are betrothed to each other, it surprises us to hear of their acting in a way contrary to their engagement, and shall we who are betrothed to Christ allow *His* place in our heart to be occupied by any save “Jesus only?” “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” The word “*simplicity*”

signifies the having but *a single object*, and should prevent any dividing of our hearts between Christ and the world. If the world gets my heart, I shall no longer be satisfied with Jesus as my righteousness and sanctification and redemption, and, though perhaps not yielding to any outward sins, I shall want something better than "Jesus only." "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached." *Another Jesus!* Does not the heart rebel at such a suggestion? Can God give anything better than Jesus, His only-begotten Son? Is He not sufficient for the work which God is now doing? Are we not told that there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved? Was it not His name, through faith in His name, which enabled the lame man at the gate Beautiful to rise up and walk? God has declared it as His intention that at the name of JESUS every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. If we wish to glorify God, let us confess this same Jesus; for "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father, which hath sent Him."

If there is one book in the Bible which, more than another, honours "Jesus only," it is the *last* book—the Revelation. He it is who sends a message to the churches, who stands forth as the One who has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, and who is found worthy to open the book which none other can open, and to loose the seven seals thereof. It is in the person of Jesus that God is manifested to us, and in the last chapter of the Revelation we read, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches; I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and

morning star." We read of "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of *the Lamb*," and we remember that it was Himself alone who could say, "If any man thirst, let him come unto *Me* and drink;" for all human fountains are but broken cisterns that can hold no water. His promise to the disciples was, "I will come again, and receive you unto *Myself*;" and it was "Jesus only" that would satisfy their longing hearts, and that will satisfy ours. It must be "this same Jesus" for them, nor will "another Jesus" suffice for us. Is His coming the great hope of our heart, or are we not satisfied with "Jesus only?" When He says, "Surely I come quickly," let our hearts respond, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." If we would have a single eye for a single object only, let that object be "Jesus only."

ON DRAWING NEAR TO GOD.

WORDS TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

ON the great day of atonement, the sin offering was burnt outside the camp, and on that mighty sacrifice all Israel's worship and access to God depended. This typifies the Lord Jesus as the one great offering for sin. Many Christians do not seem to get beyond this; they believe in the Lord Jesus as the sin-offering, and are saved; but they have no assurance, and consequently are afraid to draw near to God, and only worship Him afar off.

The next step was, to pass through the gate of the court of the tabernacle. This presents the Lord Jesus as the door. "I am the door." What a joy that it is a *living* door. Our living, loving Lord is always ready to bring us near to God.

Then came the altar of burnt offering. This was inside the court ; and the worshipper could stand by, and see the blood presented as an atonement for sin ; and the whole burnt offering ascend up as a sweet savour unto God. This teaches us our acceptance in and through Christ, and brings the soul into conscious liberty before God.

We are also priests, and every priest who offered a burnt offering had the skin as his own special portion. Thus we may clothe ourselves with Christ, and look up to God our Father to deal with us according to the perfections and merits of our precious Lord. Surely this must lead to glad and joyous worship, and also produce the earnest cry, that we may be like Christ, transformed into His image.

The laver came next, where the priests washed their hands and feet, many times a day perhaps ; for the water was always ready, that they might keep themselves clean and fit for the presence of God. And, if we want fellowship with God, we must be continually cleansing ourselves. (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

The laver was made of bright or burnished brass, and typifies the word of God,* which, like a mirror, shows out the beauties of Christ, and also our unlikeness to Him. But while the laver reflected the priests' defilement, it also held the water which could cleanse it away. So the word of God presents the precious blood of Christ, as that which cleanses us from all sin ; and also gives us precepts and commandments which have power to cleanse the thoughts and intents of our hearts. No priest could go to the altar to minister, or enter into the tabernacle, unless

* The laver, we would suggest, represents the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, who applies the truth of the death and resurrection of Christ to the conscience, and this gives us power for that communion with God which is secured to us, and to which we are entitled, by the altar and the blood of atonement. All other truth is, of course, needful for us, and can only be received through the Spirit's teaching.—ED.

he washed at this laver. This teaches us that if as God's children we neglect to make use of the laver, we can only remain in the outer court of the sanctuary.

Then came another door, the entrance into the tabernacle itself. This also presents Christ as the door, or, according to Heb. x., as the new and living way into the holiest. Our High Priest is waiting to bring us into the secret chambers of our God; and, as washed from our sins in the precious blood of Christ, and cleansed at the laver, and clothed with Christ as our righteousness, we may boldly venture in.

Inside the tabernacle were the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense, all teaching us yet more of Christ. There we learn out the secret of feasting with our God, of shining brightly for Him, and we also enjoy the sweet fragrance of the incense that fills the holy place.

But still more; the veil is now rent, and thus we enter into the very holiest, and worship there before the mercy-seat, and learn out our oneness with Christ, the breadth and length, the height and depth of that love which passeth knowledge.

“Lamb of God, through Thee we enter
 Inside the veil.
 Cleansed by Thee we boldly venture
 Inside the veil.
 Not a stain; a new creation;
 Ours is such a full salvation;
 Low we bow in adoration
 Inside the veil.”

“Glory and honour are in His presence; strength and gladness are in His place” (2 Chron. xvi. 27); and blessed indeed are they that dwell in the secret of His presence (Psalm xci. 1-4), and worship Him in the beauty of holiness.

THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN.

“ To each one his work ” (Mark xiii. 34 R.V.), is a principle applying to the whole time of the Master's absence ; it is therefore most important that each of us should know exactly the work which our Lord Himself has appointed for us. And the only safe way of knowing it is, by entire, childlike submission to the word of God ; for if once we allow ourselves to be guided by our inclinations, or carried away by what to us seems expedient or profitable, we are in danger of running into many excesses, and shall soon, whether we recognize it or not, be led by the flesh instead of by the Spirit.

When David, established as king, brought back the Ark, to place it in the tent which he had prepared for it, he appointed to priests and Levites, to singers and trumpeters, to door-keepers and others—to each one his due place, office and work ; and the wisdom of each was to keep to it. And David's Lord has likewise fully provided for every manner of service in the church of God.

All will readily acknowledge this in principle, but there are some, honestly desirous of learning how they may render acceptable service to God, how they ought to “ walk and please God,” who yet are perplexed as to details. To our finite and impatient minds, there seems so much to be done, with so few to do it, and so short a time in our little lives of threescore years and ten, that we are tempted to be taking up everything which seems to present itself ; forgetting how much we need God's mind as to *who* should undertake each work, and as to *when* and *how* it should be undertaken.

On one point there is now a difference of opinion to which we cannot shut our eyes. Many to-day are forgetting and some are denying, that in God's order there is any distinction as to *sex* in work for the Lord ; and to establish this, Scripture is hastily misapplied. We are told that in such matters " there is neither male nor female ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." In its place this is no doubt absolutely true ; but if we will patiently listen to other Scriptures, we shall humbly acknowledge that the Lord both recognizes and enforces a difference. This is too obvious to require dwelling upon, and it would hardly need to be mentioned, but that in these days Satan's chief device seems to consist in a one-sided quotation of Scripture. With " It is written," he sought to tempt our Lord Himself ; but He well knew how to answer, " It is written *again* ;" and in this we must learn of our Lord, and must seek to be furnished with " *all* Scripture," and all rightly divided.

There is work in abundance which Christian women may with utmost propriety engage in ; nay, it is by no means conceding too much to the argument from Scripture and experience to say there is much work for the Lord which they only can undertake ; but we dare not set this acknowledgment against any other clear statement of the Word. Let us, then, look a little at what Scripture teaches, on the one side and on the other, remembering that God's Word is not to be moulded to our fancies, neither can it be self-contradictory.

Those who are now maintaining that women may rightly take a prominent place as preachers, evangelists or teachers, consider that they have certain warrant in the Word for what may be called their *novel* teaching, which is also remarkably in accordance with the spirit of the age. One passage, thought to be conclusive, is Psalm lxxviii. 11,

and especially as the revisers have given it—"The Lord giveth the word: the women that publish the tidings are a great host."

In examining this passage let it first be noted that there is no word in the Hebrew answering to "*women*," which would therefore have been in *italics* were it not that the revisers have sparingly used them. It is but their manner of showing to the English reader that 'the ones publishing tidings' is expressed by a participle in the feminine gender, plural number. But still, who are meant, and what is the occasion? Is it a preaching of the gospel such as we are now entrusted with? Most surely not, we must admit, if we have any perception at all of the dispensational teaching of Scripture. The whole Psalm is a grand millennial foreshadowing of the time when Israel, the saved nation, shall realize all the gladness of Ps. lxvii.; when, blessed themselves, they shall be made a blessing; but ere that can be, a grand victory must yet be gained by the Lord over all His enemies. Not yet has God arisen, that all His enemies may be scattered before Him; not yet have kings of armies fled before Him, as one day they shall flee. But many a triumph has been typical of that which is to come. There was the triumph when Pharaoh and his army "sank like lead in the mighty waters," and then Miriam the prophetess, and all the women, joined in echoing forth the glad news of victory. After the defeat of Sisera and his host, Deborah the prophetess uttered her inspired song of triumph, singing to Jehovah, God of Israel. Again, after the triumph of the stripling David over Goliath and the Philistine host, the women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing. And a day is coming when God shall "gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle." (See also Ezek. xxxix.; Rev. xvi. 16.) Then, to adopt the words of a writer on this Psalm,

“Victory follows at once on that word (of Jehovah); and the women telling the tidings are a great host.” Triumphant over a discomfited and slain enemy is surely something very different from preaching the gospel of the grace of God, which is now committed to us.

But, we are asked, Has not God ever had His prophetesses, as well as His prophets? Surely He has, from Miriam onward, and down to New Testament times, where the daughters of Philip are mentioned, and others are alluded to in 1 Cor. xi. 4. But that is entirely beside the question, which is, How would God *now* have each one of us exercise our gift? How are we to perform the work which the Head of the church has appointed each one to do?

Before passing on, I would solemnly ask, Do all those who speak in the assembly really claim to be exercising the gift of prophecy, so that if some “revelation” come suddenly to one sitting by, the one actually speaking should at once sit down? Though it be scripturally certain that “he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort,” yet dare we to assert the converse, and say, “he that speaketh to men to edification, exhortation and comfort, *prophesieth*?” I think we should shrink from such an assertion, and therefore we must tread here very softly and with unshod feet.

Other questions might be raised, such as, What spiritual gifts have, in the purpose of God, ceased in the church, since the canon of Scripture has been completed? Have certain gifts been withdrawn, for the time or permanently, because of the lack of faith of the church? And what gifts still remain to us? But upon these points we cannot now enter. Let it be freely granted that all believing men and women are under obligation to exercise whatever gift they may have received from the Spirit of God; but let

us see to it that this be done scripturally, as to *manner*, *time*, and *place*.

Now the same infallible word of God, which, in 1 Cor. xi. 5, recognizes the rightness of women prophesying, only in the right manner—with covered head—also directs (1 Cor. xiv. 34): “Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak.” Is there contradiction here? or is it not far simpler to see that women having the gift of prophecy should seek also the right time and place for its exercise? which would *not* be in the church, where the whole assembly of men and women is gathered together. An attempt is made to show that the prohibition here only applies to women *chattering*, or speaking idly, in the church; but this involves an entire ignoring of the true use of this word in New Testament Greek, as will be made manifest, even to the English reader, by the following facts. The word here translated *speak* occurs close upon three hundred times in the New Testament, very frequently as expressing our Lord’s utterances; it is twenty-four times employed by the apostle in this very chapter, yet in no one instance, apart from verses 34, 35, would anyone venture to translate “chatter:” is it likely, then, to have that meaning here? No one, who has not a theory to uphold would maintain it. Further, both in the Greek and in the English, “it is not permitted *unto them* to speak,” implies clearly enough that women were not permitted to do that which others might with propriety do. Would it be any more proper for the men than for the women to chatter in the assembly?

In 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, we read: “Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence,” or “quietness.” This passage is so clear that unless one has a preconceived idea it can cause no perplexity.

Undoubtedly it applies to the wife in her home relation to her husband ; but, granting this particular, it by no means excludes the more general application. But whether in the general or in the particular, it is to be feared that the natural bent of a lawless age leads to its being but little regarded.

J. G. H.

(*To be continued.*)

NOTES AND REPLIES.

Is there any connection between the cursing of the ground in Gen. iii.

17, and that referred to in chap. viii. 21, where we read, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake?"

The cursing in Genesis iii. has distinct reference to the thorns and thistles and the want of fertility which would render man's life on earth one of toil and sorrow ; whereas, the cursing alluded to in Gen. viii. would seem to have reference more particularly to the bringing in of a calamity similar to that of the flood. We would also notice that the two words in the Hebrew are very distinct ; the word in ch. iii. has a far deeper signification than that in ch. viii. The latter signifies "treating lightly," "despising," or "disregarding," and is rather negative than positive, while the former involves a call for divine vengeance connected with a divine imprecation.

Of what is water the symbol in John iii. 5 ?

Water, in the symbolic language of Scripture, seems to have two opposite significations. When looked at as the sea, it symbolises death, and it is in this aspect that Peter, in his first epistle, speaks of those who were saved in the ark, as having been saved through water. In the book of Revelation also, when John, describing the new heaven and the new earth, says, "there shall be no more *sea*," the word has probably the same symbolic meaning. In connection with this, we would refer to Gen. i. 2, where we read that before "the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters," "darkness was upon the face of the deep."

On the other hand, running water, or, as it is called in the Hebrew "*living water*," is the great emblem of the Spirit of God, the source of life and blessing. This gives great significance to the "*living water*" spoken of by our Lord in John iv. and John vii., and with it we may connect the river that flows from beneath the throne in Rev. xxii.

In the verse before us, our Lord is speaking of regeneration, which He describes as a birth from above ; and this birth from above in verse

3, He speaks of in verse 5 as a birth of water and spirit; not of water and of the Spirit, as if the former was typical of the latter, but of water and spirit, as of two separate elements out of which the new life springs. These are described elsewhere as death and resurrection, the necessary channel by which the sinner passes from death into life. This is the great truth that baptism unfolds, and therefore we conclude that *water* here is the symbol of death, as the wind or the spirit is the symbol of life; and thus the truth of John iii. 5 is the same as that presented to us in Rom. vi. 3, 4. On this point the connection indicated by Peter between the flood and baptism, as corresponding figures of the same truth, is particularly to be noticed.

We need not be afraid of developing the doctrine of baptismal regeneration from this interpretation of John iii., if only we understand clearly what Christian baptism is the type of, any more than we need fear the doctrine of transubstantiation from regarding the Lord's supper as the precious symbol of the truth in John vi.

What is the force of the expression "in vain" as used in several of the Epistles?

The original word means "empty," "void," yielding no result, fruitless. It is chiefly employed by the apostle Paul, who perhaps had before his mind the utter profitlessness of all his course and toil as a Pharisee; and his earnest desire was that, as a servant of Christ, all his running and labour should be to eternal profit. The expression occurs four times in 1 Cor. xv., where the apostle is dwelling on the mighty and glorious results of Christ's work on earth. The resurrection being the divine pledge of the acceptance of the atonement of the cross, the apostle tells the Corinthians that if Christ is not risen, as some of them were saying, his preaching was useless, and likewise their faith; it had no foundation, and therefore nothing built on it could stand. But he rejoices in the assurance that God's grace to him was not in vain, and he assures them that the resurrection day would show that their labour was not in vain in the Lord. In his second epistle to the Corinthians Paul beseeches them not to "receive the grace of God in vain." If a question arises as to how God's grace *can be* in vain, the explanation is, that, like the good seed of the kingdom of heaven, God's grace has always a fruit-bearing power, but upon our heart's reception of it our fruitfulness depends. In the case of Paul, God's grace produced more abundant labour than in all the other apostles, and likewise bore the "much fruit" mentioned in 2 Cor. vi., while in the Corinthians, that grace, not being deeply received, brought forth little fruit. We may well ask ourselves whether much that we do will be "in vain" when the judgment seat of Christ manifests everything.

THE GOD OF THE BURNING BUSH.

EXODUS III.

GOD'S revelations of Himself are ever adapted in their character to the necessities and circumstances of those to whom He is pleased to make Himself known. Both Moses and Joshua had special revelations given to them, and both learned the same great lesson as to the holiness of the ground on which they stood, because of the presence of the Holy One; but the character of the revelations was very different. On the former of these, God's revelation of Himself to Moses in the burning bush, we would now seek to dwell. The circumstances in which Israel were found at this time were those of trial and sorrow; and as tribulation is our appointed portion here, we all need to enter into what God would teach us by this manifestation of Himself to His servant Moses.

The children of Israel were in affliction through the oppression of the Egyptians; their lives were embittered by the tyranny of their taskmasters, and, as we read in Exodus ii. 23, they sighed, they cried, and they groaned by reason of their bondage. For forty years Moses had been learning the humbling lesson of his own nothingness, and as he had thus become a fit instrument for God's use, God reveals Himself to him and appoints him to his great work. That Moses ever remembered this is evident from his parting words to the tribes, in which one of Joseph's blessings is said to be "the goodwill of Him who dwelt in the bush." (Deut xxxiii. 16.) The vision contains a mystery that we are slow to learn, and yet upon the understanding of it hangs the power of our heavenly life. It is alike the mystery of what God is and of what we are.

Moses was feeding his flock in the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The word Horeb is a word of strange significance, it means "desolation," and is no unfit reminder of the circumstances in which God's people were then placed. The Hebrew word for the bush in which the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses is *seneh*, from whence comes the name Sinai, signifying "The bush of Jehovah," which from this time is of frequent occurrence in the Bible. The bush which Moses beheld was a small thorn bush, not inaptly representing the low estate of Israel as a nation of slaves in Egypt. We are told that Moses "looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed," the reason of which was, that God was there. So in the case of the three Hebrew youths who were cast into the burning fiery furnace, and yet were not consumed: they were not left alone; a fourth was seen with them whose form was like unto the Son of God. What a source of comfort is this to tried children of God; what a secret of happiness and contentment lies here, to be apprehended by faith! Such revelations of God are more frequent than we think, and even in the days of our darkest sorrow and most overwhelming troubles we might, with eyes opened by the Spirit of God, see around us on every side God's chariots of fire, and horses of fire, that would make our Dothan impregnable.

The God who revealed Himself to Moses as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," reveals Himself to *us* by the yet closer and more endearing title of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and as the One who condescends to call Himself "our Father." He says to Moses: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." How

precious are these words! He sees, He hears, He knows, He comes to deliver, and the record is given to us that we may be daily assured that, come what will, God, as our Father, knows, and cares, and will see to it. This is our true Jehovah-jireh in all the trials of our pilgrimage that meet us in our appointed pathway.

This revelation to Moses of God's presence in affliction contains the secret of that spiritual life and power which qualified him for the arduous work which God had appointed him, and forty years afterwards, when called to close his life-work, he concludes the memorable blessings in Deut. xxxiii. with the assurance and all-sufficiency of God's presence—"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

In view of Israel's sorrows and sufferings in Egypt we are told that "God remembered His covenant" (Ex. ii. 24), and well would it be for us if we more distinctly remembered God's new covenant. That covenant, ratified by the blood of His dear Son, is the pledge to us of every blessing for time and for eternity, for this world and for the world to come. If God's covenant mercies were remembered we should never be found saying as David said in the hour of difficulty and danger, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul;" but rather should we say with that same man of God, when filled with the spirit of faith, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me: Thou shalt stretch forth Thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand shall save me." (Ps. cxxxviii. 7.) The fire of tribulation can do no more than burn those bonds of the flesh by which we are often so impeded in our heavenly course, just as the bonds that hindered the freedom of Daniel's companions alone were burned in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, while their garments were not changed, the hair of their head was not singed, and the

smell of fire had not passed on them, for upon their bodies the fire had no power, because they "yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God." Let us learn our lesson at the burning bush, and then shall we find fulfilled in our experience those precious words of Isa. xliii. 2, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Moses little knew that God was so near to him when in those lonely morning hours he fed his flock at the back of the desert; and so it is often with us; unbelief dims our vision and we think our God afar off, just as tears so dimmed the eyes of Mary that when she saw her Lord she knew Him not, but thought He must be the gardener. It is this unbelief that leads to restlessness of spirit, and prevents the soul from quietly and patiently waiting upon God in the difficulties which He sends.

Israel's taskmasters ruled with rigour, and were very cruel, but Israel's circumstances were none the less by God's appointment, and even the taskmasters had a work to accomplish for God which Israel in their bitterness little understood. So with ourselves; we find taskmasters in our daily occupations, and they often seem to us very exacting in the claims they make upon us; the circumstances of life oppress, and the trials of the way cast us down; but these things are all needed to teach us what we are, and to lead us better to understand what God is to us. Egypt's taskmasters led Israel to cry out for the deliverance which God alone could bring them, and the trials God sends us in business, in families, and in our own hearts, are all intended to lead us to fuller discoveries of what resources there are for us in our God.

God was no careless spectator when the Egyptians smote Israel, and evil entreated them, and cast out their young children ; every wrong inflicted on them entered into the heart of God, for "in all their affliction He was afflicted." It is good for us to seek to learn what God is teaching us ; for were it not for God and His precious lessons, the life we live would not be worth living ; but if used aright the present life is but the seed-time of an eternal harvest ; and we need the summer and the winter, the day and the night of God's appointed seasons, to bring the fruit to perfection. It is only when the heavenly Israel shall reach the heavenly city, and see as they are seen and know as they are known, that the full result of God's dealings with them here below will be manifest. Let us remember that God, who brought us into the world, has placed us where He thought fit, and has surrounded us with the circumstances which He sees to be best. If we did but realize the individual lot of each to be an appointment of God, that therein He might be glorified and we might be blessed, the poor would not envy the rich, and the rich would not despise the poor ; those who suffer in body would be content thereby to glorify God, so long as it seemed to be His will, while those in health would seek to use their immunity from pain to His glory also. Of all suffering saints God says, "I know their sorrows ;" He knows how heavy they are, and He leaves us not alone in them, for He has given us a great High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. There are griefs and sorrows which very often we cannot define, but He knows all about them, and can give us grace patiently to wait upon Himself for deliverance in His own time.

As with Israel so with ourselves, the moment of deliverance will not be hastened by our restlessness, but rather retarded. God may delay for days, for months, for

years, to answer our prayers, but let us seek grace to thank Him for His delays, remembering that they are but blessings in disguise to double the blessing of deliverance when it comes. A rebellious will touches not the heart of God, but He delights in us when with childlike submission we roll our burdens upon Himself, and await the moment of that untold joy when, leaning upon the arm of the Beloved, we shall reach our eternal home. Then the vision will no longer be as now, in a glass darkly, but face to face we shall behold the King in His beauty. Then life's enigmas will be understood, and its mysteries be explained, and the redeemed of the Lord, having their hearts made wise and their eyes enlightened, will understand His lovingkindness. As they look back on life's pilgrimage, with its downs and ups, with its afflictions and deliverances, they will see that though God led them by a way which they knew not, it was indeed the "right way," and that He made their journey truly prosperous, and then brought them to their desired haven. H. G.

EXTRACT.—“Have you thought of the difference between God walking with a saint, as Jacob, according to promise (Gen. xxviii. 15), and a saint walking with God, as Enoch and Abraham? I believe we know very little of the thousand wiles by which Satan hinders God's child from walking and communing with his Father. But he cannot hinder God from following His child *to the end*, however wilful and wayward.

Only one life—only one life. Oh! my brother, I would not for worlds its precious moments should be spent in *merely* seeking health while thousands die around, and those we love as our own lives are still unsaved and outside the ark. God knows, if I desire a sound body again, it is but to lay it at His feet. You know the device and motto of the American missionaries—the Ox between the Altar and the Plough—‘Ready for either.’—J. B. M.”

ON DIVINE GUIDANCE.

REMARKS ON EXODUS XVII. 1-4, BY MR. GEORGE MULLER,
29TH MAY, 1841.

AS Israel journeyed through the wilderness, they were not guided by circumstances, nor were they led by generals, as man would lead his fellows; but they were led by the living God Himself, who, in the fiery cloudy pillar, went before them. When the pillar rested, they rested; when the pillar moved, they journeyed—the type to us of the presence of the blessed God the Holy Ghost. We have no visible cloud, no outward, manifest sign; but a greater blessing belongs to us in this dispensation, namely, the individual, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and this, notwithstanding all our failures and shortcomings. Sin may grieve the Holy Spirit, but sin will never drive Him from us; for where He takes up His abode, He takes up His abode for ever. It is of the deepest moment that we fully recognise this, for on it depends our personal, spiritual strength, the power of our service in the church for the benefit of our fellow-saints, and of our testimony in the world to the gathering of sinners out of it to the name of Christ.

As surely will every saint receive direction and guidance to-day, as ever Israel received guidance in the days that are past. This is our privilege, and may we lay firm hold of it, and remember that there is no difficulty in our path, over which the guidance of God is not sufficient to take us. Nor is there anything that would tend to promote the good of others, for which, if God has called us, we may not expect the all-sufficient power of the Holy Ghost.

There are, however, conditions of this Divine guidance

of which we must not be unmindful. One of these is, that the heart must be truly willing to act according to God's mind. By looking into the written word of God, we shall find certain broad principles laid down, and by applying them, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to the particular case in hand, we shall be enabled without difficulty to discover His mind concerning us. We too often forget that we are the children of God in reality, and not in name only, and that our heavenly Father will not refuse to teach us, if the knowledge we desire be for His glory.

The first verse of this chapter well suits the circumstances of the church at large in the present day. The children of Israel journeyed according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. Every one serving the Lord now will be brought into difficulties under the very guidance of the Holy Ghost. There are blessed difficulties that come in our way when following the guidance of our God; but there are darker difficulties still that follow us under the guidance of our own self-will. If the Holy Ghost lead us into trouble, He will sustain us in it, and He will bring us out of it; and the longer we remain in the world, and the stronger our spiritual growth, the greater will be the difficulties to nature which will meet us in the way, though faith will triumph still.

When Israel got into difficulty at Rephidim, they should have said, "Did not the Lord bring us here? Surely the same living God can bring us deliverance, now we are here." But, alas! it was not so, for the people did chide with Moses, and afterwards murmured. Where faith fails, murmuring will come in. If ever we find ourselves in a trying position, and yet therein have no comfort from God, we have either got out of the divine path, or faith has

failed us in it. If Israel had only waited till they were thirsty before they began to chide with Moses (verse 2), they might never have come to that thirst (verse 3) which led them to murmur, and which God brought upon them because of their lack of trust in Him.

What we read further down in the chapter as to the way in which Moses met the difficulty, shows us just what our course in a time of trial should be—to pour out our hearts before the Lord, and to wait for instructions from Him.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ASA.

PART I.

2 CHRONICLES XIV.

IT is clear that Asa must have come to the throne of Judah at a very early age, for had his grandfather Rehoboam lived, he would only have been about forty-two when Asa's father, Abijah, died, after his brief reign of three years in Jerusalem. It is thought by some, that on account of his youth he would be under the official guardianship of the high-priest, and that to this may be traced the piety and faith in God which so marked his early years. We well know, however, that by God's grace alone such a mind could be wrought in him, whatever means He may have been pleased to use for his guidance; and it is good to see that even when days seem to be growing very dark, God can raise up whom He will to carry on His own work. After reading of the closing days of Solomon, and the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah, it is refreshing and encouraging to the heart to learn that "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God: for he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and commanded Judah to *seek* the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment."

There are two statements that we should notice, both for the instruction they give, and because at first sight they appear contradictory. It is said that "he took away out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the images," and yet, after even further reformation, we read that "the high places were not taken away out of Israel." These two statements are not to be understood as though one referred to the southern kingdom, and the other to the northern (*see* 1 Kings, xv. 4), but rather by remembering that there were two kinds of *high places* in the kingdom; there were some specially connected with the worship of false gods, and there were some in which, professedly at least, the people worshipped Jehovah. The former were removed, while the latter were allowed to remain, and were, apparently, used by the people as places of assembling. We may find some parallel to this in the days of the Reformation. Men turned from the flagrant abominations of the corrupt system of Romanism, but did not reach the simplicity of early days as set forth in the word of God, and those who followed, instead of carrying forward the work that had been so blessedly begun, rested content with the partial reformation that had been reached, and even stereotyped and defended the errors that had been allowed to remain. We see in the days of Hezekiah a more perfect return to the law of God, in the further removal of high places, and the requirement that the people should go up to *Jerusalem* to worship (*see* 2 Kings xviii. 4, 22). So we should not be content with simply doing as those men of God did who were feeling their way out of such deep darkness, but rather seek in the *spirit* in which they acted, and by truly following in their steps, to turn from *all* that is contrary to God's word, and to carry out *all* which that word enjoins.

We mark the lovingkindness of God in giving Asa an

opportunity for this work of reform, for "in his days the land was quiet ten years." The fact also shows God's tenderness in not calling the young king into conflict with enemies before He had given him time to prepare for battle. Yet he was not negligent, but, owning that they had sought the Lord, and that it was He who had given them rest, he strengthened the defences of the country, and had the army carefully organized. God will never call His people into conflict till He has fully furnished them for it, and if we have our times of quiet it behoves us not to become unwatchful, but rather to seek strength and preparation by the diligent use of the word of God, and communion with Himself, so that no attack may find us unprepared. In this dispensation our whole course is to be one of conflict, more or less, but there are times of special assault by the foe, who is subtle enough to know when we are unprepared, but is also blind enough to attack those who are prepared, to his own eternal confusion. In outward things, too, this is, comparatively, a time of quiet; but who can tell how long it will be so? There are indications to which students of Scripture cannot be blind, that the present liberty of the people of God might soon be disturbed. Are we making good use of our quiet? Are we so diligent in the use of the holy Scriptures that we may count upon God to enable us still to cleave to them if the possession and reading of them should cost us something, as in days of old? And do we so prize and make use of our simple meetings as to gain strength to maintain them if we had to face great opposition in so doing?

Asa's ten years of quiet was broken by a very formidable attack: "There came out against them Zerah, the Ethiopian, with a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots." Asa was ready, but what were his

resources against such a host? God taught him, and He teaches us, that no preparation for the conflict can enable the man of God to dispense with definite dependence upon Himself when the conflict comes. Asa looked at his army, and felt it was, in itself, no match for the mighty host that was against him; and as there is no mention of chariots, we may conclude that he had not any, and that he had observed the law which Solomon had disregarded with reference to horses. God had commanded, very distinctly, that the king of Israel should not multiply horses to himself (Deut. xvii. 16), for at that time horses were used chiefly in war, and when the people were settled in the land, worship, rather than war, was to be their first business, and if they were assailed, their trust was to be in Jehovah. But if Asa's strength was inferior to that of the enemy, he had what every king of Israel should have had—the living God at his right hand, and when *He* is brought into the scene, human strength counts for very little. Asa took his true place as Jehovah's servant, and put the whole matter into His hand; he “cried unto the Lord his God.” How expressive is that word *cried!* There was nothing formal about his prayer, which is beautiful in its simplicity. When we are in real need we do not make long prayers, though we may know what it is to continue in prayer; but, generally speaking, in proportion to the urgency of our case is the definiteness of our requests. Asa sends up a cry from the depths of his heart: “Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee.”

In this brief prayer Asa first acknowledges the absolute supremacy of Jehovah, and His perfect ability to help the

weak against the strong, and to give them the victory. It is good for us to keep this in remembrance, for what are we in ourselves against Satan and the hosts of darkness? It would indeed be an unequal combat if we were left to our own strength or wisdom, but having God on our side we may boldly ask, "If God is for us, who is against us?"

After this acknowledgment comes the brief petition for help, with the plea, "*we rest on Thee.*" This is surely an attitude which God loves to behold; to see His people resting on Himself is His delight, and all who thus rest will surely prove how ready He is to help. Asa further claims Jehovah's name for his banner, according to the word of Moses in Exodus xvii., where, after the victory over Amalek, Moses built an altar, and called it "Jehovah-Nissi," or, "Jehovah, my banner," thus expressing what God was for Israel, whenever owned as such. Falling back upon this truth, Asa says, "In *Thy name* we go against this multitude." We too have our banner, even that Name before which all foes must flee, and with that banner "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

The precious word, "O Lord, THOU art *our God,*" reminds us of God's covenant with Abraham: "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, *to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*" (Gen. xvii. 7.) He takes his place as in the bonds of that covenant, and puts himself and the people before God, according to the relationship which He had been pleased to establish. So we should never forget our relationship to God, a relationship which He has established, and which, in infinite grace, He maintains, in spite of all our failures, for it is a covenant relationship, and the Surety of that new and everlasting covenant is ever before Him.

Having thus put himself and Israel in their proper position, the king presents the conflict in its true light, as a conflict between Jehovah and the foes of His people. "Let not man"—frail, mortal man—"prevail against THEE." This is true of all the conflicts between the people of God and their foes; the powers of darkness are *our* foes, simply because they are the enemies of God and of His Christ, and when we see the conflict in its true light we shall never retire from it, nor shall we yield in it, but we shall go forward with the assurance of victory.

To such an appeal God cannot but answer, and the answer given was full and immediate: "So Jehovah smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah." Jehovah *smote* them, and the people *pursued* them, yet is it said that "they were destroyed (or *broken*) before Jehovah, and before His host." For though indeed His right hand and His holy arm gains the victory, and breaks the power of the enemy, and victory is His people's only as His *gift* to them, yet is He pleased to own them as overcomers in the strife, and to set the crown of victory upon their heads. We should not pass over the words "His host." The nation had been divided, Judah even had been brought low, and yet God was pleased to own the army of Judah as "His host," even as in days of old. While the sense of the divided and low estate of the church of God should humble us, and cause us to bow our hearts in confession before God, it should never prevent our taking our true place before Him, according to the position which He has given us, and the place He has called us to occupy. And if we take that place, not in word or profession merely, but in reality and truth, and with the lowliness of mind that becomes us, we shall find that God will still own us in it, and give us the honour of it. It may not always be manifestly so here, but it will be made plain in the day of

Christ, that so it has been, and till then “we walk by faith, not by appearance.”

The victory was complete, the spoil gathered was very large, and the results of the battle are well set forth in the words of Dr. Edersheim: “Far away to Gerar, three hours south-east from the border city Gaza, the chase continued amidst unnumbered slain, and still the destroying sword of Jehovah was before His host, and His fear fell upon all the cities round about. To wrest the hostile cities of the Philistines, and to carry away much spoil was only one sequence. Henceforth Egypt ceased to be a source of terror or of danger, and full three-hundred-and-thirty years passed before its army was again arrayed against Judah.” He refers to the reign of Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 20-24), though even then the army of Egypt was not exactly arrayed against Judah, though Josiah went out against it.

W. H. B.

“MEN WONDERED AT.”

BY THE LATE J. L. HARRIS.

IT is a marvellous thought that there are men who are wondered at by angels, wondered at by their fellow-men, and wondered at by themselves. The expression, “Men wondered at,*” occurs in the third chapter of Zechariah, where we see Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. The word “Satan” means resister; and what is Satan contesting here? The point at issue is no longer “Can God save a sinner?” but, when the sinner is saved, will not Satan contest every step of his further course?

* Or “Men which are a sign;” see Isa. viii. 18, where Isaiah and his sons are said to be for “signs and wonders;” that is, prophetic and symbolic types of God’s dealings.—ED.

It is God, however, who fights the sinner's battle, for the Lord says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee." Alas! many besides Satan are made angry by the salvation of the vile, and the cleansing of the filthy.

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments;" but we find that those who stand by are bidden to take away these filthy garments, and to Joshua the Lord says "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Let no one be satisfied with the knowledge of sins pardoned, though deeply thankful for it. Let us seek to have *confidence* before God; and this cannot come save by looking at ourselves as God sees us, *in Christ*, with this wondrous "change of raiment." Let us look upon ourselves as clad in that comeliness which God has put upon us, and let it never be said of us as it was of Israel, "Thou didst trust in thine own beauty." The perfection of comeliness is the righteousness of God upon us. To keep the eye fixed upon Christ's beauty is the way to become practically holy.

"Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments." In Exodus xxviii. 36-38, we are told of the plate of pure gold which was put upon the mitre, and was borne upon the forehead of the high priest, and upon this plate was graven, so that all might see it, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD;" and we are reminded that thus it is that Jesus, our great High Priest, appears in perfect holiness on our behalf before the throne in heaven.

But in verse 8 of this chapter in Zechariah we find that Joshua has certain "fellows" with him, "Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at." But the glorious marvel is that *our* Joshua, too, has got "fellows;" and

this though God Himself speaks of Jesus as “the Man that is My Fellow.” (Zech. xiii. 7.) Christ had no “fellow” when in His own body He bore our sins upon the tree; He has no “fellow” in His appearing before God as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; and He will have no “fellow” when He is revealed as the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” But He has “fellows,” nevertheless, even those whom He is not ashamed to call “brethren;” for He is “anointed with the oil of gladness *above His fellows;*” and let us remember that Jesus has *more joy* in saving us than we have in being saved.

“For, behold, I will bring forth My Servant the BRANCH.” Here is a prediction of the coming of that blessed Jesus before whose birth the Holy Ghost indited new songs, and whose birth was heralded by angels. It is a part of the mystery of God “manifest in the flesh” that He was “seen of angels;” and angels desire, we are told, to look into the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. But how must the angels marvel when they see the vilest of beings made perfect in Christ! Yet there is no envy in their wonder, and a sinner saved by grace is an object of joy as well as of wonder to them, for “there is *joy* in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” (Luke xv. 10.) The apostle Paul says of himself and his fellow-apostles, “We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.” But we are also made kings and priests unto God! This is never said of the angels that “excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word;” and well may they wonder at *us*.

In the fourth chapter of 1st Peter we again read of some who are wondered at, not by angels, but by their fellow-men; for “*they think it strange* that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.”

Here were some who turned out of the world's beaten track, who gave up old associations and sought new companionships, and who provoked the enmity of those who still chose to walk in the old paths of sin and folly that lead to destruction. And such will be our experience, too, if we are faithful to our calling. If we speak of the *certainty* of salvation we are "wondered at" and charged with the pride of self-righteousness. But does not the Lord say, "Take away the filthy garments . . . I have caused thine iniquity to *pass from thee?*" Thus we recognise that salvation is *of God*, from first to last, and we know the time is not far distant when we shall sing, "*Salvation to our God* that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb!" We prove also that if we go into company and mention the name of Jesus, we must be content to be "wondered at" by others, but we must not let this hinder our confession of Him who has said, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God." (Luke xii. 8.)

When Paul was brought before Festus, Festus thought he was mad, because he spoke about "Jesus and the resurrection." Men may talk about politics, or moralities, or any other of the topics of the day, but to talk of death and resurrection is insufferable; yet this was Paul's constant theme, and a passage in 2 Cor. v. helps us to understand why it was so: "For" says the apostle, "whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead;" or, "then all died."

Finally, we are men to be wondered at, not only by angels, and by the world, but by *ourselves*. We have met death and judgment. Death has no sting for the believer; he has left both death and judgment behind him. If we

do actually "die," as people call it, we shall depart to be with Christ, which is far better. We find, in Romans vi. that Christ died unto sin once. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and we see the whole question of sin and death settled at the cross of Christ; now all things are ours, whether life or death, and we are Christ's. Yet though we have died and have been raised again in Christ, and thus belong to the new creation, we are still in the old. If before our conversion we groaned as men, we now groan much more deeply (Rom. viii. 23); and therefore, if others wonder at us, we wonder at ourselves much more, for oftentimes we feel the power of the germ of all evil within us, when we would fain be attracted more closely to Christ

The more we have to do with the cross of Christ, the more we shall be "men wondered at;" but soon Christ will be manifested in glory to be admired, or wondered at, in all them that believe; and we—His fellows—shall be manifested in glory with Him. Meantime let us walk in the path of obedience, not minding what men may think of us, but having this one object—that Christ may be magnified in our bodies, whether it be by life or by death.

THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN.

(Concluded from page 47.)

LET us return to the passage from which we started—"To each one his work." At Pentecost, when all the disciples were gathered together in one place, and when the promised Spirit descended in power, and the divided tongues sat on each one of them, and all spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, we cannot suppose that those manifestations were restricted to the *men*, to the exclusion of the women. Again, when they were all

scattered abroad, and went everywhere declaring the glad tidings, we cannot say that no women became witnesses for Christ, though no special mention is made of them in this respect. Nor is it to be denied that the littleness of our narrow minds may have shown itself in restricting the usefulness of our sisters in Christ without warrant from the Word, and that this has been injurious in causing loss to the church. It may also have had a share in producing an unwise reaction, such as we regret, in our own days. But all the more let us see to it that the ministry of Christian women is carried on "decently and in order;" that is, let neither the liberty nor the restrictions of God's Word be ignored.

No instance can, I think, be quoted from the Old Testament, of a prophetess putting herself into a prominent place of authority and of teaching, unless it be in a time of utter disorder. Thank God, we have not yet reached that; but it behoves Christian *men* to see to it that they fulfil *their* part. Let such a passage as Isaiah iii. 1-15, be carefully pondered in this aspect. In Judges iv. may we not say that, but for the failure on the part of others, Deborah would have remained quietly, as a "mother in Israel," under her palm tree? Nor did Huldah, the prophetess, stand forth in public to denounce the judgment impending on Judah, though she had a clear enough message when king Josiah sent to enquire of her.

If we turn to the New Testament do we find any other principle than that thus exemplified in the Old? Space would ill allow of an exhaustive examination of instances, but each reader can recall many. The silence of Scripture may be but negative argument, but it is not therefore without importance; and both in the narratives of the Acts and in the personal references at the close of the Epistles one cannot but be struck with the absence of the

prominent *public* ministry of women, whether they were gifted as prophetesses or not. But all this is in beautiful accordance with the position that God has assigned to woman in the church as well as in the family—a very honourable position, and all the more influential when not obtrusive. That God does very clearly mark the relative positions of the woman and the man in the church, is manifest from the very significant words with which the apostle is led by the Spirit of God to close his instructions on this point in 1 Cor. xi.—“If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

Yet again, in conclusion, “to each one his work” by no means excludes women, as many Scriptures remind us. Thus Acts xviii. 26 shows that Priscilla was a true helper with her husband when they took Apollos to their dwelling and communicated to him more of the mind of the Lord. In Rom. xvi. Phœbe is honourably mentioned as a servant of the church, and as a succourer of many and of the apostle himself. A certain Mary (*v.* 6) is said to have bestowed “much labour” on him and his companions. Tryphena and Tryphosa laboured, the latter much, “in the Lord.” At Philippi, where the work commenced among women, Lydia constrained Paul with Silas and Timothy to abide in her house; and Syntyche and Euodia evidently laboured there with the apostle and others in the gospel (Phil. iv. 2, 3), yet doubtless in their own sphere. The apostolic instructions to aged women, in Titus ii. 3, 4, present a wide field for work, all the more needed in these last days when increasing departure from God leads to more and more disorder in family relationships. Again, if Paul’s words in 1 Tim. v. 10 begin with blessed home-work they cover a great deal more—“If she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have

washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." Does not this kind of service bring to our remembrance that of the women who followed the Lord and ministered to Him? And in the case of Mary of Bethany, has He not stamped on such service His high approval?

Were all this borne in mind by sisters in the Lord they might be preserved from the temptation to go beyond the sphere that God has given them. But the church cannot do without the ministry of women, and we would urge them to far more diligence in it. The body cannot grow without that which every joint supplieth, and to some of our sisters we would apply the words in 1 Cor. xii., "*Much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.*"

Let us then, one and all, seek guidance of God as to what He would have us do, what the work He has provided for each; not being guided thereto by circumstances, or feelings, or reasonings, but *by the Scriptures*, as taught us by the Spirit of God; and then may we be found *doers of the work*.

J. G. H.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What is the force of the following words in the Revised Version of the New Testament in connection with future punishment—"Gehenna," "Hades," "Tartarus," "The lake of fire?"

1. *Gehenna* comes from the Hebrew, and means "The valley of the son of Hinnom." It was situated outside Jerusalem, and there in idolatrous days human sacrifices were offered. Good king Josiah defiled it, "that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Moloch." Isaiah refers to it in the last verse of his prophecy, as the place where the carcasses of those who had transgressed against God should remain, "for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh." Another name for the same place is Tophet, "the place of drums," the noise of which was intended to drown the screams of burning victims. A passage

in Jer. vii. 31-33 explains the origin of the name. As Jerusalem becomes in the New Testament the type of the heavenly home of the redeemed, so Gehenna is used to signify the abode of the lost. The two places have a strange proximity in the Old Testament, and in the book of Revelation there is a mysterious connection between the glorious New Jerusalem surrounded with its lofty walls, and the terrible place "*without*," where the unholy are and where the lake of fire is visible. It is probably on this account that the term "Gehenna of fire" is used by our Lord.

2. *Hades* is the place of departed spirits, without any special reference to their condition. It contains, as described in Luke xvi., a place of suffering, and also a place of rest. We cannot here enter upon the difference which the death of Christ has made in the intermediate state of the saved, but the apostle's expression "to depart and to be with Christ" certainly indicates a change. The fulfilment of John xiv. 2, 3, and the full enjoyment of being with the Lord in the place He has prepared will not, however, be till His advent. The "gates of Hades" (Matt. xvi. 18) seems to refer to the power of death, which shall never prevail against the church of God; see Heb. ii. 14, 15.

3. *Tartarus* occurs in 2 Peter, ii. 4, where, however, in the Greek, the word is not a noun, but a verb signifying "to-cast-down-to-Tartarus." As the expression refers to angels, and not to human spirits, the place represented is probably that which in the book of Revelation is called "the abyss," or "the bottomless pit"; a place with which Satan and angelic spirits are especially connected. The "beast" of Rev. xiii., is twice spoken of as coming out of the abyss (chaps. xi. 7; xvii. 8). It was to this place that the evil spirits, mentioned in Luke viii. 31, besought the Lord not to send them.

4. *The lake of fire.* This we consider, as has already been said, to be the same as the Gehenna of fire. It may be interesting to some to know that the Arabic word used by the Mohammedans for hell, as the place of final punishment, is Gehennam, the same as the Hebrew, which we anglicise by dropping the final letter.

What does the casting out of the prince of this world, spoken of in John xii. 31, refer to?

Satan's entire defeat is brought about through the cross, but there are perhaps four distinct stages in his being cast out or subdued, and all of them may be comprehended in this passage.

(1) Christ through death deprived Satan of the *power of death*, taking from his hands the keys of death and of Hades, and thereby setting aside the authority which he held, not as a matter of usurpation, but apparently under Divine permission, as seems intimated in Luke xxii.

53, where we read that Christ on His way to the cross said to His enemies, "This is your hour and the *authority* of darkness."

(2) Satan is called "the prince of the *authority of the air*" (Eph. ii. 2), and from this position we find him hurled in Rev. xii., where we read, "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." The consequence of this will be that Satan who hitherto had access to heaven will be allowed no more place there, but will be cast down to the earth.

(3) The next step in the casting out of Satan is that recorded in Rev. xx. 1-3, where the devil is laid hold of, bound, and cast into the "*abyss*" or "bottomless pit" for a thousand years.

(4) The last and final casting out of Satan from any place of power is that spoken of in Rev. xx. 10, where we read that the devil is "cast into the *lake of fire*," the place "prepared for the devil and his angels."

This consideration of the casting out of Satan may give us some help as to the profound meaning of the passage in Col. ii. 15 (R.V.), where Christ is spoken of as having put off from Himself principalities and authorities of darkness, making a show of them openly, and triumphing over them in His cross.

What is the "trumpet" in Matt. xxiv. 31, and is it the same as that of 1 Thess. iv. 16?

The trumpet in Matt. xxiv. appears to be identical with that mentioned in the Old Testament prophecies, and refers to God's summoning Israel back to their land. Compare Is. xxvii. 13; xviii. 3; Zec. ix. 14. In Is. xviii. God calls the inhabitants of the world to hear the trumpet, and the result is that a present is brought unto the Lord of a people "scattered and peeled" to the place of the name of the Lord in mount Zion. So in chap. xxvii. we read, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem. The passage in Zechariah points to the same time. Matt. xxiv. 15-35 seems to have special if not exclusive reference to Israel and the land of Judah. The elect people, the holy nation (Dan. xii. 7) will be saved and gathered through angelic agency, and the trumpet is to be the token. The trumpet of 1 Thess. is connected with very different circumstances, viz., the gathering of the heavenly people to meet their Lord in the air. The trumpet of Matt. xxiv. will close the "times of the Gentiles," and bring in the millennial reign on earth, and with this synchronizes the period of the seven trumpets in Revelation.

“FROM HENCEFORTH AND FOR EVER.”

PSALMS CXV. 18 ; CXXI. 8 ; CXXV. 2 ; CXXXI. 3.

IF “once” and “for ever” are divine words which, when linked together in our souls, carry much precious meaning, the kindred expression,

“*From henceforth and for ever,*”

has also its own special instruction for us. “Once” and “for ever” tells us of the *perfection* of God’s work, whatever it may be, and of how it *endures*. But “henceforth and for ever” points to the *freshness of soul* with which God’s child regards these works and ways of his God, and of the joys which they increasingly inspire. God and His word, and Christ and all God’s new creation “once” finished, eternally abide for the *eye of faith* ; and *within us* the blessed Spirit unweariedly witnesses to and with our spirits. As when “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,” nothing could hinder until “It is finished” was the Surety’s mighty cry ; so neither can the confidence of soul which the Holy Ghost begets ever *die* within us.

“The flame Thy love hath kindled
Shall never be put out ;
 The Spirit keeps it burning,
 Though dimmed by sin and doubt.”

Faith and hope and love are those living graces that abide, more or less, in *all* believers, under all circumstances and for all time—aye, and for eternity (see 1 Cor. xiii. 13) ; like the “living water,” which as a well of water, or, rather, a fountain, *springs up* in the believer into everlasting life.

The psalmist’s repeated word “from henceforth” just expresses this. It matters not what may be the time or the circumstances in which it is uttered. “Henceforth”

is a perpetual "NOW"; and the believer's *now* is always a confiding and triumphant one. Every such *now* becomes to him the birth-time and the starting-point for new and abiding acquaintance with God, and for fresh and enduring trust in Him and praise to Him.

Nay more—the darker and more painful the surroundings, the more food does faith find for then and there trusting in God. The "henceforth" of submission and of faith in God is like the "bow in the cloud in the day of rain"; it never shines brighter nor are its varied hues ever more distinct than when the cloud on which they are seen is the darkest—provided only that at the same time the sun's face is shining and the rain from heaven is falling. God's word contains many instances of this—of faith's thriving when mere nature would faint and die. Thus at Ziklag, in a very dark and humbling hour, David encouraged himself in Jehovah his God (1 Sam. xxx); and Jonah, soon after his disobedience, could bid the mariners throw him into the sea.

So also the triumphant "henceforth and for ever" of the psalmist is found only in psalms of Israel's later days and amidst their darker surroundings. In Ps. cxv. 18, it shines out in contrast with idols that cannot deliver. Psalms cxxi., cxxv., and cxxx. are part of the fifteen "Songs of degrees," or "of the *goings up*" from the captivity, when the feebleness, the conflicts, and the sorrows of the godly remnant were great, as we see in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. Yet it is in these psalms that "henceforth and for ever" rings out, by a faith in God that overcomes the world and that makes even the feeblest saints "more than conquerors."

"To Him be glory both NOW and for ever" (2 Pet. iii. 18), and "To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both NOW and for ever"

(Jude 25), are similar utterances of present triumph of soul in New Testament pages, and both stand linked with the darkest hours of waiting saints.

May grace be given us to raise "the conqueror's song" here below always and everywhere and in all things, even as we shall most surely ere long raise it for ever before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

H. D.

Port of Colombo, Ceylon, January 24th, 1887.

NOTES OF CONFERENCES AT LEOMINSTER.

AUGUST 16th-19th, 1886.

BIBLE READING—THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF GOD.

THE blessed Lord Jesus Christ was ever found, not only subject to God's sovereign will, but delighting in it, while also manifesting a love to God's elect, and a love to the world, in perfect fellowship with God. If with our heart, our understanding and conscience, we likewise duly regard *all sides of truth*, we shall be safe. I would contribute to this subject some scriptures: Matthew xi. 16-30, "Even so, Father," and "Come unto Me"; John xii. 27, 28, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." I always call this the Gethsemane of the Gospel of John. Read also verses 32-41, and chap. xviii. 4-9. Here we see (not to mention the picture of Gethsemane in Matthew, Mark and Luke) Christ saying, "*Thy will be done*," even unto death and atonement. It was the highest act of God's sovereignty to bruise His Son; and it was Christ's highest act of subjection to bow thereto. Thus was He perfectly at one with God's purpose to make by the cross a channel of blessing, yet perfectly at one with God's electing love, and

also with His dealings with the world at large. And is it not remarkable, that though the prophet said, "He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart," the Lord said, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light?" As Christ was perfectly in communion with God in making a channel of love and grace through the cross, the chief act of Christ's sovereignty will be to do the work of sin-avenging Judge. If He made the Father's will touching the cross fully His will, He will be entirely at one with the Father in all that the Father accomplishes by the cross.

He who bowed to the sovereignty of God as to Himself being the sacrificed Lamb, could not do otherwise than bow to that sovereignty as to who of the human race should be saved. Divine wrath and Divine mercy were in Himself at the tree. Divine wrath and Divine mercy go forth from Him by the Holy Ghost.

Does it not follow, too, that if we would have the testimony that we please God (and no child of God should stop short of this as the business of his life), we must, in order to arrive at it, walk in precisely the same track? Now if I appeal to those who *will* shut up their understanding and affection in John iii. 16, and will not go beyond it, they will say that other truth damages it, and that chap. x. 2, "The Good Shepherd giveth His life *for the sheep*," is against it. But if the love of God to the sheep, to His own elect, have that place in our hearts which it had in the heart of Christ, His love to man as man will also have its place in our hearts. Or rather, if we are one with Christ in God's exercise of judgment on Him, to make a channel for His grace and love, we shall be one with Christ in His love to the church and to the world, and our love will be like His, unquenchable and unwearied toward both. But if we fail in the first, there will be some opposi-

tion to God, that must of necessity do harm to us in our dealings with the unregenerate world. We shall grow weary and impatient toward them; whereas if we deal fully with God's pleasure, we shall end with God as we began. That is what Christ did, and therefore His heart never wearied. He always began and ended with pleasing God. But if we merely look at the gospel as procuring good for the creature, we shall mar our testimony.

If we cannot say what the Master said over the eleven saved ones, "Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight," we shall not be able to say with Him, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." If the backbone of submission be not straight and firm, we cannot run with our feet or stretch out our arms in the gospel.

We cannot now reconcile these plain truths, but a day is coming when God will give account of all His matters, and He will be justified by giving us to see all the reasons of all His ways.

Is Matt. xi. 19, "But wisdom is justified of her children," applicable to us? Surely it is. Those who set John iii. against John x., are in different schools, but both are in the school of self-will. The psalmist says, "Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." Let "my *heart*," not my head, "be sound;" the whole counsels of God having the due place in my heart, I shall be a worker as well as a worshipper.

God's love to man—His "*philanthropy*," as the word literally is in Titus iii. 3—is in and by the cross. It is not something that flatters men and makes them pleased with one another, but it is a sovereign thing on the part of God. His philanthropy solemnly, though indirectly, tells us of His sovereignty. We do not read of God's love to angels. Holy angels are elect, but fallen angels are left in

their fall, and Christ does not take hold of them but of the seed of Abraham.

How are we to answer the universalist who quotes Heb. ii. 9, that Christ tasted death "for *every man*?" Refer to 1 Tim. ii. 4—"Who will have *all men* to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." We would go to the full length of it, but *they* shut out other Scriptures. We teach the love of God to man as man, but we do not confound it with His electing love to the church.

Is it possible for God to be disappointed as to His *will*? If we look into the passage in Timothy we shall find that it refers to all ranks and conditions of men. God "*desires** all men to be saved." And therefore the apostle says, "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Meanwhile it is for us to preach, and our gospel toil is to be with *all*. We get a striking verse in Peter in respect to this: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Let us remember that every man is bound to believe in the Son of God, and to believe John iii. 16. Every man that hears and does not believe, rejects the love of God.

In 2 Timothy ii. 8-10, we have the connection between the toil of the gospel and the bringing out of God's elect; and so also in Acts xviii. 9-11: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace . . . for I have much people in this city." In John vi. we have our Lord's own words as to this: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the *will* of Him that sent Me." The

* The word in the original does not imply God's absolute purpose or will, but simply the desire of His heart that none should perish.

next is the *sovereignty* verse: "And this is the Father's *will* which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing." The *gospel* verse follows, "And this is the *will* of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." In all three verses the word "will" occurs.

There are two passages in the Acts which might be put with those we have just read: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (chap. xiii. 48), and "They . . . so spake that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed" (chap. xiv. 1). In the first case we see God's sovereign grace, while in the other it is the apostles' speaking which seems to produce the result; but here also the sovereignty verse comes first.

May we return to one point which was touched upon? What warrant have we for supposing that God will explain to us all His dealings?

First turn to Romans iii. 4, and mark the difference between Paul's words and the words of the psalmist: "That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou *art judged*." The apostle puts into words what was wrapped up in the heart of the psalmist: "That Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and clear when Thou *judgest*." Paul sets forth the great principle that when God finally judges, those whom He judges will justify Him. Turn also to Psalm l. 21, and compare with Romans ii. 16. And if you look to other psalms you will find a number of passages which show that all iniquity *must* stop her mouth. (See Psalm cxii. 10; cvii. 42.) Another very notable instance we have in Balaam. He says in Numbers xxiv. 5, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" There is admiration, but it is from an enemy

of God, who remarkably stands as an example of the perfect enlightenment of men's consciences in the last day. In verse 17 he says, "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh." So all the enemies of God will admire what they will never partake of and will never wish to share; for they will never wish to live to God, though they would desire to escape His punishment. Turn again to Romans ii. 16, "In the day when God shall judge *the secrets of men.*" Then what an instructive chapter is Matthew xxv.! The unprofitable servant is answered, and his silence is a justification of the sentence. From Phil. ii. we learn that "*every knee*" is to bow, and "*every tongue*" is to confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The final and perfect revelation of God will cause the perfect justification of God by friend and foe. The purpose of God is, that He who bowed in perfect obedience and humiliation to the death of the cross, and thus magnified God's law and made it honourable, shall have universal confession. "To the glory of God the Father," will be something beyond the admiration of which we have been speaking in the case of Balaam; men will own that God is glorified even in His judgments.

I would also add the great sample testimony of Pharaoh in Exodus. He begins with "Who is the Lord?" and ends with "What have we done to let Israel go?" But he owns, "The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked," though his conscience could sink down again into a state of death. In Rev. xx. we read, "I saw a great white throne," which means that only God's will shall be done, and all opposition be shut out. "And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened." They were not open to Pharaoh; it was in his case but a waking up of conscience—yet conscience

tells the truth, and can never be killed—and he tells the truth for God. Ah, but there will be no sleep of conscience after the books are opened! The damned will ever know that the Lamb is on the throne, but will always have to say, “Our debt is not paid.”

Might we turn to Galatians, for the solemnity of these things is very great. While speaking in faithfulness and with a tender mind of the everlasting punishment of the enemies of God, we do well to bear in mind that in order rightly to convey the truth we must look at the *equity* of God, as well as at the simple and naked justice of God. What I mean is expressed in chapter vi. 7, 8—*the reaping what is sown*. God’s rule of giving the harvest according to the sowing is very clear in Scripture. The great example is Christ Himself; what He reaps will be the harvest of that which He has sown. Verse 8 shows us the equity of God in all His dealings on either hand; therefore, in dealing with the ungodly it becomes us to appeal to their conscience continually; not simply to tell them of the hell of just punishment, but to show them that it will be the reaping of their own sowing. If we only speak of punishment, it does not give the full view of the matter.

Again, let us think of the longsuffering of God as exercised in the fulness of perfection before the final exercise of His wrathful judgment. An interesting portion in respect of this we have in Genesis xv., where we read that “the iniquity of the Amorites is *not yet full*.” Another instance which combines longsuffering with judgment we see in the same book, where God says of Sodom and Gomorrah, “I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto Me; and if not, I will know”—not as hoping to find it guilty, but to find it not so bad.

The government of God through Christ, first in view of atonement and then since it has been made, is distinguished always by longsuffering, although there be judgment at last. There is no instance in Scripture of the judgment of the sinner unless he has despised the warning of God. And there is no trace of God's longsuffering towards angels that sinned. If we look at the two passages in Peter and in Jude, we read in the latter, that "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains;" and in Peter, that "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell." There is no trace of longsuffering, and no trace of repentance, because they knew that there was no forgiveness for them; they were given up to their own hatred of God.

Does God's longsuffering last as long as a man's life?

Let us remember that our Lord Jesus speaks of one who may sin a sin that can never be pardoned. It is rare for God to give up men to such hardness of heart as in the case of Judas and of Pharaoh, yet He does so. And it is a solemn truth that there have been those alive and going about, who were as sure of hell as if they were in it; for instance, Saul, for whom Samuel was told that he was not to pray.

We have been dwelling on the solemn points of our subject. We started with the *submission* that gospel work requires, together with unwearied bowels of kindness. Why is it difficult for us to labour in such a gospel?

Such a combination of truth forbids a popular gospel; it forbids a man-pleasing gospel; and it forbids a gospel that explains itself now. It is a gospel that can wait for eternity to get its explanation fully. Jonah would not tolerate the forbearing side of the gospel; others will not hear the solemn side of the gospel.

God presents the "philanthropy" view of the gospel first. For example, John's Gospel begins with the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world; and not till we get to chapter vi., when the Jews begin to cavil, do we read, "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." And again, Romans ix. follows at some distance Romans i.

How are we to reconcile the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," with what we see of the blessing of God in certain lands, whilst others are not so blessed?

Some say that the secret is that we are the ten tribes, and that this is the only solution! Another solution is that the English are much more easily convinced; so it is half the English character and half the grace of God!

In the Gospel by Matthew the Lord says, "Go not in the way of the Gentiles . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" then at the *end* of that Gospel He commands, "Go ye into all the world." Are we not to account for the lack of blessing by our failure to obey the word of the Lord?

The first question has started another. May we not ask, Why has God put the stars in thick clusters and not spread them all out evenly? The answer is, "He has done as it pleased Him." Yet in saying this, I would not take off the weight of our failure and guilt in not obeying the Lord's command.

If our apprehension of God's sovereignty is not defective, we shall be filled with holy diligence to win souls; and shall have no will of our own. The full apprehension of God's sovereignty, after the pattern of the blessed Master, will fill us with the patience and zeal of the Master. All truth is many-sided. The sovereignty of God is like a throne, which, though it will not be disputed, will draw

out our hearts. Fellowship with the firmness of the throne leads to fellowship with the flowings of the river that proceeds from the throne.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ASA.

PART II.

2 CHRONICLES XV.

GOD had answered the prayer of Asa, and shown Himself to be still the God of Israel, whose right hand could give them victory, and now He calls His prophet to go forth and meet the king and his victorious army, and encourage them in the path of faith and faithfulness upon which they had entered. Having called the attention of the king and the people, the prophet, in his first utterance, lays down some great principles that are always true in God's ways with His own, while they were specially applicable to that time: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." Can the principles laid down here, have any application in the *present* dispensation? Yes, most decidedly, only we have to distinguish between what God bestows unconditionally and irrevocably, and that to which He is pleased to attach conditions.

God was pleased to call Abraham, and to give him unconditional promises with reference to his posterity and to their possession of the land of Canaan; and of this call and of these gifts it is written, "The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance;" that is, He will never recall them. Afterwards, God singled out the family of David as the one from whom in due time the Messiah should spring, and no unfaithfulness on the part of David's successors on the throne of Israel could frustrate that promise. "Jehovah hath sworn in truth unto David;

He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." All these promises will yet be fully honoured in due time by their perfect fulfilment; yet God sent Israel to Babylon for seventy years, and has now scattered them among the nations for centuries, while His dealing with the family of David gave ground for the solemn word: "Thou hast made void the covenant of Thy servant, Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground." In each case, whether in the wider circle of Israel, or in the single family of David, God acted on the principle, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" though He will carry out to the full every promise He has made.

The same things hold good in regard to the church of God. The Lord builds His church, and against it the gates of *hades* shall not prevail; the church for which in infinite love He gave Himself, He will in due time present to Himself in glory; each sinner who beholds the Son and believes on Him has everlasting life, and shall share in the resurrection at His coming; all the sheep of the Good Shepherd's flock are in His mighty hand, and in the mighty hand of the Father, and no power of earth or hell can pluck one of them thence. These are some of the foundation truths of our most holy faith. But, accepting them as beyond a question, there still remains room for all those promises to which *conditions* are attached. God draws nigh to those who draw nigh to Him (Jas. iv. 8); only the one who keeps the word of Christ has the joy of the presence of the Father and of Christ (John xiv. 23); if we endure we shall reign with Him, and if we love His appearing we shall obtain the crown of righteousness. (2 Tim. ii. 12; iv. 8.)

We are such one-sided creatures that while some dear souls torture themselves with the *ifs* of God's word, and

miss the comfort and strength of its unconditional promises, others seem to treat every *if* as though it had nothing to do with a true child of God. We do well to take this to heart also with reference to our position and condition as *assemblies* of the Lord's people, professedly gathered unto His name. We take His promise: "Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them;" and we do well to act upon it. But are we not in danger of taking for granted, that because as a few believers we are gathered together, *without any other name*, therefore the Lord is in the midst of us, and we rest content with this? The condition expressed in the words, "*unto My name*" should ever lead to deep exercise of heart. If unbelief would lead us to tempt the Lord by raising the question: "Is the Lord among us or not?" the spirit of faith, on the other hand, would surely say, "If the Lord be with us, where are the tokens of His presence?" (see Judges vi. 13.) It surely can be no honour to the Lord to say we take His presence for granted, if we have no token thereof, for where He *is* He is wont to *manifest* Himself, and if He does not, there must be some serious hindrance. When God, by His prophet Joel, calls Israel to deep humiliation on account of their state, and promises rich blessing as the result thereof, He says: "And ye shall *know* that I am in the midst of Israel;" and again it is said: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee *is mighty*." (Joel ii. 27; Zeph. iii. 17.)

If, therefore, we lack that sense of His presence which fills a meeting with joy and worship, gives power in the ministry of the word, and restrains what is not of God, we may well ask, What is there that grieves and hinders the Spirit of God? Let us be assured that both in our church fellowship and in our individual walk there is abundant room for the fulfilment in our experience of this word:

“The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him He will forsake you.”

The prophet proceeds to give a very solemn, and then a very gracious illustration of the truth of his words. First, he refers to the condition of Israel during much of their history: “Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.” They had forsaken Jehovah, had disregarded His law, and had ignored the priesthood, which was the great link between them and their God. Consequently they had lost the blessings which God had bestowed, though He had never recalled them. As a result, they had “no peace,” but “great vexations,” and destruction, “for God did vex them with all adversity.” His hand was heavy upon them, though it was still the hand of mercy, to bring them back to Himself. And of this He ever gave blessed proof, for “when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and *sought* Him, He was found of them.”

How God's grace shines out in this word! He is indeed slow to execute judgment, while He is ever ready to forgive. Sometimes when we are in difficulty, our hearts may be cast down with the thought that it is our own fault, and we hesitate to turn to God for relief. We think we have taken our own course, and must reap the consequences thereof. Now it is right that we should be deeply humbled when such is the case, and indeed we cannot deal truly with God without being humbled, and bowing in confession and self-judgment. But never let us forget that He is “good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Him.” It was David's own fault that all his possessions, and those of his followers, including their wives and children, were lost at Ziklag, for it was his unbelief in going to the Philistines

for safety that led to the disaster, yet David's faith revived, he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God," and God enabled him to recover all, and take spoil besides. It was Jehoshaphat's own fault that his life was in danger in the battle of Ramoth-gilead, for it was his most blameworthy alliance with the wicked Ahab that caused him to be surrounded by those who would have killed him, but even in those circumstances he "cried out, and the Lord helped him, and God moved them to depart from him." Therefore, whatever cause we may have for being self-abased, and while we ever seek to deal honestly with ourselves before God, let us always be encouraged by the assurance that He often magnifies His name, and lays up for Himself eternal praise, by showing that He is above all circumstances, and is able to deliver us from the results of our own folly and unbelief. The record must stand for ever, "When they sought Him, He was found of them."

The prophet's address concludes with an exhortation and an encouragement: "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded." Great courage and energy were needed to carry on the work that had been so happily begun, for there were still opposing forces in the kingdom, to say nothing of the backward tendency of the human heart; but persistence in the good work would bring the happiest results to both the king and his subjects. The exhortation is never out of place: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," for no work was ever done for God in this world without opposition, and no one ever walked with God in the diligence of faith without desperate efforts being made by the great enemy to cast him down from his excellency. All hell would move itself to bring down a servant of Christ in such a manner as to dishonour His holy name. But there is great encouragement for us;

let us quietly pursue the path in which God calls us to walk, relying on Him who strengtheneth us (Phil. iv. 13), and our "work shall be rewarded," though we shall ever with gratitude confess, "*Thou* hast wrought all our works in us." One of the Lord's last words to His church, from the throne above, is: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with Me, to give each one according as his work shall be." Let us not be content with *profession*, for not according to our profession, but according to our *work* will the reward be given; and on the other hand let us not be too much concerned about *apparent results* of service, for not according to *results*, but according to *work*, known and estimated by the Lord alone, will be His acknowledgment, which will be an eternal treasure to the receiver thereof.

Being encouraged by the words of the prophet, Asa further prosecuted the work of reform, putting away the abominations out of the land, and renewing the altar of the Lord. The fact that the presence of Jehovah was once again manifestly with the king of Judah, attracted those who were godly in the northern kingdom: "for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him." Nothing attracts the godly like the presence of God; the mere profession of His presence will never do it, but the reality will; and the fact that Israel was becoming so corrupt caused those who thirsted for the living God, to hail with joy the opportunity of once again worshipping in His temple and at His altar.

We are living in the midst of a Christendom that is becoming increasingly corrupt, and is turning to all kinds of abominations, Romanism on the one hand, and infidelity on the other, which we see, in various stages, increasing on every hand. Are there not many who feel the burden of these things, and will feel them more deeply? Surely the godly will do so, and will be constrained to look for some-

thing more simple, and to ask where the living God can be worshipped in spirit and in truth. If those of us who have learnt something of this simplicity are to be helpers of such, we too must be able to show that *God is with us*. Not by sitting in judgment on everything, nor by dealing harshly with Christians who have not learned the truth of God as we have, or are not prepared to seek to carry it out, shall we be true witnesses for Christ and helpers of His people, but by judging ourselves for those things amongst us which have been stumbling-blocks to others, by putting away the abominations of pride and vanity and self-seeking, and by so bowing before God, rending our hearts and not our garments, that others may see the fulfilment of the word: "Ye shall *know* that I am in the midst of Israel," and of that earlier word: "There I will meet with the children of Israel, and *they shall be sanctified by My glory*." (Exodus xxix. 43.)

W. H. B.

ON FRUITFULNESS.

(FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.)

JER. xvii. 7, 8; JOHN xv. 1, 6.

THE word of God frequently compares believers to trees, and speaks much of fruitfulness; and surely we would all desire to bring forth fruit, much fruit, fruit in perfection, fruit to the glory of God.

To ensure a healthy, fruitful tree, at least seven things are necessary, and they beautifully exemplify the truth of God as applied to ourselves.

1. *The tree must be of a good stock.*

By nature we are all of a bad stock, utterly good-for-nothing; only fit to be hewn down and cast into the fire. (Matt. iii. 10; vii. 16-20.) But a briar can be turned into

a rose-tree by budding, and a wild plum or crab tree into a good fruit-tree by grafting.

Thus God, in abounding grace, has made full provision for us, but at infinite cost to Himself, by giving up His well-beloved and only Son that in Him we might have eternal life. Coming as poor sinners to the Lord Jesus, we not only receive forgiveness of sins, but also a new life, the very life of Christ; we are born again, born of God, and made partakers of the divine nature. Truly this is a good stock.

2. *It must be rooted in a good soil.*

Our God has provided a rich soil for us; for we are "rooted . . . in Christ" and "rooted and grounded in love." (Col. ii. 7; Eph. iii. 17.) We have all the fulness of Christ to enrich us, and all His love to flow into our souls and gladden us. The roots are like our wishes and longings, the deep desires of our hearts; and there is enough in Christ, and far more than enough, to meet and satisfy them all.

Do you desire affection? Then root your longing for it in Christ Himself, for where can be found a love like His—so tender, so considerate, so true, so faithful? Who else could be so ready to make allowances for all our shortcomings, so quick to recognise every effort to please Him, so warm in His appreciation and praise of anything He can approve? His is indeed a love that passes knowledge.

Are you ambitious? He has crowns to give, positions of wonderful glory in His kingdom, eternal and never-fading honours. Let your ambition be rooted in His promises of future reward, and do not waste your energies in seeking earthly position or glory.

Do you desire to be strong and useful? Then root your longing in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Draw out of His fulness the grace you need, and take care that your

roots do not turn aside and get into the barren sand of self-sufficiency and pride.*

3. *It must have abundance of water.*

A tree planted by a river sucks in water continually (Ps. i. 3), and thus we should continually be drinking in the love of our Lord through the scriptures, and should seek to have the word of Christ dwelling in us richly, so that its streams may at all times refresh and strengthen us. He has a river of pleasures for us (Ps. xxxi. 8), fresh and ever-flowing, which He loves to see us enjoy; a river, the streams whereof can make us glad (Ps. xlvi. 4); a river to enrich us and cause us to be fruitful. (Ps. lxxv. 9.) We need not turn to human cisterns, for there is enough in Christ to meet our need and satiate our souls; and what can we desire beyond the consciousness of His approval?

4. *It needs plenty of sunshine.*

Do you live in the sunshine, dear child of God? Do you take your place as one beloved of God, and find His favour as life to your soul? Do you realise that you are precious to Him?

However much fruit you may bear, it will be sour and insipid unless you dwell in the sunshine. Nothing but the light of His countenance can really satisfy (Ps. xvi. 11; xxi. 6; lxxx. 3, 7, 19), and He is always ready to lift it up on us. (Num. vi. 24-26; Ps. iv. 6.) If you but *seek* to please Him you may be assured of His good pleasure though conscious that what you do is not done perfectly.

5. *It needs to be kept free from blight.*

Many Christians drink in God's word and give much promise of fruit. There is, so to speak, plenty of blossom, yet very little fruit is produced. The tree suffers from

* This turning of the roots is referred to in Ezek. xvii. 7, where the king of Judah secretly turns his roots to Egypt; with which our turning to the world would correspond.

blight, as we see so continually in our gardens, where fruitfulness is hindered by the canker-worm, the caterpillar, or the fly.

The canker-worm spoils the bud or young fruit. We do not see it, but it does its hidden work of destruction, while outwardly all may look fair. Canker-worms may represent indulged evil feelings; the workings of vanity, pride, impatience, anger, jealousy; all hidden, so that we scarcely allow that they exist. These feelings lurk deeply in the heart, and we may deceive ourselves by covering them over with some good name, instead of judging and mortifying them. How many promises of fruit have been destroyed by canker-worms!

Caterpillars differ in their way of attacking the tree; they do not hide themselves. At first they are found under a leaf, and very small, and then they may easily be destroyed, but if they are left alone they gradually increase until they devour both leaf and fruit. We may compare them to little sins, which we think do us no harm. A little worldliness, a slight yielding to evil, will not be serious, we are inclined to say, and we flatter ourselves that our hearts are all right. But if these little sins are not checked, they will spread and spread, like the caterpillars, until even the leaf of outward profession is gone.

Then there is the little green or black fly. These attack the shoots from without, and hinder growth. We may compare them to the praise of man, which the natural heart loves. Flattering words will not hurt us if we reject them, as we would brush off the green fly, but if we let them remain they will multiply and mar both flower and fruit. May the Lord help us to watch against these varied forms of evil.

6. *It must be well trained.*

Mark the contrast between two trees—one left to it-

self and growing wild, but fruitless ; the other carefully trained against the wall, and loaded with fruit. Suppose yourself a tree, and that, instead of being allowed to grow as you please, the gardener bends and pins down every twig : would you not cry out, and think the gardener very unkind ? In like manner God's children often cry out under His training, because they do not understand His heart and ways.

By means of little things in daily life that cross our wills, or try our tempers, or hinder us from pleasing ourselves, God is constantly training us. Have we not struggled against this bending and pinning down ? If we resist, we only injure ourselves and hinder fruit-bearing ; but if we yield, we bring forth much fruit. Let us seek to bring forth goodly fruit, that the Lord may not be disappointed in us as He was in Israel (Isa. v.), but may delight in us.

7. *It must be well pruned.*

What is the use of a vine that is not pruned ? There may be long shoots, giving promise of rich fruit, but they must be closely cut back, or the fruit will be worthless. So the Lord is obliged to cut back even our right desires and efforts, that our fruit may be richer. We may long to work for Him, but all our plans may be thwarted, and we may be tempted to think that the Lord refuses our service. Or our sphere may be very small, and we greatly desire a larger one, but no opening is found. We cannot understand it, and perhaps distrust His love or think He is displeased with us. Had we our own way we should only be like the leafy branch that takes away the nourishment from the grapes. But the heavenly Husbandman is only cutting us back, that our fruit may become more excellent and comely ; and to ensure this He may even need to thin out some of the fruit, as the gardener does.

The vine may bleed when it is cut ; and so do we if we

do not understand our Lord's dealings. It is from no displeasure with the vine that the gardener prunes it ; on the contrary, he is glad to see the vigour of its growth. And so the Lord is pleased with our earnest efforts, and even when He checks them, because He sees they would exhaust our spiritual strength, He still says to us as He did to David, "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart."

Let us, then, be thankful to Him for all the pinning down and pruning, for the restraints and hindrances of every kind which He imposes ; and let us seek to labour in communion with Him, that we may bring forth much fruit, the fruit of His ungrieved Spirit, to His eternal praise.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LATE DR. MULOCK'S LETTERS.

"HERE, as regards my surroundings, I am in the midst of green fields and great familiar trees—all as fresh to memory, and apparently unchanged, as though I had never left them. But *I* am happily changed, with an eternal change, since last I saw them. ———'s mind is singularly clear, and his views of men and matters the soundest human philosophy ; but those supreme factors, God and His purposes and grace, are quite left out ! He often speaks of the failing and breaking up of families around, and of those who were once flourishing and influential heads of families, whose 'inward thought' was that 'their houses should continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations,' and who called 'their lands after their own names.' But this 'their way' proved 'their folly,' as is manifest in the history of this country (Ireland), and its landed proprietors.

"I am learning the meaning of two words one has so often read with little or no meaning—words which Paul had learned for himself, and which by the Spirit he so often taught and urged upon others—those words are '*contentment*' and '*patience*.' Oh, to be content with my state, knowing it is

His choice for me; patient in my sorrow (though it is often very deep), knowing it is, like the cup that Jesus drank, from a Father's hand. The hopes that glistened round my path, to serve Him in the Church till He come, are but star-light, after all, compared with the sun-light of His own love and presence, if I had eyes to see, and a heart to understand. My cup is broken, but it was mixed with earth and self; and what if Jesus gives me one filled with Himself? What if He sent my sorrow that I might lose it on His breast—my tears that they might be dried by His hand?

“Tell the assembly at G—— that ‘faith’ and ‘the blood of Christ’ are both put by the Holy Spirit under the same head, ‘PRECIOUS.’ How precious, then, to God must be the faith of the saints! And this is the hour of their ‘trial of faith,’ which is said to be especially precious. May faith and patience have their perfect work in us all, to the glory of the Lord Jesus, at His appearing! May every hour of our patient waiting be freighted with blessing from our God; and at last we shall know that *all* below was grace, in the light of heaven's eternal day, when there can be no blinded or sinful judgment of His ways.

J. B. M.”

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What is meant by the words in Matt. iii. 11, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire?”

John contrasts his baptism in water with the baptism of Christ, which was to be in the Holy Ghost and fire. The contrast, we think, explains the metaphor. John's baptism could figuratively only take the sinner into the grave and leave him there, showing that the righteous end of the law was death. The baptism which Christ enjoined on His disciples after His resurrection, is typically not only the believer's acknowledgment of sin, and of death as its desert, but it is also a triumphant realisation of the fact that he has by the Spirit been baptized into the body of Christ, and is therefore a partaker of the life and power which the Pentecostal “fire” indicates. With this we would connect the fire from heaven which came down upon the altar on so many different occasions in Old Testament history.

THE CREATION.

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE ?

GENESIS i. 1, 2.

IN the midst of the much real scientific discovery of the present day, and the still greater abundance of what is called scientific speculation, it is very important for us as children of God to see distinctly what the Word of God asserts touching the creation of the world, that we may know definitely what we are called upon to believe in spite of contrary human speculations; and also what the Word of God does not affirm on this subject, and therefore to what extent we may allow scientific theories to stand simply for what they may be worth.

Until recent years the Bible, from want of careful and exact reading of Scripture, was supposed to assert explicitly that the creation of the world immediately preceded the creation of Adam, and took place about six thousand years ago. The correctness of this thought is now questioned by scientific facts, and consequently many a godly mind has been disturbed by some mis-giving as to the actual accuracy of Scripture statements. We therefore desire to say a little on the subject, that the hearts of God's children may be set at rest as to what our God and Father would give us to understand from the precious record He has vouchsafed to us; for we must bear in mind that the God of redemption who speaks to us throughout the whole Bible from Genesis ii., is likewise the God of creation who speaks in Genesis i. He who stands revealed in the first chapter as the GOD (*Elohim*) of omnipotent power, is made known to us in the second chapter as the 'LORD GOD (*Jehovah Elohim*) of covenant

mercy. He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, and no change in the creature can affect Him.

The first two verses in Genesis i. are :

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

As thus read, we naturally infer that the condition of the earth, immediately after it was created by the hand of God, was such as is described in verse 2. This, however, as judged by the Hebrew text, is by no means the case ; for had it been so, the word “was” in verse 2—“the earth WAS without form and void”—would almost of necessity have been in the same tense as the verb “said” in verse 3, where, consequent upon the movement of the Spirit on the waters, we read, “And God said, Let there be light.” The “Speakers’ Commentary” justly observes, “The verb ‘was,’ as used in this verse, implies not succession, but *condition*, at the time in question.” We think, therefore, that in order to avoid ambiguity, this word is better rendered *became*, as it frequently is elsewhere—“The earth BECAME without form and void.” This at once disconnects verse 1 from verse 2, and the expression, “In the beginning,” would only refer to God’s creative act, as stated in verse 1. This expression has in Scripture a very distinct and definite meaning, and carries us back into a past eternity, before the earth was in its present condition. The expression, “The ages of the ages,” likewise carries us back with reference to the past, as well as onward to the future.

There are several passages in which the word “*beginning*” occurs with special reference to the pre-existence of Christ before all worlds. In John i. 1, we read, “In the beginning WAS the Word”; not “was

created," nor "became," but essentially WAS; for He is the "I AM," as He says of Himself in John viii., "Before Abraham was" (or, more properly "became," or, "came into existence") "I AM." In Prov. viii. 22, Wisdom (corresponding with the *Logos*, or Word, of the Gospel of John) says, "The Lord possessed me in the *beginning* of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." And of Him it is said in Heb. ii., "Thou, Lord, in the *beginning* hast laid the foundation of the earth."

We should also especially notice that the prince of darkness is spoken of as "a murderer from the *beginning*" (John viii. 44), while in 1 John iii. 8, we read that "the devil sinneth from the *beginning*." This remarkable linking of Satan's history, not only with the present course of the world, but with the "beginning," we regard as of the deepest significance in connection with the subject before us, as we are thus carried back far beyond the limit of the present order of things on the earth's surface.

The Hebrew word for "created" (*bara*) is used exclusively with reference to God's power, as though He would reserve it to express that character of divine action which denotes the construction of something out of that which had not previously existed. This word occurs three times in Gen. i., and its connections are very instructive. It is used first in verse 1, with reference to the material creation; secondly, in verse 21, of the introduction of animal life, designated by the Hebrew *nepshesh*, which corresponds, when rightly understood, with our word *soul*, whether in the lower forms of animal life, or in man; and, thirdly, in verse 27, of man, when God breathed into his nostrils the breath (*neshamah*) of life, thus creating in him a life distinct altogether from that natural life

which he possesses in common with the animals around. This threefold creation corresponds with the tripartite nature of man described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Thess. v. 19, where, in praying for the complete sanctification of those to whom he writes, he amplifies the word "wholly" into "your whole *spirit* and *soul* and *body*."

The word *bara* is first used of that which is merely material and outward, including the inorganic world, and also the organic structures of vegetable life; its use in the next passage shows that the otherwise impassable barrier which separates vegetable from animal life could only be bridged over by a second divine act of creation, which imparted a mysterious something, called in the Hebrew *nephesh*, that gives to animal life its peculiar character and dignity. But a higher power was put forth in the creation of man, marking him off more completely from the animal life around him than even the most intelligent of lower creatures is separated from the unintelligent life of the vegetable world. "So God *created* man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Thus clearly and simply does God in His Word separate for us the mysteries of His creation.

In the first verse of Genesis, then, we have the fact of the original creation of the heavens and the earth declared, and in verse 2 we have a description of the condition in which the earth was found when God's six days' work began. Nowhere in Scripture is it said that God created the heavens and the earth in six days. The text quoted in support of such an idea is that in Exodus xx., where, in giving the ten commandments, the reason for the observance of the Sabbath is said to be that "in six days the Lord *made* the heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that in them is"; but the word to "make" contains

within itself the thought, not of *creating*, but of forming out of something that has been already created; and in harmony with this we read in Gen. ii. 3, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created to make," as it is rightly given in the margin of our Bible.

We now come to the second verse, which we would read as follows, "And the earth was (or had become) desolated and empty; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The two Hebrew words here used for "desolate" and "empty" are *tohu* and *bohu*; the latter of which occurs only in two other places; and the former much more frequently. To show the plain meaning of these two words we give the passages where they occur together. In Isa. xxxiv. when the prophet speaks of the desolations of the earth that precede the advent of the Son of God, and describes "the day of the Lord's vengeance," he says, "He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion (or desolation, *tohu*) and the stones of emptiness (*bohu*)." Jeremiah also, in chap. iv. 23, declares the terrible acts of Divine judgment, "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form (desolate, *tohu*), and void (empty, *bohu*); and the heavens, and they had no light;" and in the succeeding verses which describe the completeness of the desolation, we find expressions strikingly characteristic of the desolated condition of the earth at the time when God began His six days' work, to make it a fit habitation for man.

The word *tohu* occurs, in all, twenty times, and its meaning may further be gathered from the following examples: Deut. xxxii. 10, "waste;" Job vi. 18, "to nothing;" Isa. xxiv. 10, "confusion;" and in almost every other case it has more or less to do with desolation and destruction. There is a remarkable statement in

Isa. xlv. 18 with reference to the creation of the world, "He created it not in vain" (desolate, *tohu*), which at once reveals the fact that it came not so from the hand of the Creator, when, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

We will not here enter upon any surmises as to the cause of the desolation, or consider any inferences to be drawn from Scripture on the subject; we merely note that God states that, subsequent to its creation, the earth became desolate and void, and geological science bears distinct evidence to this. It is well again to assert that science, so far as it reads aright the book of nature, is but a handmaid and a witness to that far deeper book, the book of Divine revelation. The description of the earth's condition in Gen. i. 1, 2, is completed by the statement of its two-fold covering, first of water and then of darkness, and to this condition geological facts bear ample testimony.

Such are the declarations of God's word in the two momentous verses we have been considering. Then follows the record of those wonderful works of God, which commences with the brooding of the Spirit of life over the face of the waters, and is followed by the seven times repeated word, "AND GOD SAID," for "He spake and it was done."

We will not dwell upon the consideration of God's six days' work, wherein He reconstructed the world that had been desolated; but the legitimate inference from the creation, on the sixth day, of Adam and Eve as a perfect man and a perfect woman, surely is, that plants, and fishes, and birds, and beasts were likewise made in perfected forms on their respective days. It is, we think, the more simple course, as well as the humbler and safer, to regard all the beautiful forms of creation around us as the work

in one short week of Him to Whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day.

Seeing that the order of the original creation of the various forms and structures, as indicated by geological research, corresponds with the order of the work of the six days, we can but suppose, as indeed would be most natural, that He who had originally created all things in a given order, brought about the restoration of the earth into a habitable condition in the same order.

In conclusion, we would remark that in this matter, as in all others when God speaks, it is for us to hear; and when He has uttered His voice may we allow of no misgiving, no uncertainties, and no doubts. Let all human science, so far as it is real, have its due weight; for God has given scientific abilities to His creatures, and enabled them to tread the paths of astronomy and geology. But let us tread these paths, so far as we are called to do so, as worshippers and not as speculators; as those who ever bend all supposed scientific discoveries to God's unmistakable revelation; and let us never twist the revelation of God to suit or fall in with the changing fancies of profane scientists who would be wise, though born as wild ass colts, untrained and intractable. H. G.

ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.

AN ADDRESS GIVEN AT A CONFERENCE IN VEVEY BY
M. BRIQUET.*

I AM much pleased that such a practical subject should have been chosen; a subject treating of our daily life, of those simple duties, an account of which God will, before all others, require us to give Him. The world looks to us, not for words but for deeds, and for wholesome and

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strengthening examples. It is by such conduct that we shall be able to counteract the theories of materialism and other deplorable attacks now so often directed against the *family*.

The Lord addresses Himself in the first place to our sisters: "*Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands.*" This command is not in accordance with the tastes and ideas of these days, when people speak, even in certain Christian circles, about the emancipation of women.

"*As unto the Lord,*" adds the apostle. What can be more definite and more decided? And, to prevent any misunderstanding, he again says: "*So let the wives be (subject) to their own husbands in everything.*" After these declarations, no doubt can remain in our minds or in our hearts as to what God requires of wives; that is, submission, like that of the church to Christ. Believe the Lord's word, sisters in Christ, and accept with humility, simplicity and fidelity the place and the task which He assigns you. Bring your difficulties to Him; be always loving to your husbands; comfort them if they are suffering in the battle of life; turn your home into an oasis, and, above all, pray for your husbands. If you follow any other course it will only lead to sorrow, pain and deception, instead of to peace, joy and blessing.

Some of our sisters will perhaps say that, not being married, there is nothing concerning them in the verses which have been quoted. This is a great mistake, for they have in the family, in the church, and in the world, such an important sphere of activity, in relation to the Lord, that the same apostle says of the unmarried woman, that she "careth for the things of the Lord."

No woman, then, either married or unmarried, can say, as one hears, even amongst the Christian women of our assemblies: "I have nothing to do." To be convinced of

the contrary, read again what the Scripture relates of the "holy women" who comforted the afflicted, helped the poor, nursed the sick, taught the children—in a word, served the Lord in all sorts of good works, with love, humility and modesty, which are signs of a life hidden with Christ in God. Imitate them, and your heavenly Father will reward you.

"*Husbands*" are exhorted to "*love their wives,*" and they are to do so with a true, unselfish and constant love, such as Christ's love for His church. But is this done? Are we, as husbands, examples in word and deed? Can we say before the Lord, that our whole effort tends to give happiness to the partners whom He has given us? For this to be the case, Christ must possess our hearts; He must be the centre toward which we constantly press; before Him we must together bow the knee, and together also search the Word. Christ must be the associate of our joys and of our sorrows, of our hopes and of our disappointments, of our success and of our failure; we must show to those around the helpful and blessed example of a couple walking in the love, the peace, and the fear of God.

I see here several *children*. The Lord also speaks to them, commanding them to obey their father and mother, and to honour them. You who are children of Christian parents, do you distinguish yourselves by a prompt, joyful, entire, and constant obedience? God will require of you, in the day of judgment, an account of your years of childhood, as well as of other years. Think of what you owe to your dear mother, who watches over you night and day with a tenderness which nothing tires. Think of the toil, the anxieties and the care of your good father, who constantly provides for all your wants. Therefore "obey your parents;" make their heart to rejoice by your love to one another as brothers and sisters. Always tell the

truth, and confess your faults, even if it may bring punishment ; be diligent in your duties at school and at home, and afterwards freely indulge in recreation. Give your parents those proofs of tenderness which make their return home so full of joy. Above all, give your heart to the Lord. What a mercy to be brought to Him in childhood ! Remember Samuel, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Timothy, and others, who listened to the voice of the Lord and were made wise unto salvation from their earliest years.

And now, we *parents*, do we love our children as God tells us to love them ? If we have but little satisfaction in them, if they are not converted, if they even turn away from the right path, is it not partly our fault ? Perhaps our conduct stumbles them ; their simple hearts feel our inconsistencies ; they are discouraged by our ill temper. "*Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath : but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,*" and that from the beginning of the way they should go. As they grow up, let us win their hearts, let us be their friends ; let them find no truer confidants, no admirers more appreciated than their father and mother. Above all, let us pray for them untiringly, so that God may shield them from the dangers which surround them, and from the pernicious examples met with even on the forms of the school, for one word is enough to corrupt their imagination, to vitiate their understanding, and to poison their life. Let us pray that the Lord may use their very falls to bring them, repentant, to the foot of the cross.

"*Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters.*" The relations between masters and servants are not forgotten in this list of family duties. The question of wages is often now the only question with servants and masters. Without denying that, in certain cases, it is a duty to calculate, we must nevertheless remember that the word

of God puts us on higher ground than that of simple interest, by placing the relative duties of master and servant among those of the family. Servants, be obedient to your masters, in their absence as well as in their presence, as unto the Lord. May faithfulness and a good conscience in the fulfilment of your duties be your characteristics. May the proverb "When the cat is away, the mice will play" never apply to you. If you consider yourselves blamed unjustly, do not grow reckless; the Lord will justify you; let your conduct be a blessing to your masters, and it will surely be so if they can fully trust you. Remember Eliezer, Abraham's faithful servant; the little maid from the land of Israel in the house of Naaman, and also Naaman's servants who gave him such wise counsel. Finally, what a source of blessing to the family you serve may you not be, if your prayer goes up for them night and morning, and if you train the children under your care to seek the Lord, by reading His Word and praying with them.

The apostle closes his exhortations by enjoining moderation to *masters*, because they have a Master with whom there is no respect of persons. Christian masters, we cannot look upon our servants as simply hirelings to whom nothing is due but wages. They are living under our roof; do we love them? Do we show them sympathy by inviting them to our family worship, by leading them to Jesus, and by praying for them?

Many solemn questions have been asked. Let us meditate upon such teaching in the presence of the Lord, with the desire of discerning our shortcomings, obtaining forgiveness, and amending our ways. And may we all, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, be greatly strengthened for the accomplishment of our respective duties with patience, meekness and joy! Amen.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ASA.

PART III.

2 CHRONICLES XV. AND XVI.

THE great national movement of Judah in returning to the God of their fathers reached its crowning point in the fifteenth year of King Asa, when he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon, for the offering of sacrifices at Jerusalem, and for the renewal of the covenant which had been so grievously broken. They followed up the victory over their enemies by a fresh dedication of themselves to God, and by offering to Him in worship part "of the spoil which they brought." So, we may say, every victory which the Lord in His grace gives us should be followed by fuller worship in His presence, and more earnest dedication of ourselves to Him. There was great *reality* in their seeking of the Lord, "And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought Him with their whole desire; and He was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about."

One expression in this narrative we must be careful not to misunderstand: it is said that "whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death." This does not mean that everyone who was lacking in personal piety should be put to death; but everyone who turned from the worship of Jehovah to false gods. It was a solemn determination to carry out the law of God set forth in Deuteronomy xiii. and xvii., that anyone who turned to idolatry, and sought to lead others away from the God of Israel, should be stoned to death. Asa shewed

his own earnestness by removing his grandmother from the official position she held as queen-mother, "because she had made an abominable image" for idolatrous purposes, and he "cut down her image, and made dust of it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron." As before noticed, they did not fully return to the simplicity of early days, for "the high places" which were dedicated to Jehovah "were not taken away; nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days."

This does not mean that there was no failure in Asa, as alas! we shall see presently, but simply has reference to the fact that he *never* turned to idolatry, but as king, and in his kingdom, maintained the worship of Jehovah. His integrity of purpose at this time showed itself not only in removing the "queen-mother," and destroying her image, but also in the offering which he presented to the house of God. He brought thither "the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver and gold and vessels." It may be that his father Abijah had dedicated these things to God after the victory which God gave him over Jeroboam, and then had failed to fulfil his vow. Dr. Joseph Hall quaintly says, "Asa, like a good son, pays his father's debts, and his own. It is a good sign of a well-meant devotion when we can abide chargeable; as contrarily, in the affairs of God, a niggardly hand argues a cold and hollow heart."

If Asa's history had closed here we should only have admired him and his course, but from this point it is a record of failure, and it is "written for our learning." He may be regarded as an example of many who, without wholly turning from God as the God of salvation, lose spiritual strength, and finish their course in a very different manner from that of which their start gave promise; and his failure may remind us that no child of God can ever,

while here below, reach a point of attainment that makes it unnecessary for him to watch and pray that he may not enter into temptation. Let us observe that Asa failed in that very thing in which he shone so brightly in early days, the matter of faith in God. In this respect his heart ceased to be "perfect toward *Him*," though in owning Jehovah as the God of Israel, and not turning to idols, "the heart of Asa was perfect all his days." See 2 Chron. xv. 17, and xvi. 9, and note the importance of considering the meaning of words as illustrated by the context.

It could hardly be supposed that Baasha the king of Israel would see without concern his subjects flocking to the temple and the altar at Jerusalem, and perhaps many of them taking up their residence in Judah; and with evident determination to stop this, he went up "against Judah, and built Ramah," that is, converted it into a fortress, thus blocking the two chief roads that led from north and east to Jerusalem, "to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah." The very fact that Baasha's object was to keep people from going to worship Jehovah might well have led Asa to trust Him about the matter, and to put up his former petition, "Let not man prevail against Thee." But instead of this he takes silver and gold from the house of the Lord, and sends it to the king of Syria, with the request that he will break his league with Baasha, and renew with himself the league there had formerly been between Judah and Syria. This piece of diplomacy seemed successful, but Asa by his unbelief missed the opportunity of gaining a great victory, and of crippling a power which was really hostile to him, however it might be bought for a time with silver and gold. We none of us know what we lose when we turn from faith in God to human expediency.

But God's eye had been upon the whole affair, and though Asa seemed to have managed the business to his own satisfaction he was not to go unreprieved. Once again a prophet of the Lord addresses him, but this time not in words of commendation. Hanani tells him that because he had relied on the king of Syria, and not on the Lord his God, the army of the king of Syria had escaped out of his hand; he reminds him of the immense host that once came against him, and adds, "yet because thou didst rely on the Lord, He delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." What a beautiful expression is this of God's ever watchful providence, and ceaseless activity on behalf of those who trust in Him! Nothing escapes His all-searching eyes, and the haste which He makes to help when the fitting moment arrives is beautifully set forth by the word *run*. It matters not *where* the need may be: God is there; not in any one part of the world to the exclusion of another, but in "the whole earth." Asa's former foe was from the south, the late danger came from the north, but it made no difference to God; if He had only been sought He could have given a fresh token that He is "a very present help in trouble."

We think of fellow-saints who have gone forth to other lands in the service of Christ, and some may have those who are very dear to them far away in China or in the solitudes of Africa, and may at times be anxious about them, but God is *there* as well as *here*, according to that question of His which is so often misquoted, "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?" (Jer. xxiii. 23.) It is true that Jeremiah speaks of God's omnipresence in connection with the execution of judgment upon false prophets, while here the assurance of it is given

from Him as One who loves to show Himself strong for His people. He is ever the Almighty God, and those who seek Him prove Him to be so.

The perfect heart toward Him as the word is here used, is simply the heart that fulfils the exhortation, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto [or *upon*] thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct [or *make plain*] thy paths." (Prov. iii. 5, 6.) This is exactly what Asa failed to do; he did not trust God with all his heart, but leaned upon his own understanding, and proved it to be a broken reed, for his understanding taught him that the best thing was to make an alliance with the king of Syria, of which act God, by His prophet, said, "Herein hast thou done foolishly." He had not acknowledged God, and therefore instead of a *plain* path he should have one made rugged with the harvest of his own sowing—"from henceforth thou shalt have wars."

Hanani, as became a servant of God, spoke faithfully and fearlessly, but the king had gone so far from God, that though his conscience may have felt the truth of what was said, he was not humbled before the God who had sent the message, but was enraged against the messenger who had brought it. "Asa, instead of penitence, breaks into choler; fury sparkles in those eyes which should have gushed out with water; those lips that should have called for mercy, command revenge. That holy grandfather of his would not have done so; when God's messenger reproved him for sin, he condemned it, and himself for it: I see his tears; I do not hear his threats. Any man may do ill; but to defend it, to outface it, is for rebels; yet even upright Asa imprisons the prophet, and crusheth his gainsayers." It is an encouragement to us to see that all the king's attendants had not become so dull in conscience

as himself. If none of them had raised any protest with reference to the alliance with Syria, some apparently felt the force of the prophet's words, and showed their sympathy with him, and their disapproval of the way in which the king treated him. But having put the prophet into "the prison house," or "the house of stocks," Asa was in no mood to brook any contradiction, and endeavoured to put it down with a high hand. This seems the meaning of the statement, "Asa oppressed some of the people the same time," and the fact of their risking and suffering his displeasure is evidence that there was still some living faith in Judah.

But God had "stocks" as well as Asa, and if the king could lock the prophet up in prison, God could tie A to his bed, with fetters that perhaps held more tightly. He "was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians." We must remember that Asa lived in a dispensation when health of body and prosperity in circumstances were possessed as the special reward of obedience; and anything contrary to these was a token of God's displeasure against sin and unfaithfulness to Him. And therefore it behoved a king of Israel who was diseased to seek Jehovah, and humble himself before Him, but here also Asa showed the same failure of faith as before. In those days physicians were not simply men of skill, but often people of other nations who practised many things that were contrary to God. It is not the use of means which God has provided that is here condemned, for such means may be used in true dependence upon God; but evidently Asa neglected Jehovah and relied upon physicians. And again God allowed him to reap the fruit of his own way, and did not give him the recovery which he sought not at His hand.

We may contrast the notice of his burial with what is said of earlier kings: "David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David;" and the same is said of Solomon. (1 Kings ii. 10; xi. 43.) Of Asa it is written, "They buried him in *his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself.*" He seems to have followed the example of the kings of Egypt, and prepared for himself some grand tomb, a thing he would hardly have found time for, or inclination either, had he in later life pursued the simple and earnest course of his early days, seeking to know and do the will of God, and to lead the people in the same path. When it says "they made a very great burning for him," there is no reference to cremation, as some are now seeking to make out, but to the burning of spices—a customary way in some countries of honouring the deceased, though the introduction of it into Israel was something new.

One great lesson of Asa's later years is surely this: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The history shows us how low even a man of God may go, and may well move us all to pray, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." W. H. B.

AI; OR, DEFEAT.*

JOSHUA VII.; ROMANS XV. 4.

THE leading feature in the sixth chapter of Joshua is *victory*, but in the seventh chapter it is *defeat*. Is there not something akin to this in our experience as "good soldiers of Jesus Christ?" Do we not find that a season of triumph is often followed by a time of failure? We know it need not be so; but alas! is not such the case?

* Brief Notes of an Address delivered at a meeting held in Ballarat for Humiliation and Confession.

The reasons of defeat are many, but here one stands out very prominently. When Israel went up to fight against Jericho, they realised their own weakness and placed their entire dependence upon God; but when they sought to overthrow Ai, it was not as a dependent people, but as those who thought they could achieve the victory in their own strength. If our hearts were only in *abiding* dependence upon God, our experience would be one of continual victory (2 Cor. ii. 14); but we need to be again and again reminded that we are as wholly unable to save ourselves from the *power* of sin as we are from the *guilt* of sin. (Rom. vii.) A crucified Christ on the tree saves from sin's guilt; a living Christ on the throne saves from sin's power. (Phil. iii. 10-14.) Sanctification in its daily practical, earthward aspect is brought about on the same principle as our justification before God, viz., by simple, intelligent, and habitual faith in a *present* Saviour. When we learn the lesson, "Without Me ye can do nothing," we are able to say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Jericho was a great city, considerably larger than Ai. The one had many thousands of armed men, whilst the other had only a few. Yet Ai was the scene of Israel's defeat!

Does not this remind us that it is the *little* sins rather than the *great* sins that we are prone to succumb to? An irritable temper, worldly and foolish talk, suspicion, scandal, and other little things often rob us of our joy, our communion and our testimony. (Cant. ii. 15.)

Directly Israel suffered defeat, we find Joshua and the elders down in the dust before the Lord. Whenever we individually or corporately realize a lack of power in worship, or in ministering to the needs of God's people; whenever we see little or no manifest approval from the

Lord in gospel effort; or whenever we are in anywise overcome of evil instead of overcoming evil with good, our proper place is on our faces before God to learn the reason why.

We ought not to *murmur*, but to *mourn*. (1 Cor. v. 2.) It is one thing to murmur about failure in the assembly, and quite another to mourn over it in secret, in the presence of God. (Ezra ix, x.; Dan. x.; 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21.) We never hear of trouble in the church until the sixth chapter of Acts, and there we read, "when the number of the disciples was *multiplied* there arose a *murmuring*."

We sometimes murmur about things around us, when we ought to be judging *ourselves*. (Josh. vii. 10, 11.)

"*Israel hath sinned.*" How solemn! The sin of one man is charged upon the nation! Of course God did not hold all Israel as guilty as Achan, or *all* would have been visited with his judgment. In Num. xiv., we find two men, Caleb and Joshua, who were not personally guilty, suffering for the sin of the whole congregation, but they did not suffer to the same extent. We have to learn this weighty principle, that whenever there is evil in an assembly, all are in a measure responsible for it. The Lord cannot prosper us if we are indifferent to His honour by allowing unjudged evil amongst us. (Ch. vii. 12.)

Here we see how the guilty one was made manifest, viz., by *personal* dealing—"man by man" . . . "man by man." If we would get right or keep right as an assembly there must be *individual* faithfulness amongst saints. Let each of us, however, see to it that we are right ourselves before we attempt to put others right. It is vain for me to seek to wash my brother's feet, if my own hands are not clean.

From his confession we see that Achan's fall was a gradual one—"I saw . . . coveted . . . took . . .

hid." Departure from God is always a step-by-step process.

The word "accursed" in this chapter might be rendered "*devoted*." (See R.V.) Achan took what did not belong to him, but was "devoted" to the Lord. How instructive this is to any of us who may be hoarding up money or squandering it upon "costly array," with which to deck out these poor bodies of dust and death.

The "godly Babylonish garment," the "silver" and the "gold" which Achan had hidden were brought forth, and the children of Israel "laid them out before the Lord"—a kind of public confession of the evil, and a clearing themselves of it. (See the sevenfold characteristics of "godly sorrow" in 2 Cor. vii. 11.)

Then came the judgment of the troubler. Connect Joshua's words to Achan with Paul's words to the Corinthian church. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God defile; for the temple of God is holy, which temple *ye are*." (1 Cor. i. 10-13; chap. iii. 3, 4, 16, 17.) Again, "He that troubleth you shall *bear his own judgment*." Achan means "He that troubleth," and even as he bore his own judgment, so will every other troubler of "the Israel of God." (Gal. i. 7; v. 10-12; vi. 5.)

"And *all* Israel stoned him with stones." Scriptural discipline is the united action of *all* the assembly. (1 Cor. v. 4, 5, 13.) If this were only understood by all, there would be no sympathizing or associating with the evil doer, but as opportunity occurred, each saint would wisely, tenderly, and faithfully seek to reach the heart and conscience of the erring one.

The judgment on Achan was not executed on a *mountain* but in a *valley*. Whenever discipline *has* to be performed, let it be done in "the spirit of meekness," and with the object of restoration. (Gal. vi. 1; 1 Cor. v. 5.)

Thus "the valley of Achor" shall be "a door of hope" to *all*. (Hosea ii. 15.) The Lord's flock will be fed, strengthened, guided, and encouraged; and we shall know something of the meaning of Isaiah's words, which will have a literal fulfilment to Israel in a future day: "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, *for My people that have sought Me.*" (Isaiah lxxv. 10.)

"OF GOD" IN THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

IN this foundation Epistle the word "God" occurs more often than in any other. In it He is called the "One God;" the "God of patience and consolation;" the "God of hope;" the "God of peace;" the "Everlasting God;" and the "Only wise God." Addressed to saints of God at Rome, then the metropolis of the world, it reveals God's holy and just character, man's ruin, and God's provision for it. It is instructive to read over the words to which the expression "Of God" is attached, and they are here given in order.

The Gospel of God—i. 1	Gift—vi. 22
The Son of God—i. 4	Law—vii. 22, 26; viii. 7
Beloved—i. 7	[32 The Spirit of God—viii. 9, 14;
Will—i. 10; viii. 29; xii. 2; xv.	xv. 19
Power—i. 16	Children—viii. 16, 21; x. 8, 26
Righteousness—i. 17; iii. 5, 21;	Heirs—viii. 17
x. 3	Sons—viii. 14, 19
Wrath—i. 19	Elect—viii. 23
Truth—i. 25; iii. 7; xv. 8	Right hand—viii. 34
Judgment—i. 32; ii. 2; iii. 5	Purpose—ix. 11
Goodness—ii. 4; iv. 22	Mercy—ix. 14
Name—ii. 24	Word—ix. 6; x. 17
Oracles—iii. 2	Severity—xi. 22
Glory—iii. 23; v. 1	Gifts and calling—xi. 29
Forbearance—iii. 25	Mercies—xii. 1
Promise—iv. 20	Authority—xiii. 2
Love—v. 4; viii. 39	Kingdom—xiv. 16
Grace—v. 15; xv. 15	Work—xiv. 20

THE COLLECTION.

“For with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”—*Heb.* xiii. 16.

Deem it no unholy break
 In the praise ! For Jesus' sake
 Let thy heart its wish fulfil ;
 Bring thy gift, it is His will ;
 He accounts it *worship* still.

Blessed when His children bring
 Each his secret offering ;
 Blessed, too, when all agree
 That their gifts united be—
 Something from the family .

Be thy mite “or great or small,”
 Give to Him who giveth all ;
 Freely, for He standeth by ;
 Cheerfully, with single eye ;
 Give, as for eternity .

L. A. B.

 NOTES AND REPLIES.

What are we to understand by our Lord's words in Mark ix. 49. “Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt?”

In the typical language of Scripture, fire is represented as producing two very opposite results. (1.) It *consumes* the sin-offering outside the camp, as the Hebrew word for “burn” implies ; as Sodom was destroyed by fire, corresponding with hell-fire, of which our Lord was previously speaking. (2.) In connection with the sacrifice on the altar, fire is always said to *incense it up in perfume* to God, and thereby is unfolded to us the quickening power of the holiness of God, when brought to bear upon that which stands under the shelter of the atonement. Thus the baptism of the Holy Ghost is also a baptism of fire, the symbol of which we see in the tongues of fire which rested upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. The expression “salted with fire,” corresponds with the second use of fire referred to above. Salt, in Scripture, typically points to preservation and not destruction, and the abiding efficacy of the sacrifice is indicated by the presence of salt, which was never to be lacking on the sacrifices of God. In this

passage "every sacrifice" answers to "every one" in the previous clause; and Rom. xii. 1 throws light on the word "sacrifice." The believer is called to present himself as a sacrifice, which when slain and placed on the altar is again quickened by holy fire and becomes "living," "holy and acceptable." This is what we understand by being "salted with fire;" and "salted with salt" seems to tell of the power that restrains inward corruption. Truly we can say with our Lord "Salt is good;" but we do need to ask ourselves, "If the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?" As those brought within the "covenant of salt" (Num. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5), may we all learn what it is to have salt in ourselves and to have peace one with another. We are too prone to minister the salt to others, and to take the peace to ourselves.

Is it right to say that the law is "set aside," as stated in page 243, vol. ix.?

The expression was there used solely in connection with personal obedience to the law by the sinner, in order to his salvation. In this sense the law is certainly set aside, but only because its penalty has been borne by the Substitute. It is well, however, also to notice that the relation of the *child of God* to the law of God is essentially different from the relation of the *sinner* to that law. To the latter it is the law of condemnation from without; to the other it is the law written upon the heart by the Spirit of God, and is now in measure what it will be hereafter absolutely, "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

In what sense are we to understand the word "all" in John xii, 32?

The word "all" here and elsewhere represents not the all of an accomplished fact, but the all in the heart and wish of him who utters it; by which we mean that when our Lord says "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," or better "unto Myself," He does not imply that all will be effectually drawn any more than when we read that God "will have [or better, "wishes"] all men to be saved," we are to understand that all will actually be saved. As God's desires are for all, so the drawing power of Christ's love is for all, and Christ crucified is the one attractive object. The emphatic word in the sentence is "*Myself*," as the one only centre towards which all must be drawn. Compare this verse with 1 John ii, 2, in which Christ is called "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," where, as in other similar passages, we have no right to limit the universality of the application; for that which excludes from the blessings intended, finds its cause in the sinner, and not in God; so that while He would, the sinner would not.

THESE FIFTY YEARS.

AT present one subject is engaging universal attention in the British empire ; most people are thinking in some way or other of the Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. We hear much of celebrations and rejoicings, but not very much about the goodness of God, and the thanksgiving that is due to Him for His mercies to, and long-suffering over, this kingdom during her reign. Nor does there seem to be a disposition to review the past and make an acknowledgment of the national sins of this period. Every reader of these pages will, doubtless, gladly give thanks to God for His forbearance and His mercies, and for graciously preserving the Queen, thus enabling her to complete her fifty years' reign ; they will also pray that her life may still be lengthened, and her sovereignty upheld, and that she may finally enter the everlasting "mansions." Many, indeed, will not feel able to join in the worldliness inseparably connected with public celebrations, but they will rejoice to turn the occasion to profit by making it a time of special thanksgiving and supplication touching national matters, as well as concerning the matters of the kingdom of God. A few words here with reference to the past fifty years may help to this.

There are, of course, various ways of reviewing any period of time, and persons will come to different conclusions according to their individual standpoint. We can only consider the subject from one point of view, even that which affects men for eternity as well as for time, and therefore the following remarks will bear upon what in popular language would be called the religious condition of the nation.

Most of those who will read these lines have been taught, through God's grace, the great truth of the heavenly calling of His Church, and that the moment a sinner receives Christ as the Saviour of the lost, that sinner ceases to belong to the world; and as a child of God and a stranger and pilgrim here, he is simply waiting for the rightful but rejected King of the whole world, even the Lord Jesus Christ. This truth has not been learnt by all the children of God, or there would be more general separation from the world on the part of those who are Christ's. A large number of those who are really saved by faith in Christ do not see that His cross stands between them and that world which rejects Him, and they are found either in what is called the national Church, or in other bodies which mingle religion with politics. They are thus necessarily affected by the systems in which they are found, while to a certain extent they are responsible for the character of those systems, and it is a deeply humbling fact that so many of the anti-Christian movements of the day have the sanction of not a few who in their hearts own Christ alone as their Saviour.

It is not a little remarkable that many of the things now so powerful around us made their appearance, or had a new impetus given to them, just before the commencement of the last fifty years. If a twofold picture could be drawn of the state of things then and now, many would be startled at the rapid development of evil, and at the sad degeneration of one movement at least, which had for its aim the honour of the Lord in subjection to His Word. Our remarks, however, must be very brief, the object being to give a bird's-eye view of a large subject.

I. ROMANISM.—Let us first look at this system, which is above all others a combination of both religious and political pretensions. In England and Scotland, up

to the beginning of this century, Popery had never recovered from the blow it received at the time of the Reformation; then it again reared its head, and, beginning by obtaining grants from Parliament for educating its priests at Maynooth, it succeeded in 1845 in obtaining an endowment, and in 1884, more than half a million of the national funds were employed in supporting Romish training colleges and schools in Ireland.

Until 1829 Romanists were disabled from sitting in Parliament, not on account of their religion, but because the Romish theory of the temporal authority of the Pope prevented their taking the place of absolute allegiance to a Protestant sovereign. In that year the law was relaxed to such an extent as to throw open to them not Parliament only, but all offices in the realm, except five; afterwards came the obliteration of the word *Protestant* from the oath of allegiance to the sovereign, and as a consequence they have got into some of the highest offices of State.

Fifty years ago persons were not allowed to take titles similar to those given by law to the dignitaries of the Church of England, but in 1850 the Romanists began to assume them, and have gone on until now there are in England and Scotland no less than twenty-three who are called archbishops and bishops, in addition to over 2500 priests. And these titles are so far recognised by English statesmen that the priest who claims the highest position in the Romish church in England is given, in an official document, a place of precedence before the English nobility. During these fifty years Jesuits have been expelled even from Romish countries, but have been allowed to settle in England, and are said to be at the head of the great Catholic mission in this land. An agitation is also now on foot for establishing diplomatic relations between the Government of England and the

Pope of Rome. Thus is England nurturing that system that once held her in thralldom, that murdered her sons and her daughters for reading the Bible, that *boasts* itself to be ever the same, and *proves* itself to be so by enmity to Christ and the gospel, and all who cleave to Him and it. And she is doing so with an open declaration before her eyes, in words spoken in 1859 by one now a cardinal, and often quoted, that Rome will rest content with nothing less than supremacy. In addressing a council he said: "It is good for us to be here in England. It is yours, right reverend fathers, to subjugate and subdue, to bend and to break the will of an imperial race, the will which, as the will of Rome of old, rules over nations and peoples, invincible and inflexible. . . . It is the head of Protestantism; the centre of its movements, and the stronghold of its power. Weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere. Conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world."*

II. RITUALISM. — We have hitherto spoken of that which bears its own name, but there is another movement more subtle, because carried on in many respects under false colours, that is, the Ritualistic movement in the established Church of England. We are told that between fifty and sixty years ago there was, amongst a certain number at Oxford, an earnest spirit aroused, and a desire for spiritual life and power, that could only be compared with the movement that preceded the great revival of the former century. But the results of the two movements were very different, and that difference may be accounted for by the fact that whereas in the earlier period men in

* Many years ago I read a volume of sermons preached by this very priest as a clergyman of the Church of England, and I said, "Surely none but a Christian could have preached them." A solemn warning to us that truth in the head is one thing, but in the heart another.

their earnestness turned to the Word of God, in the latter they turned to the Church, starting with the postulate that the Scriptures were to be received on the authority of the Church, and by that authority alone could they be expounded. Hence, while "*Hear the Word of the Lord,*" was the cry of the evangelists of the eighteenth century, "*Hear the Church,*" was the watchword of the leaders of a new departure from that Word.

This is commonly called the *Tractarian* movement, because the leaders set forth their doctrines in a series of tracts, concluding with the celebrated "Tract XC.," in which, as one has said, the writer endeavoured to show "that the Protestant articles of the Church of England might, by a process of Jesuitical casuistry and non-natural interpretation, be explained away, and reconciled with the doctrines of the Romish Church." What led to the writing of this tract was the feeling on the part of some that, while the prayer-book generally was on their side, the articles were against them; there was in such a consequent exercise of conscience as to whether they ought to remain where they were. This tract agitated the whole of England, for at that time people were not prepared for such a defence as the author set forth. "But," says an able writer, "he had done his work, and had he waited a few years, till the seed which he had sown could grow, he would have seen the Church un-protestantizing itself more ardently than his most sanguine hope could have anticipated, the squire parsons of the establishment gone like a dream, an order of priests in their places, with an undress uniform in the world, and at their altars 'celebrating' masses in symbolic robes, with a directory to guide their inexperience. He would have seen them hearing confession, giving absolution, adoring Our Lady and professing to receive visits from her, preaching tran-

substantiation and purgatory and penance, and everything his tract had claimed for them; founding monasteries and religious orders, washing out of their naves and chancels the last traces of Puritan sacrilege; doing all this in defiance of law and Parliaments and bishops, and forcing the authorities to admit that they cannot be interfered with." But the author of Tract XC. did not wait where he was, for he took the only consistent path and joined the Romish Church, of which he also is now a cardinal.

The above was the testimony six years ago of a churchman, whose brother was one of their early leaders, though he soon died; the following is the testimony of a clergyman less than six months ago: "Prayers for the dead, invocation of angels, confession and absolution, seven sacraments, the mass, the real presence, the adoration of the host or wafer are all now openly taught." And he adds: "In regard to the ritual expression of these doctrines, we find it more or less pronounced in hundreds, if not thousands, of churches, from St. Paul's, London, down to the humblest village church in the land." The same writer makes another solemn statement: "Even our Nonconformist brethren seem bitten by the same rabies in their harvest decorations and elaborate musical services. The Church of England is racing after Rome, and some of our dissenting friends seem unwilling to be left too far behind."

This picture is, indeed, a sad one. Judges pronounce, as they have done fifty or sixty times, that certain things are illegal, yet the men who are under the law, and are eating the bread of the State, set the law at defiance and do as they choose. The bishops who have in the most solemn manner promised before God "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word," not only permit these things, which, indeed, they

seem powerless to prevent, but actually promote the men who practise them. But what is still more sad is the fact, that some who are truly children of God are helping on such things, while those who would oppose them render themselves powerless to testify against them, for while, every time they baptize an infant, they declare the awful lie of baptismal regeneration—which they themselves do not believe, but which is the foundation of the whole system—how can they withstand the immorality of the men who declare their unfeigned assent to the articles, and then teach doctrines and follow practices condemned in them?

III. INFIDELITY.—Side by side with the growth of superstition we have to record the terrible progress of avowed scepticism amongst those who profess the name of Christ. “Half a century ago,” says the churchman from whom we have quoted, “anyone who openly questioned the truth of Christianity was treated as a public offender and was excommunicated by society. . . . Orthodox dissent was permitted. Doubts about the essentials of the faith were not permitted.” Very soon, however, the flood of German rationalism reached this country, and one fruit of it was the notorious volume of *Essays and Reviews*, which set aside the authority of the Bible, questioned its fundamental truths, and struck at the very foundations of Christianity. Again many were startled; the matter was taken up, and efforts were made to obtain sentences against the writers (or some of them) for denying the doctrines of the Church of England, and after the charges had been considerably pruned down, the judge gave judgment against two of the offenders. This judgment was reversed by the highest court of the land in 1864, and thus the question was definitely settled that, as a leading journal expressed it, “the members of the Church are released from all legal obligation to maintain

a higher authority for the Scriptures than that claimed for them in *Essays and Reviews*," or, as another Review stated: "The clergy of the Church of England are required to believe that the Bible is, on the whole, a good book; but the Church of England does not affirm that it is, in any distinctive and authoritative sense, God's Book." The same Review adds, "Their lordships absolve ministers of the Church of England from obligation to believe in vicarious atonement and in the eternal punishment of the lost."

Such a judicial encouragement as the assertion from England's highest court, that the ministers of the State religion were at liberty to teach what they pleased, coupled with the promotion at no distant period of some of the writers and their defenders to places of dignity within its pale, could only be fruitful in the growth of irreverence in handling Scripture, and the subversion of its inspired teaching. The natural consequence is, that in the establishment Socinianism has spread to an amazing extent, and on every hand men are denying the vicarious character of the death of Christ, and openly caricaturing the solemn doctrine of the punishment of those who refuse to obey the gospel.

The effect of this teaching is felt outside the national establishment in a far greater degree than the effect of Ritualism. From hundreds of the Nonconformist pulpits of the land these evil doctrines are preached, and men seem seeking to outvie one another in popularizing sceptical teaching, while certain papers that are circulated by thousands, and find access to unsuspecting households, are sapping the faith and morality of the young.

Three facts may be given as sure evidences of the growth of laxity in bodies that once were reckoned to be sound upon fundamental doctrines.

1. In one large body the denial of the eternal punishment of the lost, and the holding of doctrines necessarily connected with this, form no barrier to the highest official position, while in that body the doctrine that men are by nature children of God, is commonly taught, and as a natural consequence the need of reconciliation by the death of Christ is denied.

2. In the recent union meeting of another body, from which better things might have been expected, a minister was appointed vice-president who has championed the cause of one who denied every essential of Christianity, and has himself given evidence of lack of reverence and soundness in expounding scripture. This is not all. One minister was faithful enough to raise a protest on behalf of evangelical doctrine, and though he did so in a courteous and solemn manner, he was actually *hissed*, while in the assembly of hundreds of ministers only *eight* supported the protest by their votes!

In both the above bodies it was suggested for consideration at their large annual ministerial meetings, that the preaching of theology should be given up at their Sunday evening services, and that in order to attract the masses, such subjects as the works of creation, the human body, social and political duties, etc., should be taken up.

3. In a third denomination, the subject of some annual lectures is this year, "*The moral and religious aspects of the doctrine of evolution*;" and the one chosen to deliver these public lectures is known as "a decided evolutionist." Surely this points to nothing less than a loosing of the authority of Scripture, which condemns by anticipation *all* evolutionary theories, inasmuch as they deny *creation* and set aside the *Creator*.

Thus on every hand we see the word of God being made void, and human tradition, or human speculation, taking

its place, or influencing those who profess to be expositors of it; and even many who cannot be charged with actually teaching what is false are noted rather for what they *withhold*; and, it may be added, true servants of God, who know and love the Lord Jesus, and value His precious sacrifice, are, like Lot in Sodom, tormenting their righteous souls with the lawlessness around them, with which they are linked, and from which they seem to have no power to free themselves. We might refer to the agitation in northern churches against the Calvinistic principles of the Confession of Faith, and to the introduction of novel doctrines and practices among them; also to the strange lack of knowledge and consequent perils of those whose "salvation" zeal has of late so widely spread—but enough has been said concerning others, and we need to remember the apostolic injunction in 2 John 8.

"*Look to yourselves.*" This brief review is only given with the feeling that we ought not to be ignorant of the state of things in the midst of which our lot is cast, and in the hope that those who read will seek yet more earnestly to bow before God, in fellowship with our gracious Lord, and in deep humiliation and confession, with prayer for the deliverance of those who are His, and the rescue of those who are "led away with the error of the wicked." But even greater cause for abasement of soul is seen as we consider that which still more concerns us.

Again looking back to the period just preceding the last fifty years, at the very time of the Oxford movement to re-assert the authority of the Church, we behold a little company of children of God gathered around His Word, first in Dublin, and then in Plymouth, and seeking to give that Word its place of supremacy, and to test everything by it. The consequence was that they were taught much

by the Spirit of God, and sought at no little cost in many ways to carry out what they had learnt. They were led into the great truths of the heavenly calling and the oneness of the Church of God, the priesthood of all believers, the simplicity of the Lord's supper, the presence of the Lord with His people when gathered to His name, the guidance of the Spirit of God in the assembly, and the bright hope of the return of the Lord to receive His people unto Himself, raising the departed and changing those "which are alive and remain," and then fulfilling His word of promise to Israel and setting up His kingdom on the earth.

The results of the reception of such truths by believers were separation from the world and gathering together in a simple way to show forth the Lord's death and to help one another's faith and joy. On the one hand, as the conviction grew that they could only find true fellowship with those who were really living members of Christ, so on the other, as one has said, "the *original* principles of this happy communion tended to nothing less than the enjoyment of union and communion *among all* who possess the common life of the family of God." Those who thus assembled acknowledged that they were but a fragment of the Church of God, and they took such a position as enabled them to acknowledge all who were Christ's, while they raised no barriers to fellowship with any who had taken refuge under the blood of sprinkling, and were seeking to walk worthy of the gospel of Christ, however little they knew of the truth. Surely those who remember the position and course fifty years ago of these believers, and who consider the present condition of things, can but exclaim, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" while those of us who only hear with the hearing of the ear of

those happy days, are deeply bowed with a sense of the contrast.

Twenty-five years ago I heard a dear departed servant of Christ say, in the course of a lecture which has been published with much alteration since his death, " We have sadly lacked *grace* ; there we have lamentably failed. I believe the great mistake from the beginning has been, not in the act of separation, but in the ungracious way of exposing the mistakes of other brethren, and for this the Lord has solemnly judged us. The divisions of ' Brethren ' are the greatest scandal we see in the Church of God, and they are the result of the want of grace shown toward one another." What would he say if he were here now? Above all, what does the Lord say? Some who were once walking in the simplicity of the truth have been for years pursuing a path very contrary to their early course and drawing many after them, and thus building up a system the pretensions of which can only find their parallel in the Church of Rome. For about forty years they have unjustly charged with evil doctrine those from whom they separated, and have claimed to take a high stand for God ; but His blessing has been lacking, and strifes and divisions have only brought further dishonour on the name of Christ.

And even such as have in some measure sought to maintain the simplicity of those first principles of fellowship, are in great danger lest, instead of being truly humbled by the past, taking warning by the sorrowful condition of those we have just referred to, and seeking grace to deal wisely and patiently with all God's children, we should be misled into building up another system, surrounding ourselves with barriers of our own devising, and allowing the habit of judging other children of God to take the place of that intercession on their behalf which must spring from a walk in intelligent fellowship with

Christ. Have we not cause also to ask ourselves, Where is the evidence of the presence of the Lord in living power in our meetings, subduing what is not of Himself, and filling us with the spirit of worship, and with power for growth and edification? Where is the unworldliness of fifty years ago and the simple living to Christ, who "loved us and gave Himself for us?" Where is that zeal in the gospel which leads to self-denial in seeking to spread it around us, and to minister to those who carry it forth to other lands in such a measure as to give us the consciousness that we are fulfilling our Lord's last commission? And where is the brightness and purifying power of the blessed hope of His coming again to receive us to Himself and conform us to His image? Have we not allowed discussions and differences about prophetic truth to hinder our waiting for *Him*, and our keeping the eye on His judgment-seat?

These things cannot be enlarged on here, but surely they show us that a review of fifty or sixty years may well bring us on our faces before our God in humiliation and confession. Yet let us not be *discouraged*, and let us not be tempted to give up anything we have received; let us rather hear the Lord's word to the Church at Sardis: "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and *hold fast*, and *repent*." Let the condition of things around us stir us to watchfulness and prayer for ourselves, and to the blessed work of intercession for others; and let us take to heart the fact that the Lord who has been pleased to cast our lot in these difficult days is able to make all grace abound unto us, so that we may as His witnesses magnify Him in all our ways, and gain His approval in "that day."

W. H. B.

THE TEMPLE OF EZEKIEL.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES BY MR. T. NEWBERRY.—I.

EZEKIEL xl. 1-18.

WHEN God gave Moses a pattern of the Tabernacle, He revealed to him, upon Mount Sinai, His own thoughts concerning it, and directed him to make all things according to the pattern shown him. (Exod. xxv. 40.) Before God employed Solomon to erect the house for Jehovah, He first gave to David, by His hand upon him, a full description of what it should be. In like manner, ample particulars were revealed to Ezekiel concerning the future millennial Temple. (Ezek. xl. 3.)

In the visions of God, Ezekiel was taken from his place of captivity by the river Chebar, and was set upon a very high mountain in the land of Israel, and there came to him an angel having the appearance of brass, which is a symbol of endurance and stedfastness. The mountain was not then really existing, but was a fore-shadowing of that mountain of Jehovah's House yet to be established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills (Isa. ii. 2), on which the millennial Temple will be built, and which will be the centre of worship for Israel and all the inhabitants of the earth during the millennial period. The prophet was shown from the summit of this mountain the frame of a city on the south, and was then led by the angel to the Temple and its courts. This angel was sent by God to give him full instructions, and with the line and measuring reed in his hand he conducted Ezekiel over the whole. The prophet is apparently on the south side, and he is brought to the south outer gate, and while standing there is shown a wall going round about the outside of the house. This external wall forms an enclosure of 500

cubits square, or in round numbers, about 1000 feet, encompassing the Temple and its courts.*

In the New Testament, when the temple and its courts are mentioned, two different Greek words are used by the Holy Spirit, both of which are in the Authorized Version rendered by the one word "temple." The Greek word *hieron* from *hieros*, meaning "sacred," is used to describe the whole of the temple area, including the outer and the inner courts, with the building itself; so that when it is said that our Lord Jesus and His disciples went up to the temple, the word *hieron* is always employed. The Greek word used for the *internal* building, the house of Jehovah, the sanctuary proper, embracing the porch and the holy and most holy places, is *naos*, from *naio*, to dwell. When our Lord said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John ii. 19), He used the latter word, for He spake of the temple of His body, as being the dwelling-place of God. In John i. 14 we read, "The Word was made flesh, and *tabernacled* among us," so that both the tabernacle and the temple were types of the Lord Jesus Christ, during His sojourn upon earth, as God manifest in the flesh.

Within the outer enclosure of 500 cubits square was a court of 300 cubits square, called the court of the priests, and into this inner court none but the priests and Levites were permitted to enter. The temple of Solomon and that of Ezekiel have but one outer court, but in Herod's the outer court was sub-divided into the court of the Gentiles, and the court of the women. This was an innovation by Herod, without warrant in the Word of God, and there will be no such sub-division in the future temple. (See Rev. xi. 2.)

* See the ground-plan and elevation contained in the Supplement to the Englishman's Bible, Large Edition.

When it is said that Jesus was found in the midst of the doctors, or that He taught in the temple, we must not suppose that He even entered the court of the priests, much less the sanctuary. "*He entered not into the holy places made with hands*, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Heb. ix.) When we read that our Lord overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and cast them out, the reference is to the external courts. As being under the law, our Lord fulfilled every iota of its commands; and not being of the tribe of Levi He only entered the court of the people. The "*naos*," or temple proper, was only entered by the priests in regular course, as in the case of Zacharias (Luke i. 8), who in the order of his course went in to offer incense on the golden altar at the appointed time, while all the people were praying "without," *i.e.*, in the outer court.

All the gates are of one pattern. (Ezek. xl.) There are three gates to the outer court—one east, one north, and one south. Over against these gates, and 100 cubits from them, are the inner gates and their porches. Opposite the eastern outer gate is the eastern inner one, and so with the others. There are two porches to each gateway and six little chambers, three on each side, five cubits apart, the doors of which are opposite each other. The length of each gateway is fifty cubits, the breadth five and twenty; and on either side of the gateway are arches—more properly porches or piazzas—extending sixty cubits. These piazzas are covered walks with pillars, forming a convenient place of shelter for those coming up to worship. In the wall there are lattice windows so that the people waiting may obtain a view of what is going on within the courts.

The little chambers or porter's lodges (on either side

of the gateway) were one reed, or about 12 feet square, and they bring to mind that Scripture, "I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." The word rendered "little chamber" is from a root signifying, "to point out, or define;" and we may infer therefore that these little chambers are not only provided as lodging-places for the porters, but also that the porters instruct the person entering, giving him the information needed in order to become an intelligent worshipper in the courts of his God. It illustrates beautifully that word in Eccles. v. 1-7—"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil." It is of very great importance when we worship and serve, that we should be well instructed; and God has provided for us the evangelist to teach us the first elements of His truth; the pastor to give us an experimental acquaintance with the truth; and the teacher, who opens to our view a wider manifestation of the Word of God, so that we may be able fully to enter into and enjoy the worship of Jehovah.

The prophet Ezekiel is then brought into the outer court, and beholds a pavement, like that in Solomon's temple, for which David provided marble stones in abundance, probably of white marble; and there are thirty chambers upon this pavement. The word for "*chamber*" here is a different word from that used for the "little chambers" of the gateway; it signifies "to join, or unite." These joined chambers were in the thickness of the wall, next to the porches of each gateway, five on either side. Those in the inner court are holy chambers for the priests alone, but those in the outer court are for the use of the people. Sometimes the word is rendered "parlour," as when Samuel took Saul into the parlour and gave him the

portion set apart for him. These chambers of the outer court are for the use of those who come up to worship; either for retirement, prayer, or conference, or as a place in which to partake of the peace-offering.

In the peace-offering, God accepted a part, "the food of the offering made by fire unto Jehovah." (Lev. iii. 11.) All the fat that covered the inwards was burnt as incense on the altar; this was God's portion. The priest who offered—a type of the Lord Jesus Christ—had his, and the priestly family had theirs. The wave breast and heave shoulder were given to the Aaronite family—the heave shoulder being the emblem of strength and service, and the wave breast, that of sympathy and affection. The offerer had also his portion. Thus we get a beautiful type of fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ; and with the whole priestly family in the one offering of Him who hath made peace through His blood.

These attached chambers are entered by one door on the east, and lead one into another from east to west, showing progress. The *east* is the point of direct approach. The *north* speaks of judgment or justice. The victims are slain on the north side of the altar, and the claims of equity and justice are thus met. The *south* speaks of loving-kindness or mercy. There are entrances by the north, south, and east, but there is no going out by the west. There is no entrance but on the ground of judgment satisfied—atonement made by sacrifice; or on the ground of mercy, which had provided a sacrifice to meet the requirements of justice,

“ For justice had withstood
The purposes of love.”

But the sacrifice being offered,

“ Justice now withstands no more,
And mercy yields her boundless store.”

Connected with the north inner gate are eight tables of stone, four within and four without. These tables are a cubit and a half square, and one cubit high. On these the priests slay the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the trespass-offering. There are also hooks of a hand's breadth on either side of the porch, on which are hung those parts which are too large for the tables. The priests on entering the north gate to go into the sanctuary, would pass between the eight tables, on which would be the flesh of a newly-slain victim, and suspended on either side would be the flesh of the victim. We read in Gen. xv. concerning Abram, that when God made a covenant with him, Abram was to divide the sacrifice in the midst, and to lay one piece over against the other, with a pathway between; and "when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces, and in the same day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram." This was the ancient manner of confirming a covenant, viz., cutting the sacrifice in twain, and passing between its divided parts. (Jer. xxxiv. 18.) In Heb. ix. 17, it is said: "A covenant is only of force over the dead, but is of no force at all while the victim is alive" (as some render). The priest entering by the north gate thus enters into a covenant with God. The pieces suspended on each side, corresponded with the rent veil, illustrating that verse in Heb. x. 19, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a newly-slain and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

Chambers within are provided for the purpose of washing the legs and inwards of the victim which is afterwards burnt on the altar as a "sweet savour to God"—a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was holy in

His walk and in His inmost thoughts. Through His one offering we now enter into God's presence, accepted in the acceptance of Christ, as shown forth in the burnt-offering.

Two of these chambers are for the use of those priests who have the charge of the house and the altar, for they have a charge to keep, and a God to serve. There are also chambers for the singers, which may remind us that we too are called to enter into His house with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise.

A LIVING SAVIOUR.

JOHN XIV. 18, 19.

THERE is something exquisitely touching in the way our gracious Lord seeks to establish the hearts of His disciples in the love and grace of the Father, and in His own love and gracious care for them.

He was about to leave them in a world where everything was adverse to their spiritual well-being. Every artifice which the prince of this world could bring to bear, would be employed against them. That power which while less than almighty is yet very great, and that intelligence which exceeds all human intelligences, would be exercised against these feeble men who had been drawn to own Him as their Saviour and their Lord. The ceaseless efforts of the powers of darkness would be put forth to extinguish the light lit for God in their hearts, and to silence the witness which they were to bear for Him. But He that was for them, was greater than all that could be against them; and the Lord seeks to familiarise their thoughts with the unseen. He was about to go to the Father, and they would see Him no more.

(Jno. xvi. 10.) That is, they would see Him no more after the old order, as present with them in the body. Yet He would be with them, and they should see Him by the exercise of those spiritual faculties which they had as begotten of God. "*I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.*" As if He would say, I will not leave you like orphans, unloved and uncared for, to fight your way through a hard and hostile world as best you may! Henceforth they must not live after the sight of the eye, or the hearing of the ear; but they must live by that faith which hangs upon the word of God concerning the grace and fidelity of Him who had gone to the Father, and yet would be present with them.

"I will come to you," in verse 18, corresponds with, "I will manifest myself to him" in verse 21. This "coming," or "manifesting," is not the Lord's *future* coming as in verse 3, but the manifestation of Himself spiritually while yet absent in body. It was this *spiritual* showing or manifesting which Judas could not understand—the possibility of an appearing which was not for sight and sense; not for the world, but for disciples only.

"*Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no longer, but ye see Me.*" Here we have the disciple's privilege, and that which contrasts him with the world. "We see Jesus," is the language of faith. Not only do we see Him at the right hand of God, but we are privileged to know His presence with us amid the difficulties of our daily life. "I will come to you," is a positive promise, the fulfilment of which we ought to expect and desire.

Peter in prison has the visit of an angel (Acts xii.), and deliverance is the result. Paul in the ship (Acts xxvii.) has the same, fulfilling the words of Heb. i. 14, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" In Acts

xxii. 18, and in 2 Tim. iv. 17, we have something far more precious and intimate. The Lord Himself draws near, not to deliver from chain and prison, but to cheer and strengthen His servants under the weight of affliction endured for the Master's sake.

If some valued earthly friend had promised to visit us, should we not expect him? and would not the desire for the visit be according to the love of our hearts for the one who promised? But is it not true that sometimes—may we not say oftentimes?—our hearts are so cold and our faith so feeble, that there is little expectation of, or desire for the fulfilment of this most gracious promise made by the "Friend" who "loveth at all times?" "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty," was long since said to the godly in Israel. (Isa. xxxiii. 17.) Is it less a promise to the godly in this present evil day? Surely not. Did we connect promise with privilege we might the more earnestly covet its fulfilment, and cease to grieve Him who feels the slight put by His people upon His love.

Again, the gracious Saviour seeks to establish their souls in the perpetuity and stability of their blessing, saying, "*Because I live ye shall live also.*" These words agree with Rom. v. 10, "Being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life;" also with Heb. vii. 25, "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Arguments and reasonings touching the security of saints would cease if the priesthood of our risen Lord were more fully understood. His intercession secures our salvation, for in answer thereto the activities of divine grace are exercised on our behalf—we obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need. (Heb. iv. 16.) The Holy Ghost makes good *in us* the intercession of our

Great High Priest *for us*. That "other Comforter" has taken the place of Him who is gone away, and who is now our Advocate with the Father. The security of the believer depends upon the faithfulness and ability of the Advocate with the Father and the faithfulness and ability of the Holy Ghost the Comforter with us; and it would be an affront of the worst kind to suppose inability or unfaithfulness in either, for "God is faithful."

We do not at present fully understand the manner of the divine dealings; for we might expect that under this faithful and gracious provision the saint would never stumble or stray away; but this we know is not the case. By the word of God, and our own experience, we know that we do stumble and stray, yet we can never attribute our so doing to any lack of ability or faithfulness in the Advocate with the Father or in the Comforter with us; but we must ever take the shame to ourselves. The character of our walk depends very much upon ourselves. By the ministry of the great High Priest, and by the presence of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, we are secured from falling, that is, from coming short of the mansions above; but we are not secured from stumbling, except as we abide in Christ, and as His words abide in us. "While I was with them in the world I kept them in Thy name; those that Thou gavest Me I have kept (*guarded*), and none of them is lost." (Jno. xvii. 12.) But how much *stumbling* there had been! Such is the grace on our behalf that we need not even stumble. "If ye do these things ye shall never stumble." (2 Pet i. 10.) Thus, we see that, while there is an absoluteness about the ministry of Christ for us, and of the Spirit in us, so that a perfected salvation in glory is assured us, yet as to the character of walk, and fruit unto our God, much depends upon ourselves—"if ye do these things."

The difference between stumbling and falling is very distinctly marked in Rom. xi. 11, "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid." Israel had stumbled, and divine grace and wisdom accomplished its purpose to Gentiles through their stumbling; but they could not *fall*, for "God is faithful," and Israel shall yet be gathered.

One great preservative against stumbling is a lowly mind. If we are learning of Him who is meek and lowly in heart we shall not stumble. But if the fires of pride be allowed to burn, we shall soon find ourselves stumbling. It was only natural that Peter should follow his Lord afar off, and then deny Him, after he allowed the thought of his superiority to the other disciples. (Matt. xxvi. 33.) We always carry the same embers and fire within us, and unless watchful, the devil will quickly blow up the flame, and fearful stumbling will follow. (See 1 Tim. iii. 6.)

Another help against stumbling is the Scriptures, and our estimate of them is seen by the measure in which we take them as our rule and guide in all things. Yet we would not exactly call this *another* help, but rather the complement of the one already mentioned. For the lowly mind will always value the Word, and take it as a lamp to the feet and a light to the path.

There is a power in the Holy Scriptures to preserve the obedient child from stumbling, and if a child of God has been overtaken in a fault, there is power in the Scriptures to restore him. In every way, therefore, it is our wisdom to value the written word. (Psalm cxix. 72.)

"Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore." (Jude 24, 25, R.V.)

J. C.

THE HUMANITY OF OUR LORD.

THE incarnation of the Son of God is a subject which, above all others, needs to be considered with such lowliness of mind as leads to the absolute acceptance of what God has revealed, and disallows anything like the profane exercise of mere speculative imagination. The subject is so profound, and the mystery so deep, that none can enter into it except as they have the written Word unfolded to them by the Spirit of truth, who has said, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." While, however, the mystery is great, the utterances of Scripture are remarkably clear and distinct, and therefore none need misunderstand.

In whatever concerns the humanity of Christ there seems peculiar fitness in taking for our guidance the Gospel of Luke, which is emphatically *the Gospel of the Son of Man*. In the first chapter of that Gospel we read that the angel Gabriel came to Mary and announced to her the miraculous conception of Him who should "be called the Son of the Most High," and in answer to her question: "How shall this be?" he added, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; therefore also that *Holy thing* that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." From this we learn that He was the Son of God as touching His humanity; even as touching His deity He was "the Only-begotten of the Father." The great truth of the incarnation is thus declared in language precise and clear, and had these words been accepted more simply with worshipping hearts, and apart from speculative thoughts, there would have been no danger of godly souls falling

into the delusions of contemplating an incarnation that had lost its human reality on the one hand, or its divine characteristics on the other.

In the Gospel of John (i. 14) we read that "the Word *became* flesh"—*not* assumed it, or took it on Him. But we must be on our guard against attributing to the word "flesh" here that moral evil with which it is identified in other passages, which speak of the old nature in contrast with the new.

When God created Adam and Eve in the garden, He created them "flesh and blood," and so in the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle, in speaking of our Lord's becoming a little lower than the angels by becoming Man, says, "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same," or, more properly, "of these," that is, of flesh and blood. (Heb. ii. 14.) It has to be noticed in regard to this passage, that as if to prevent the possibility of a moral significance being given to the word "flesh" the apostle links it with the word "blood"; and the expression "flesh and blood" simply describes man as man, without reference to that corruption which, by the fall, has come into man's nature. When Paul would express what is sinful and corrupt, he uses the word "flesh" alone.

But in Romans viii. 3, when he speaks of Christ, he says, "God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," or more literally "the flesh of sin," implying that in the flesh of the Son of God there was the absence of the moral taint of sin, and therefore also of all the consequences of sin; for to deny the presence of sin, and yet to assert the presence of its consequences, until sin and its consequences were taken up vicariously on behalf of others, is to bring in confusion, and to make that intrinsic which in Christ was solely extrinsic.

The body of the Lord was not derived from human fatherhood, but was a body prepared for Him by God, as we read in Heb. x. 5, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." This remarkable rendering of Psalm xl. 6, which in the Hebrew is "Mine ears hast Thou opened" or "dugged," points to that particular kind of obedience for which a body of "flesh and blood" was an essential prerequisite, namely, the presenting of Himself a sacrifice and an offering to God. He who in the beginning moulded and fashioned the human frame from the dust of the earth, and thus made the first man, prepared or perfected (as the word is) a body in the Virgin's womb for "the second Man, the Lord from heaven"; and the Mighty One, the Most High God, who breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life, overshadowed the virgin Mary, so that that which was begotten in her was not a Seth, begotten of Adam, "in his likeness, after his image," but "that Holy thing," Emmanuel, the Son of the Most High. The spirits of darkness own Him as "the Holy One of God" (Luke iv. 34); Peter, for himself and his fellow disciples, confessed that He was "the Holy One of God," when many were turning from Him (John vi. 69, R.V.); the apostles charge the Jews with having "denied the Holy One and the Just" (Acts iii. 14); John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One" (1 John ii. 20); and in Rev. iii. 7, in the epistle to Philadelphia, He is emphatically described as "the Holy One and the True."

Before referring to the passages which speak of the growth of the Holy Child, let us consider that profound expression of Philippians ii. "*He emptied Himself,*" weakly rendered in the A.V., "He made Himself of no reputation." To this emptying our Lord appears to refer in John xvii., when He prays, "Now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had

with Thee before the world was." It is not for us to fathom what is included in the expression, "the glory which I had with Thee before the world was," but it would certainly seem that only by emptying Himself of this was it possible that He who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person could take the form of a servant, become in the likeness of men, and then humble Himself and become obedient unto death. While we magnify the grace that led our Lord to become poor even to the poverty of the cross, we must take care not to let our imagination go beyond the Scripture, and leave us *only* the Son of *Man*. In Isaiah ix. the titles "Wonderful," "Counsellor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "Prince of Peace," remind us of the mystery connected with the birth of Him of whom it is said, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." Of Him as the Infant in Nazareth it is said, "And the Child grew, and waxed strong, becoming full of wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him." (Luke ii. 40, R.V.) At the age of twelve He asked questions of the learned, astonishing them by His understanding and answers; and His reply to His mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" made her feel the mystery concerning her Son. Yet, as characterizing the years of His life at Nazareth from that time to the commencement of His ministry, it is said, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

While to human eyes there was nothing that was not natural in the development of the Holy One, we must not think that we can judge of Him as of one, like ourselves, only a child of Adam, but we must ever remember that in the incarnation and growth in human form of Him who was the Son of God, there are depths beyond our ken. In the Scriptures we have quoted, and a few others, God un-

folds all that He has been pleased to enunciate to us regarding the birth and life up to full manhood of His Son, but this is enough to satisfy our hearts as to how thoroughly our blessed Lord was indeed the Son of Man.

From the time when He commenced His public ministry onwards to the cross, the full and varied accounts in the Gospels reveal to us the obedient Son of the Father, the true Servant, in whom His soul delighted, Who spoke not His own words, but what He had heard from His Father ; not doing His own works, but those which had been shown Him from above ; not going hither and thither according to the dictate of will or circumstance, but ever awaiting and following the guidance of the Father.

Speculations concerning the development of our Lord have led some to attribute to Him "misunderstandings" and "misconceptions." Those who thus speculate forget that only from the darkness of the carnal heart or the pride of lofty imaginations could such things arise ; they could not possibly be found in Him who could ever say, "Lord, My heart is not haughty, nor Mine eyes lofty." (Psalm cxxxi.) To *misunderstand* has always a measure of culpability attached to it, and is a very different thing from *not understanding*, as this may arise simply from the fact that a revelation has not been made.

Again, in seeking to enter into the wondrous grace of the Lord as shown in His deep humiliation, we may wrongly interpret or add to the utterances of Scripture. For example, much misuse is often made of Isa. liii. 2, "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ; He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." This has been taken to imply that the personal appearance of the Blessed One was marked by the absence of comeliness and beauty ; so much so, that

the word "tender" has been rendered *weakly*, and to the words "form" and "comeliness" significations have been attached which are not in the least warranted by the original. The word here rendered "comeliness" is that frequently used for kingly and divine *majesty*, and the passage has no reference at all to the personal aspect of the Son of God, but, read in the light of the New Testament, it is seen to indicate His mean earthly surroundings, while it tells us that, as a root in a dry ground, He grew and flourished, drawing all His resources from above and not from beneath. Hence to unbelieving Israel there was no "beauty," or rather "outward appearance," that caused them to desire Him, though, as John says, those who looked upon Him with the eye of faith "beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

There are no direct prophetic Scriptures in the Old Testament, nor any statements in the New, that justify the assertion that because Christ was man He was therefore necessarily subject to the corporeal and mental maladies to which fallen humanity is a prey. Such ideas are based mainly on expressions in the book of Psalms; but we must remember that many of the Psalms which contain prophetic expressions regarding our Lord were written by those who were only *types* of Christ.

In the record of the experiences of David, Asaph, and others, God has caused to be written that from which we may draw an endless fund of spiritual help and comfort and warning, and from which, as from the facts of the historic types in the Old Testament, such as Joseph and Moses, we may find much that shadows forth the Lord Jesus; but we must not forget that we have scarcely an isolated personal type of Christ in the Old Testament wherein there has not been failure, perhaps in that very

point in which the person was a type. For instance, David, the type of the perfect king and righteous ruler, fell into the awful mire of adultery and murder.

If those who without discrimination take the Psalms as the language of Christ, and, interpreting them literally, attach to the person of the Son of God loathsome disease, emaciation of body, and distortion of bones, were so to interpret them of the Psalmist himself, David would, in appearance, have been a miserable, revolting object. But by no tortuous reasoning does anyone in reading the book of Psalms picture to his mind such a view of David, the king of Israel, when he gives us therein his personal history, and sufferings, and experiences. Why, then, should a perverse literality attach to the person of the Holy One that which was not true even of the Psalmist himself?

The Bible is full of oriental modes of expression; and outward maladies and forms of evil, as well as outward beauties and perfections, are figuratively used to indicate inward and spiritual evil or good. Should, then, our more literal habit of thought lead us to import into Scripture ideas which such figures were never designed to convey?

No book in Scripture has been so abused by ardent Bible-students as the Book of Psalms, because in dealing with it men have often allowed a fertile imagination to have free play, rather than sought the experimental teaching of the Holy Ghost, and this has often led to ungodly controversies and bitter animosities. He who is content to read this book as "a weaned child," as one whose heart is "not haughty," and whose eyes are "not lofty," will never go wrong or be misled, and to such its allegories and figures will yield the most accurate conceptions of that which God designs to teach.

H. G.

(To be continued.)

THE TEMPLE OF EZEKIEL.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES BY MR. NEWBERRY.—II.

LET us briefly call to mind the dwelling-places of God on earth. When the children of Israel were brought out from Egypt, under shelter of the blood of the paschal lamb, God could speak to them as a redeemed people concerning a sanctuary for Himself, and He said to Moses, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." The tabernacle in the wilderness, which was thus made in accordance with God's command, is an appropriate and expressive type of the church of God in its present wilderness condition.

The second dwelling-place of God was the Temple of Solomon. David, who is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in rejection, made large provision of materials for the temple; but Solomon, who is a type of the Lord in His resurrection kingdom and glory, built the house. The temple of Solomon is a type of all the redeemed in association with Christ in His resurrection and heavenly glory, "In whom all the building (*or* every building), fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord." (Eph. ii. 21.)

Through the defection of Israel the temple of Solomon was despoiled and destroyed by the Chaldeans, and the holy vessels were taken to Babylon. After that, on the partial restoration of Judah from captivity, another temple was built under Ezra and Nehemiah. Though this was so far inferior to Solomon's temple that those who had seen that in its glory wept when they beheld it, yet God was pleased to own it with the manifestation of His presence—a great encouragement to us in these days.

This latter temple was afterwards taken down and re-erected by Herod the Great. The Jews greatly feared he would never rebuild it, but he did so. Though no doubt he retained its main original features—the porches, the holy place, and the most holy—it is evident that he built it on a plan of his own, and that it thus differed both from Solomon's and Ezra's. About A.D. 70 that temple was destroyed by the Roman army under Titus; and the word of the Lord was fulfilled: "As for these things which ye behold, the days will come in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." (Luke xxi. 6.)

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was God's dwelling-place; now God dwells amongst His redeemed (2 Cor. vi. 16); "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isa. lvii. 15.)

But there are temples in connection with Israel in the future, of which mention is made in Scripture. Daniel the prophet, whose words are quoted by Christ (Matt. xxiv. 15), has foretold us of a temple in which the antichrist will sit, and in the holy place of which "the abomination of desolation" will be set up. Concerning antichrist the Holy Spirit also instructs us through the apostle Paul—"That day shall not come except there come the falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

In Rev. xi. 1, we read that John was directed to "measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." Here are temple, altar, and worshippers, recognized by God; and of this temple the antichrist gets possession. Having made a covenant with Israel for one week of years, he breaks it and takes away the daily

sacrifice. Then comes the time of the great tribulation "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matt. xxiv. 21.)

It is a remarkable fact that the Mosque of Omar stands on that marble platform which was the firm foundation of the three former temples—a platform reared at immense cost and labour on the spot which David bought of Araunah the Jebusite, and where, long before, Abraham, in obedience to the command of God, offered up his son Isaac. It is my own conviction and that of others that the Jews will adopt this mosque for their temple, and on that marble platform will erect their altar. The spot has for centuries been kept sacred in the hands of Mohame-dans, and has thus been preserved from those idolatries by which it would surely have been defiled if it had been in the power of the Romish or the Greek Church. But this temple will be defiled by the antichrist, and will give place to another.

The temple of Ezekiel will be built in the land of Israel during the millennial period, when Israel has been restored by God, when Satan has been bound, adversaries have been subdued, and the greater than Solomon has begun His peaceful reign. This temple will be an earthly counterpart of the heavenly temple above, just as the tabernacle of the wilderness was a shadow of that greater and more perfect tabernacle, eternal in the heavens, into which the High Priest of our profession has entered.

Let us now consider the divisions of the Temple proper, which stands on what is called the "separate place," or inner court, 100 cubits square. The measurements of the temples of Solomon and Ezekiel fully coincide, but the most complete description is found in the prophecies of Ezekiel regarding the future temple. The divisions are—

1. The porch, the internal measurement of which is 20

cubits in length, and 10 in width (like the holy place of the tabernacle), and 20 in height. The rendering in our Bibles of 120 cubits in height (2 Chron. iii. 4) is acknowledged by competent critics to be a mistake of a transcriber, and is easily accounted for by the similarity of the letters which are used for figures in the original Hebrew. The Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint reads 20 cubits.

2. The holy place is 40 cubits long and 20 cubits wide, that is, just double the area of the holy place in the tabernacle; but while the holy place of the tabernacle was only 10 cubits high, this has a height of 30 cubits to the top of the walls, from whence the vaulted roof springs.

3. This division consists of the most holy place, which is 20 cubits long, 20 broad, and 20 high; just double the size of the holy of holies in the tabernacle, which was a cube of ten cubits.

The holy place, or sanctuary, between the porch and the most holy, is surmounted by a vaulted roof of cedar, and over that is the dome of cyprus, a harder wood than cedar. This takes in what is called "the greater house," because it includes the side chambers. The dome of 30 cubits in height, added to the height of the sanctuary, which is 30 cubits, makes a total height of 60 cubits, and that corresponds with the height stated in Ezra vi. 3, "three-score cubits," that is, over 100 feet.

There are chambers on either side of the temple extending through its whole length, 15 on the first storey, 15 on the second, and 15 on the third, making 90 altogether. The storeys increase in breadth as they ascend. Those of the first storey are five cubits broad, but the floor of the second set of chambers takes one cubit from the wall of the temple, and the next floor takes another; so that the chambers increase in breadth, and the wall decreases in

thickness. There are winding stairs that ascend into the middle storey, and from that to the third. There is but one door at the head of the way on each storey, so that those entering the side chambers pass from the first into the second, and so on through the whole fifteen.

From east to west is God's order. The fore-front of the temple stands towards the east, and the holy place is in the west, so that those who worship towards the east turn their backs on the temple of Jehovah. Worshipping towards the east is mentioned as one of the abominations shown to the prophet Ezekiel in chap. viii. 13-16.

We will now consider the spiritual instruction connected with the various divisions of the temple, taking as our guide the truth that the "holiest of all" is the place where the Lord Jesus now is, in the presence of God for us.

The porch is suggestive of the first heavens, the firmament, or atmospheric heavens, surrounding the earth; and this tells us of the heavenly places where we have to meet in conflict the principalities and powers of wickedness. (Eph. vi.)

The holy place, with its vaulted roof and numerous side chambers, suggests the second heavens, the starry heavens, or the material universe generally. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number." (Isa. xl. 26.) The Lord said, "In My Father's house are many mansions," and He taught His disciples to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The most holy place reminds us of the third heavens, whereinto Paul was caught up, the place of the immediate manifestation of the Divine glory.

The side chambers in Solomon's temple appear to have been for the accommodation of those priests who, in their

due order, served God day and night in His temple, watch by watch; there being a constant change of service that they might wait on God continually. The enlargement of these chambers as they go higher and higher suggests that the saints in resurrection glory will not remain on the level on which they commence their eternal course. And in addition to progress upwards there will be enlargement; with growth in the knowledge of God there will be an increase of capacity to know and love and serve Him; there will still be both rising and expanding. What a progress! What a prospect! If the abyss of hell has no bottom, the height of glory has no summit. We enter chamber after chamber from east to west till we come to the innermost one, then, rising another stage, we may still go on, and yet higher and onward. All this is suggestive of progress Godward, not only in faculty, but in actually becoming more and more conformed to that God whom we shall love still more and serve still better while eternal ages roll.

MEDITATION ON PSALM XLVI.

BY THE LATE A. N. GROVES.

WOULD that the saints of God knew the power that results from casting all care on God! When this spring of comfort is realised, all that our souls need is found, and we fear no evil. Fear of calamity always brings with it torment, and the design that God has in all trial is to drive us to Himself as a refuge, and we then prove that He is "a very present help"; and though the waters still roar and the tempest blows, we find a river that flows from underneath the throne of God, a river which makes glad God's city, and rejoices the hearts of all who take refuge in Him.

There are two classes of trials in our wilderness course.

One, from without, arises from the conduct of others, or from outward circumstances; the other arises from within, and is the fruit of our own sin. But in either case God is our refuge; for in the latter we have that precious promise ever to lay hold of, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive." Thus, precious truth! God is not only a refuge from our sorrows, but a refuge from our sins; and not only is He a refuge from sin, He is also an *antidote* to it.

David's life was peculiarly one of sorrow of every kind, and so he becomes a fitting channel through which God may set forth the resources that are to be found in Himself. There are mighty consolations in God for man, and by all his vicissitudes and the perplexities of his circumstances man becomes an empty vessel, prepared of God and exactly suited to receive these consolations. The natural tendency of the heart is to look to man, and to have some expectation from him. God's great lesson to us is, that all our expectation must be from Him only, and that, instead of going to others for help, we should fly at once to Him alone, and drink deeply of the river of His fulness. In Him water is to be found for our thirst, for Christ has said, "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"; a word of rich gospel blessing to the poor lost sinner, but one none the less needful and blessed for the thirsty spirit of the child of God, who still cries, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

When God is thus known and realised, the peace that He gives is a peace passing all understanding, and the soul is prepared to hear the closing words of our psalm, "*Be still, and know that I am God.*" This word reminds us of that memorable occasion when with death following them in the armies of Pharaoh, and death before them in the waters of the Red Sea, God's command to His trembling

people was, “ Fear ye not ; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew you to-day.” To be still, and to let God act, is a mighty work of faith, but it is the result of a deep, living, personal acquaintance with God. It will not be learnt from second-hand teaching ; it can only come from the Spirit’s teaching as we walk in the pathway of obedience. There is no greater source of danger to the child of God than that which arises from the restlessness of the flesh, which is ever prone to take its own course, and to seek its own deliverance, forgetful that to the obedient soul the word is, “ In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.” May we learn to habituate ourselves to that divine stillness of soul which finds its resting-place at all times in the bosom of God.

“ THE LAME TAKE THE PREY.”

ISAIAH XXXIII. 23.

O blessed Lord, I would be taught by Thee
To glory even in “ infirmity,”
That so “ the power of Christ ” may rest on me.

I pray Thee bring me to that hallowed place,
The “ Peniel,” where Thine Israels see Thee face to face ;
Halt, yet invincible through sovereign grace.

My faith looks up to claim that touch Divine
Which robs me of this fatal strength of *mine*,
And leaves me wholly resting, Lord, on *Thine*.

Oh, touch me in the place of human pride,
That, with Thy Spirit’s power alone supplied,
The Lord in all things may be magnified.

Bring rebel “ self ” beneath Thy kingly sway ;
On haughty “ self ” Thy hand, disabling, lay ;
Oh, make me “ lame ” enough to “ take the prey.”

Acquitted when I own Thy sentence just ;
Exalted most when humbled in the dust ;
Triumphant when Thou art mine only trust.

The fulness of Thy blessing thus bestow ;
 The "fellowship of suffering" let me know ;
 The power of resurrection-life below.

Yea, make me such an one as Thou cau'st bless ;
 Meet for Thy use through very helplessness :
 Thine, only Thine, the glory of success

Lord, teach Thy trembling saints to find, like Thee,
 The place of death the place of victory ;
 Like Thee, to triumph in extremity.

For still Thy cross shall be our conquering sign :
 Then first we live when we our life resign ;
 Yea, all our being is the being THINE !

L. A. B.

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. xii. 9.

THE NEW CREATION.

NOTES OF A BIBLE READING AT LEOMINSTER.

It is profitable for us to consider that we are not only saved from guilt and pollution and the wages of sin, but that we are also saved from what might be called mere *creatureship*. It will be a mighty help to our faith to mark well the infinite difference, not only between the condition of the sinner and the redeemed, but between the condition of innocent though accountable creatures, and that of *sons*, the relationship toward God wherein we now stand, and on account of which Christ is not ashamed to call us "brethren."

We have two great examples of God's way of dealing with accountable creatures, simply on the footing of creatureship, first with the angels who sinned, and then with Adam in Eden. In Jude, verse 6, we read of the disobedience of angels, and their wilfully leaving their stated habitation. They are not called *holy* angels, and that is very significant; for though they could not but be worthy of God as their Creator, yet it is only of "the elect

angels" that the word *holy* is used. In 2 Peter ii. 4 it is said they were "cast down," and we should observe that the very word "spared not" is the word we have in Rom. viii. 32, "He that spared not His own Son;" for in both deeds of judgment mercy was utterly shut out, and could not have any place. We are quite sure that in God's deed of judgment upon the cross anything like a remitting of what was due to justice could not possibly be, in order that God "might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." And the use of the same word with reference to the angels that sinned shows that for them there can be no mercy; but a future of retribution and punishment awaits them. In Genesis iii. God made no enquiry of Satan, because there was no mercy for him, no mediator; and he knows that there is a double bar to his salvation—his own enmity and God's justice. And therefore, as we never find on God's part any intimation of mercy, so on the part of Satan we never find any trace of hope; nothing but determined and perpetual opposition to God.

In Genesis ii. we see Adam placed in a position of responsibility: "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, 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: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." As God never pledged Himself to uphold the angels that fell (or they never could have fallen), so He did not pledge Himself to uphold the creature *man* in his position as an innocent creature. And though as one formed "in the image of God" Adam would have had that knowledge of God which was necessary for his happiness and guidance as head of creation, yet of the bosom secrets of God he could know nothing, and therefore was entirely shut out from what

Scripture calls fellowship with God; indeed of this fellowship he was, simply as a creature, incapable. And to speak of Adam having fellowship with God in Eden is damaging to our souls, because it tends to blot out the distinction between the creature under the old creation, and what we are as new creatures in Christ.

Man, unrenewed, can make no advance toward fellowship with God. In the case of Israel we see all that the law could do even for a people under the peculiar favour of God. In Rom. v. 20 we read, "Moreover the law entered *that the offence might abound*;" and in chap. vii. 8, "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." And in 1 Cor. xv. 56 we get that marvellous word, "the *strength of sin* is the law." Is there any book of man's religion in which such a secret concerning man can be found? In the first act of the first man and the first woman, after they became sinners, we have a picture of what man seeks to do by his religion. Their first business was to hide themselves from themselves, and their next was to hide themselves from God. Man's natural religion is most foul in God's eyes when fairest in his own, and man is most obstinate in opposition to God when he is best pleased with himself. Hence we have from religious lips the cry, "Away with Him! crucify Him!" and this opposition will come to the full when the devil's man is set up.

Now, in contrast with the mere creature we have the Son of God, in whom God is well pleased, and by whom He reveals Himself. At the baptism of Christ and at His transfiguration, God bore witness to Him as His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, and in His resurrection we have the word, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." (Heb. i. 5.) In Col. i. He is spoken of as "the image of the invisible God," and in

chap. ii. we read, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are complete in Him." Not completely justified simply, but completely filled up, because of the perfect revelation of God in Christ. It was specially given to Paul to set forth Christ under the figure of Adam—"the last Adam." The first Adam was formed after God's image, in comparison with God's other creatures; Christ is God's "image," or "express image," as Paul tells us, in comparison with God Himself. To John it was given to set forth Christ under the title of "the Word;" and just as by speech alone we tell out all our hearts, so God kept silence comparatively until He gave Christ. Such is the ignorance of the creature that, compared with the bosom-secret revealed in Christ, no one hath ever seen God. (John i. 14-18.) And all revelation in creation is as nothing by comparison with the revelations of God by the Son of His love.

Creatures simply as such are responsible to understand their relationship to their Creator, and as vessels God can fill them, according to their measure, while obedient. Adam, in his first estate had no capability for fully knowing Him who had formed him, but he could know something of the creatures around him, and could name them, though he could not name his Maker. But the coming of the Son of God sets aside mere creatureship as well as guilt and sin, and thus we have given to us the capability of knowing God, and we have the mind of Christ, that we may commune with God.

When in John xvii. the Lord presents His people to the Father, He takes them up not simply as having all natural guilt blotted out, but as having indwelling sin that would make them groan, and also their weakness as mere creatures, put out of sight; and no distinction is made between measures of faith and obedience among them, but the

contrast is simply between all saints and the world. From 2 Cor. v. we learn that the new creation is the fruit of death and resurrection: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all died; and that He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." Resurrection means new-creatureship: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" he sees as it were a new earth and a new heaven; he sees a new creation, a new Eden, and the last Adam and His bride.

It was said that God did not pledge Himself to uphold creatures as such, but we find, to speak humbly, that now God has infinite reasons for pledging Himself to Christ and to us. Look at Isaiah xlii. 1, "Behold My Servant"—the man that is My Fellow, My Son, who has become My Servant—"Behold My Servant *whom I uphold*; Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth." All the affections of God as a Father find perfect repose in Christ, but those affections embrace *us*, and hence the mystery of that wondrous word is cleared up, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Being in resurrection in Him who is the Head of the new creation, we are looked upon as entirely worthy of the affections of God, and it will greatly help our faith to see this.

In Col. i. 12 we learn that we are made competent for the inheritance of the saints in light, by what God has done for us already, and, considering what He has made us in Christ, must He not of necessity delight in us? Are we not more inclined to look at ourselves as in the old creation than to consider what we are in Christ? And is not this the reason why children of God speak of their "poor prayers" and "unworthiness?" Strange language this, surely, in heaven!

In the first creation the woman, as we learn from Genesis ii., was taken out of the man, and thus had a derived life; so we, by the new creative power of the Holy Ghost, have a life derived from the Son of God with all its excellency, and, if it be but the feeblest babe in Christ, there is a beauty and a glory in that new life that God must delight in. When we speak of the distinction between our condition as sons, and what we were merely as creatures, another truth comes up. In this new creation there is that which was not in the first, for we are "begotten" or "born of God." Christ is "the beginning of the creation of God;" God has both fashioned us in Christ, and begotten us in Christ, and therefore is our God and Father. Eve had a living element from Adam, but she was "buildd" into a woman; and both things are true of us: God has begotten us, but He is also building us for the new creation.

This brings us to St. Paul's two prayers in Ephesians, and to his thanksgiving which precedes them: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;" or, in *super-heavenly places*, outside all this creation; "according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world;" before Adam and the garden existed. Then the apostle prays in chap. i. that God would enlighten us in His handiwork in Christ, and in chap. iii. that He would unfold to us the love of Christ.

There is now no place for old creation likings and tastes, or a whit of excuse for living to self, for the new creation is come, and we are looking forward to its completeness in the paradise of God. Is there not special force in such expressions as the "righteousness of God" and "the paradise of God?" It is the "righteousness of God"

because all God's glory is revealed in that righteousness, and the "paradise of God" because all God's glory is revealed in that paradise; and in Rev. iii. 14, we read of "the creation of God" because all God's glory is revealed in that creation. "The creation of God" is not merely a work of God, but such a work as that all His glories are seen in it, all His purposes are fulfilled in it, and all His delight is found in it.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to understand Ephesians ii. 21, where, instead of "all the building," the R.V. reads "every building"?

Dean Alford says, "To a classical Greek ear, any other rendering than 'every building' seems preposterous enough," because of the absence of the definite article in Greek before the word rendered "all." It is, however, a recognised principle in Greek that as proper names often dispense with the article after the word *all*, so other nouns, referring to some special thing, likewise dispense with the article; and it is on this ground that in 2 Tim. iii. 16, where the article is wanting, the A.V., renders, "All Scripture," and therefore Dean Alford retains the reading of the A.V., in the passage under consideration. We mention this, because it is well that all should be on their guard against making this passage the basis of any special dogmatic teaching in regard to the "*all*" and "*every*."

The word, "*building*," is used by Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 9, in writing of the Corinthian Church, "Ye are God's building;" and in 2 Cor. v. 1 of the glorified body. In Matt. xxiv. 1, and Mark xiii. 1, 2, it refers to the buildings of the Temple; in other places the word is rendered "edification" or "edifying." And we confess we do not see sufficient ground for classing "building" with such well-known special words as "creation," "scripture," etc, which may dispense with the article, and we are therefore disposed to coincide with the R.V., while for the reason above given we would reject the R.V. rendering in 2 Tim. iii. 16, "Every scripture," and would retain "All scripture," as in A.V.

We now come to the meaning of the passage itself, which would thus present the local assembly at Ephesus as one of the many buildings of which the apostle speaks in the next verse, "In whom ye also are being builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Alford's

translation). This building is further represented as "being fitly framed together" (present tense), that is, this fitting process is going on, whereby the whole is growing up into a holy temple in the Lord, which is the ultimate destiny of the entire church of God. The actual building of the temple, whether in heaven or on earth, can only be effected by the true Solomon, who is spoken of in Zech. vi. as "The Branch"; "He shall grow up out of His place and He shall build the temple of the Lord, even He shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne." With this agree our Lord's words, Matt. xvi. 18, "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." He has the keys of death and hades, and they shall not stand in the way of that resurrection which alone will present the living stones perfect and fit for the heavenly building.

It is quite true that in a certain sense the local church is in the purpose of God His temple (1 Cor. iii. 16-17), as it is also true that the body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Ghost; but in the passage before us the local assembly is regarded as growing up into something which as yet it is not.

It is of importance that we make neither too much nor too little of the local church, which in the eye of God embraces nothing less than every saved soul in the locality; and in the present day, when discord and confusion have marred the united testimony of the church of God, let us be on our guard lest in our assumptions or our practices we take the place of the whole while we are but a fragment, and lest by saying, "we are of Christ," "we are the church of the place," we make ourselves more guilty of sectarianism than those who call themselves of Peter or Paul.

May God commend us, and not we ourselves, and may He manifest His commendation by that fire from heaven upon our altars which shall demonstrate that He is pleased. May God bear witness to us, and keep us from bearing witness to ourselves, and then we shall stand where the meekest of men stood, when silent before the upbraidings of Miriam and Aaron, which when the Lord heard, He spake suddenly and vindicated His servant's cause, saying emphatically, "My servant Moses . . . who is faithful in all My house." Thus may we seek the Lord's owning of us and of our church position.

Does the word "host," in Gen. ii. 1, refer to the angels?

The Hebrew word for host (tzaba) signifies *armies*, and is very frequently so rendered. When used of God as the "Lord of hosts," or the "God of hosts," it doubtless refers to the angels; but there are many passages where the word indisputably refers to the sun, moon,

and stars ; see for example, Isa. xxxiv. 4, xl. 26, xlv. 12 ; Jer. xxxiii. 22 ; Dan. viii. 10. In the following passages it is used in connection with the worship of the heavenly bodies : Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3 ; 2 Kings xvii. 16 ; and probably the best explanation of Gen. ii. 2 will be found in Neh. ix. 6, compared with Ex. xx. 11, which would make the "host" refer to the heavenly bodies, whether the far-off starry worlds or earth's solar system.

In what sense does Paul speak of the Apostles being set forth "last," "appointed to death," in 1 Cor. iv. 9 ?

He seems to connect the ministry of the apostles with that of the prophets who had gone before, and he implies that the ministry in the church of God now (for in measure the apostolic ministry is that of the whole church) is, as it were, the leading of a forlorn hope which would end in that ultimate victory which God has destined in eternity. The idea in the verse seems very similar to our Lord's word in reference to Himself and the prophets who had preceded Him, in the parable of the vineyard (Matt. xxi. 37), "But last of all He sent unto them His son, saying, They will reverence My son." But as the resurrection of Christ (which is implied in the next parable) turned defeat into victory, so the apostle felt fully assured that although they were set forth "as those appointed to death," "a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men," the resurrection at the second advent would reverse all this, when the hidden things of darkness would be brought to light, and each would receive his measure of praise from God Himself.

What is the force of "sprinkle" in Isa. lii., 15, and is any other rendering admissible ?

The word here rendered *sprinkle* is never otherwise rendered. It is almost exclusively used of the blood of those offerings which have to do with sin and trespass, and though it occurs in connection with the sprinkling of the water and ashes of the red heifer in Num. xix. 9, 17, that also is emphatically called a sin offering in the Hebrew. In Isa. lii. the word seems beautifully to harmonize with the context. We would read the passage as follows : "Behold My Servant shall act wisely," that is, so as to bring His work to a prosperous issue. "He shall lift up Himself, and very much is He exalted and made high (because many are astonished at Thee ;)" "for as His appearance was marred more than any one, and His form more than the sons of men, so shall He sprinkle many nations." The *as* points to the cross and its atoning sacrifice, and the *so* to the application of that atonement.

THE HUMANITY OF OUR LORD.

(Concluded from page 151.)

THAT our blessed Lord suffered from hunger, thirst and weariness, we are distinctly told, but do we know that unfallen Adam could not have suffered in the same way? We know that Adam would not have died if he had not sinned; but we are not told what the physical conditions of unfallen human nature were; and hence all arguments from the supposition of what Adam might, or might not have been subject to, are vain and foolish. And here we would remark that the use of the word *mortal* with reference to the body of Christ should by all means be avoided, for the word as used amongst us in an ordinary way does not mean simply capable of dying, but having an inherent liability to death; and the expression *a mortal body* means a body in which the seeds of mortality exist. Therefore as we should not call the body of Adam mortal before the fall, so we cannot use this word to describe the body of our Lord without violating the truth of Scripture.

Sinful man dies of mortal decay; but Christ died because He laid down His life. There was no feeble voice when on the cross "He said, It is finished," and "bowed His head, and gave up the ghost," for we are expressly told that He "cried with a loud voice." (Luke xxiii. 46; John xix. 30.) He died not as we die, because no longer able to live; but having received a commandment to lay down His life for the sheep, that commandment He carried out. No man took His life from Him, but He fulfilled His own word, "I lay it down of Myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take

it again. This commandment have I received of My Father." (John x. 18.)

It is painful to see analogies drawn where all analogies fail, and the sinless, perfect Son of God likened to sinful, mortal man, when contrast rather than likeness should be observed. On the day of Pentecost, when the Apostle Peter contrasts David with Christ, he says that while David "died and was buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day," the One whom they had crucified "God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death; because it was *not possible* that He should be holden under it" (*i.e.* death); and therefore, while death was a divine necessity, the corruption that follows in the case of sinful man was in Christ's case impossible. May these divine necessities, and these divine impossibilities satisfy our hearts, and if we need to know more, we shall know it where all truth will be known, and where there can be no perversion of it.

We may be reminded of the assertion in 2 Cor. xiii. 4, that Christ "was crucified through weakness;" but here as in 1 Cor. i. the contrast is between the weakness of the creature and the omnipotence of God, and we learn that Christ, in order to accomplish the purpose of God, descended from the almightiness of God to the weakness of the creature, and hence no argument from the word "weakness" is allowable that would contrast it with human strength.

Another point that calls for consideration is the sympathy of Christ as set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we read that "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of [*or, is unable to sympathise with*] our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. iv. 15.) From this it is sometimes inferred that Christ must have

had the same infirmities that we have, sin excepted ; but it should be noticed that in the next chapter the apostle especially draws a *contrast* and not a comparison between Christ and the Aaronic priest. The human priest, he says, can bear in his measure "with the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity ; and," he adds, "*by reason thereof* is bound, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (R.V.), implying that the word "infirmity" here includes the idea of sin. It is not said that our Lord sympathises with us in our infirmities because He was partaker of them, but because He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." As the One who made us He knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust, and with perfect knowledge of our experience, and perfect sympathy as man, He was able, in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for our sins, and He is now able to succour us in our temptations.

To make the sympathy of Christ depend upon absolute identity with ourselves, at once places us on dangerous ground, for the next step is to say that, though He was free from actual sin, He was a partaker of sinful humanity, a theory which entirely vitiates the atonement. Christ came as near to us as was essential to secure the efficiency of His work as a Redeemer, but not so near as to violate the essential conditions for the accomplishment of that work. This is beautifully shadowed forth in the book of Ruth, a book peculiarly instructive as to the rights and obligations of a Redeemer. Here we find that Boaz was not the nearest of kin to the household of Elimelech ; there was, as he tells Ruth, a kinsman *nearer* than he ; but that one was unable to redeem, and thus strikingly illustrates the relation occupied by man to his fellow : "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm xlix. 7.) He

has therefore to draw off his shoe, and give it to the one that comes after him (Ruth iv. 7), the kinsman who is sufficiently near, and is both able and willing to redeem.

It has, indeed, been asserted by some that in order that Christ might sympathise with His people, it was necessary for Him to be partaker of a sinful humanity, though He was personally sinless; and on similar ground it has been asserted by others that it was needful His body should be afflicted by disease and sickness; but the one doctrine has no more support in Scripture than the other, and if on hypothetical grounds the latter is held, there will be a great danger of falling into the heresy of the former. Sin was outside Christ, and never within Him, for He alone of those born of women could say, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me;" but though He "knew no sin," and that was lacking in Him which makes temptation to us what it is, yet there is no lack of ability in Him to sympathise with us when tempted.

In the same way the fact of Christ's body not being subject to internal derangements and disorders is no reason why He should be unable to sympathise with us in our bodily sufferings. As all sin was outside the Holy One of God, so all sickness and disease, which are the consequences of sin, were outside the perfect Son of Man, for in spirit, soul and body He was "holy, harmless, undefiled."

The circumcision of Christ has been thought to point to vicarious sin-bearing, but for such a thought Scripture gives no warrant. His circumcision points to the fact of His having been "born under the law, that He might redeem them which were under the law." It was a sign of the Abrahamic covenant, and Christ, as a Jew, needed therein to be made like unto His brethren. This view of

the supposed vicariousness of circumcision has perhaps arisen from the statement of Colossians ii. 11, but a careful perusal of this passage, in which circumcision is connected with baptism, leads to the conclusion that what the apostle had in mind was the moral significance of circumcision as revealed in the death and resurrection of Christ. "In whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ." (R. V.)

We do not here enter upon the question as to when the Lord assumed His vicarious character as sin-bearer, whether at His birth, at His baptism, or on the cross, for the substitutionary character of His work does not affect the truth of what He was inherently in Himself. Sin-bearing in Christ denotes the bearing of the penalty of sin and meeting its obligations; and sickness being the result of sin, in bearing the latter He bore the former: hence the quotation in Matt. viii.

When it is said that God "made Him *sin* for us" (2 Cor. v. 21), the word points to His being the sin-offering, as in Isaiah liii. 10, "Thou shalt make His soul a trespass offering." The words "sin" and "trespass" are used not only for sin and trespass, but also for the offering that atoned for them. Christ took upon Himself vicariously all that was needful to make Him a perfect sacrifice in death, and a perfect High Priest in resurrection.

In dealing with the doctrines of God's word the use of terms not found in Scripture is sometimes open to grave objection, inasmuch as we have no Bible standard whereby accurately to define their meaning; and hence the use by different persons of the same word in very different significations often leads to serious misunderstandings. This is true of the word "vicarious." Properly speaking the use of the word ought to be limited to that wherein one

acts or stands *in the place of* another, whereby, as in the case of a penalty borne, the one for whom it is borne becomes free. This is a very different thing from suffering *on behalf of* another.

In the life and sufferings of Christ both were true; but it is important for doctrinal accuracy that these should not be confounded. What Christ endured at the hand of God penally is that to which alone we can attach the thought of substitution; all else was endured in sympathy with man, or as an example to man, or as that whereby the absolute perfectness of the Lord as the sacrifice was demonstrated; but only that was in the strictest sense vicarious which paid our debt as sinners; and it is a grave mistake to include in the discharge of the sinner's debt those sufferings and sorrows from which the suffering Saviour has *not* delivered us, and which therefore could not have been vicariously borne by Him on our behalf. Throughout Scripture the *death of Christ alone* is spoken of as that which was *substitutionally endured* for us.

In conclusion, we warn dear fellow-believers of the danger of profanely intruding where angels reverently adore, lest we be smitten, because like Uzzah we touch God's ark with unholy hands, or like Israel we look into it with curious gaze. The danger in these days is not small, and the judgments that fall upon this profane spirit of intellectual speculation are neither few nor light, as the history of the past fifty years has abundantly shown.

We again ask all to ponder Psalm cxxxi., and to seek so to cultivate the lowliness of mind therein set forth, that mere intelligence in Scripture may not lead us to become fat, and kick like Jeshurun of old; rather let us seek to eat, and become fat, and worship. (Psalm xxii. 29.) And let us ever remember that God hides from the wise and prudent that which He to reveals to babes. H. G.

THE SECOND PASSOVER.

NUMBERS IX.

BY THE LATE J. L. HARRIS.

THE second Passover was kept in the wilderness, and the record of it is given in the ninth chapter of Numbers, that book being the book of the wilderness. We are not told whether the people persevered in keeping the Passover every year; but the third of which we have any record was kept when they had entered into the land of Canaan, and it was a remarkable one. The Spirit of God has laid great stress on these three Passovers: the first in Egypt; the second, a year after, in the wilderness; and the third in the land; and we may be sure there is some special instruction to be gained from them.

Now, let us note the contrast between the Passover kept in Egypt and that observed in the wilderness; it may be for our profit, and may help us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In Egypt we find the children of Israel in perfect security in the midst of judgment. There was not a house of the Egyptians where there was not a wail heard, but while judgment was going on among them there was no death in the houses of the Israelites, for they were under the shelter of the blood, and were feasting on their paschal lamb. In this chapter we read of some men who could not keep the feast with the rest, because they were defiled by the dead body of a man; and God would show us that He, the living God, cannot link together death and feasting. In order to feast we must be above death and judgment. Whatever *we* may think, God's eye is upon the blood, and it is good when our eyes

are upon it too. It is the blood that allays our fears, and the blood enables us to walk in our high places.

We find, both in Exodus xii. and Numbers ix., the command that no bone of the lamb was to be broken; this is the key-note of that beautiful hymn—

“ No bone of Thee was broken,
Thou spotless paschal Lamb;
Of life and peace a token
To us who know Thy name.”

If we look at John xix. we see that the soldiers broke the legs of the two who were crucified with Jesus, to hasten their death, but, contrary to all expectation, when they came to the Lord Jesus Christ they found He was dead already. This wondrous oracle had then its fulfilment: “ A bone of Him shall not be broken.” I believe there is an immense depth of truth in this. The Lord Jesus Christ offered *Himself* to God. He “gave *Himself* for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity;” He “gave *Himself* for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world;” He “gave *Himself* for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour;” not something else, but *Himself*—His entire self, His full self, His unbroken self. He who was Emmanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh, David’s Son and David’s Lord, gave *Himself* for us. I am lost in admiration when I think of the sacrifice of that glorious Person, when I consider Emmanuel on the cross! These two truths are inseparable—the glorious person and the finished work of God’s Lamb. We shall learn more of the depths of the corruption of our hearts the more we recollect, “ A bone of Him shall not be broken.”

The second Passover was kept by Israel just a twelve-month after they had kept the first in Egypt; but they had learned some lessons in that year. Since the first

Passover they had passed the Red Sea, and had seen God's judgment on their enemies. The Red Sea had been to them a path of safety, whilst it had been destruction to their enemies; therefore they could sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." They had learnt a *little* of God's grace, for they had been fed with manna from heaven, they had drunk water from the rock, and the Lord had fought for them against Amalek. This year had also seen the Tabernacle raised up, and they still had the same token of the presence of God with them as when they left Egypt.

It is a sad fact that many Christians do not know even a *wilderness* experience; they are hoping to be saved, but are still living in Egyptian bondage. I do not believe Israel could sing until they had passed the Red Sea, and were clean out of Egypt; and I do not believe that Christians in Egypt can really sing; they may sing about themselves, but not about what Christ has done for them. The moment a believer touches the hem of Christ's garment he is safe, but it is a blessed thing to learn more and more the value of the blood; and it is as much our happiness to be delivered out of this present evil world, as it is to be delivered from hell.

Are there not many who are like the Israelites when they thought Egypt better than the wilderness? They remembered the leeks and onions and garlick they had in Egypt, and said, "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." It is a solemn thing when the heart turns back to Egypt. We stand between Egypt and Babylon; we have the flesh-pots and allurements all around us; but let us keep close to the Lord Jesus and His cross, remembering that "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with

the affections and lusts." It is our privilege to drink day by day at the cross of Christ, even as "they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ."

Let us also observe in Numbers ix. the connection between the Passover and the pillar of cloud. The One who delivered the people out of Egypt guided them on toward Canaan, as we find in Nehemiah: "Thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go." They ate the first Passover as pilgrims, with staff in hand; and in connection with this second Passover they appear to have been reminded that they were to be good pilgrims; and this we need to remember in connection with the Lord's Supper. Whether it was by night or by day that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed; they might have only just settled in when the cloud went up, and yet off they moved again.

God is guiding us as really as He guided them. I believe it is a very dangerous thing to say, I shall go here, or I shall go there, without asking God's guidance. It is when we ask God about our movements, remembering that we are His redeemed ones, and when we move after prayer, that we find prosperity in so doing. Do we recognise God in little things? If we are thinking of taking another situation, do we consult God about it? Let God our Father take the guidance in all our little circumstances, and let us be careful not to take them into our own hands. "God is love." He cares for the sparrows, and numbers even the hairs of our heads; therefore let us watch in little things, and seek His guidance in them.

Jesus, who has borne our sins, will guide us through the wilderness of this world. "At the commandment of the Lord they rested in the tents, and at the commandment

of the Lord they journeyed." Resting in their tents was a different thing from resting in a mansion or a house. Do we know what it is habitually to rest as it were in our tents? These Lord's days are like a pilgrim's rest. We have God's presence in the midst of us, and find refreshment in thus coming together, but none of us can tell if we shall be here again; therefore let us learn to depend on our heavenly Father, saying as His children, "My times are in Thy hand," but first, "Into Thy hand I commit my spirit." (Psalm xxxi.) I ask not how long I shall remain here, but I leave it all to Him, and take each Lord's-day as it comes, and thank God for it. If we are dead with Christ, if we know what He has done for us, if we know that He is our Shepherd, we know that He will guide us skilfully through the wilderness, and that He will never be satisfied till He renders up His account with joy, and says, "Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none."

FURTHER REMARKS ON PSALM XLVI.

It is said that Luther found special comfort in this psalm, and that when fresh troubles arose by reason of opposition to the work to which God had called him he would say, "Let us read the forty-sixth psalm." Hezekiah proved the reality of the truth of this psalm when Jerusalem was surrounded by the great army of Assyria; and the time is coming when again a remnant of Israel will learn, amid the wars and tumults of the days that shall immediately precede the manifestation of their Deliverer, to make God their refuge, and they will prove His faithfulness to sustain and defend those who seek Him.

But it is good for us individually to enter into these blessed truths, and to know the sufficiency of our God at

all times and under all circumstances. The word trouble in verse 1 is properly plural—*troubles* or *distresses*, and it intimates that they may be varied and severe, but in them all God is readily found to be a help. The growing tendency in some quarters in the present day to look upon trouble or sorrow as a token of God's displeasure, and outward prosperity as a mark of His approval, is very damaging to those who yield to it. It is subversive of the great truth that God in various ways disciplines "every son whom He receiveth," and that He does this "that we may be partakers of His holiness," and it is calculated to disquiet the soul that God would have resting in His love. Even when God sends trial He would have us so trusting in Him that His peace may garrison our hearts; and let us never forget that the peace of circumstances is a very different thing from "the peace of God;" the former is at the mercy of the slightest breeze, the latter is undisturbed by storm and tempest. There may be the roar and foam of billows around, but the eye of faith is upon Him who "is mightier than the noise of many waters," and the soul that is stayed upon Him knows what it is to drink of that river "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" for ever and ever.

God is ever "in the midst" of His people, while He is with each one individually who rests in Him, and it is the sense of His presence that banishes fear, however many and strong their foes may be. He has but to speak and they shall be laid in the dust; to utter His voice and they shall vanish like mists before the sun. Can we not imagine the godly in Israel calling one to another, on that morning when the mighty host of Assyria lay dead before Jerusalem, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth!" And should we not look forward to another morning when it shall indeed

be said, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth," and when not only armies of flesh and blood will be laid low, but the spiritual powers of wickedness will be crushed beneath the feet of Christ and His saints ?

There is a beautiful combination of majesty and grace in this psalm which we should not overlook : "Jehovah of hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge." The title "*Jehovah of hosts*" sets forth the greatness and glory of "the Most High ;" He is supreme in every sense, and all the hosts of heaven are at His bidding ; He could have sent twelve legions of angels to the help of His beloved One had it pleased Him to do so ; and He *did* send a host greater than the host of the king of Syria for the defence of His servant Elisha. But He is also "*the God of Jacob* ;" poor, weak, failing, sinful Jacob. What an encouragement is this to those who feel that they are very much like Jacob ! If it had been, "The God of *Abraham* is our refuge," many a feeble soul would have been tempted to say, That is no comfort to one who does not rise to the measure of Abraham's faith ; or if it were "The God of *Israel*," we might have said we must be overcomers and prove ourselves worthy of the name of Israel before we can say He is our God ; but He condescends to be the God of *Jacob* ; though He does this that He may turn Jacob into Israel. In infinite grace He comes down to our low estate, but it is in order to raise us up to the dignity of true conquerors by giving us victory over those things that are natural to us, and enabling us to walk as Israelites indeed. Nevertheless, the more we are enabled by His grace to subdue what is contrary to Him, the more conscious shall we be of our weakness and failings, and the more shall we rejoice in the assurance, in all difficulties and trials, that "*Jehovah of hosts* is with us ; *the God of Jacob* is our refuge."

W. H. B.

THE MATERIALS OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

AN ADDRESS BY MR. T. NEWBERRY.

THE great truth expressed in "the words of the Lord Jesus," when "He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive," was verified in the experience of David and the princes of Israel when they contributed so largely in preparation for the erection of the temple. David first emptied the exchequer of his kingdom, bestowing "a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver" (1 Chron. xxii.); he then emptied his own private purse, thus adding "three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver"; and the princes followed his example. David's motive is beautifully expressed in his own words: "Moreover, because *I have set my affection* to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house"—and the effect of all this liberality was an abundance of joy: "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy." (1 Chron. xxix. 3, 9.)

When we consider the enormous value of the gold and silver contributed for the temple, unbelieving atheism may ask, "To what purpose was this waste?" But that which was expended on the house of God, and devoted to His glory was not wasted. There is such a thing as laying up treasure in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal," and so making "friends of the mammon of

unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." The donor of a few pence or shillings, or pounds here, may be recognized with joy in the everlasting habitations.

We are further told that David provided "onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance." The Hebrew word for "marble" signifies *white marble*, and these stones were doubtless used for the paving of the court, for the structure of the wall, and for the building of the temple itself. The stones for the building of the house were not of great size like those used for the foundation platform, but were "according to the measures of hewed stones." (1 Kings vii. 9.) Let us consider the spiritual import of these.

The Spirit of God interprets in one portion of the Scriptures the figures He uses in another, and we have only to put our hand on the right drawer to find out the treasures and unlock the mysteries of God. The apostle Peter says, "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house." (1 Pet. ii. 5.) This work is now going on, and in resurrection and heavenly glory these living stones will form a glorious temple—an eternal monument of redeeming love. Of this we have the type or shadow in Solomon's temple. Each stone represents the individual believer, once dead in trespasses and sins, but now quickened by the Spirit of the living God; once lost in the common ruin of humanity—a stone in the rock or pit of this world, but thence it has been cut or digged. It is true of those who are now believers in the Lord Jesus Christ that "we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, 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." (Eph. ii. 3-5.) Hence we are called upon to "look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." (Isa. li. 1.)

The evangelist is God's quarryman, used by Him to detach these stones from the world in which they are now embedded, uprooting them from the pit of ruin and corruption in which by nature they are found. This is often rough and hard work, requiring great skill and great force. Some stones are loosened more easily than others, but at times a kind of dynamite blasting is required to detach them. Then follows the work of the pastor. Solomon's servants worked the stones into square blocks, chipping and cutting them into shape. So the pastor seeks by the Word of God to form and fashion the minds of believers, leading them to a deeper acquaintance with and experience of divine truth, and bringing them into the communion of saints below, preparatory to their being built by the true Solomon in resurrection glory into an everlasting habitation for God. Then comes another operation, for these stones must be "polished after the similitude of a palace." They not only require to be hewn and shaped, but also to be exquisitely carved and polished. This is the work of the teacher, who unfolds the mysteries of God, and leads His children into more intimate acquaintance with the person of Christ.

The evangelist's work is to go into all the world and preach the glad tidings of salvation to every creature; the pastor is called to care for those who have been brought in by the gospel; and the teacher is employed to lead souls upward, and onward, and Godward, into closer conformity to Christ. The world is God's work-yard in which there is fellowship of labour, and it is a busy scene. It is not

a time of ease, for the squaring, the cutting, the chipping, with saws and chisels and files, are painful operations; and then there is the patient process of polishing and giving the finishing touches to make the stone fit for the purpose for which it is destined. The Lord Jesus is not only making use of the gifts of the Spirit for this purpose, but also of the trials and temptations which come upon Christians, for all things are under His skilful, guiding hand, and therefore "all things work together for good to them that love God." Affliction and trial there may be, but "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. iv. 17.)

Being thus polished and made ready, "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23) are waiting for the time when they shall be presented "faultless before the presence of His glory." The first stone made ready for this building was Abel, and we read of many more in Heb. xi., and of what trials they passed through. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword," they were "destitute, afflicted, tormented," but they are now ready for the building; and not these alone, but the first martyr Stephen, and all who have since fallen asleep in Jesus, the loved ones gone before. Some stones were for the foundations of the building, others for the solid walls, and others for coping stones, but when ready and prepared each was fitted into its proper place, and this without sound of hammer or axe or any tool of iron. So as saints are gathered home there is no more sorrow or suffering, but perfect peace and rest, and without any sound save that of thanksgiving, joy, and praise, a noiseless building rises, upon which the top-stone shall soon be fixed into its place, with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it."

No plaster or common mortar was used for the walls of the temple, but the whole of the interior was covered with *silver*, so that no stone was seen. The meaning of this is explained by the Spirit of God when He says, by the apostle Peter, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) In Exodus xxx. 12, 13, we find that every one of the children of Israel passing among those who were numbered was to redeem his soul by the payment of half a shekel of silver, and of this redemption-money were formed the one hundred sockets of silver used for supporting the boards of the tabernacle. This denoted redemption by the payment of price, and pointed to redemption by the precious blood of Christ. As silver was the circulating medium of ancient time, it furnishes a beautiful emblem of the communion of saints on the ground of their common redemption by that precious blood. The stones covered with silver may remind us of the "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," of whom it is said, "*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

Again, these stones thus made perfect were covered with cedar wood, so that "there was no stone seen" (1 Kings vi. 18); they were first covered with silver, and then with cedar and gold. Cedar from its nature points to what is incorruptible, and is therefore a fit emblem of incorruptibility in resurrection. In 2 Cor. v. 4, the apostle Paul says, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." The

Spirit of God does not lead the saint to groan for death ; this is never presented in the New Testament as the object of desire. The apostle was willing "to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord," but the true desire of the believer is to be "clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life"; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. xv. 53.) Men say, nothing is so certain as death, but to the believer it is not so certain, "for we shall *not all* sleep, but we shall all be changed."

The cedar was carved with knops, open flowers, cherubim and palm trees, similar to the carving on the doors. Christ says of Himself, "I am the door," thus appropriating this figure. The cedar boards, being carved in conformity with the doors, represent the bodies of saints conformed in resurrection glory to the glorified body of the great Redeemer ; for "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 49.) "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." (1 John iii. 2.) As the melted wax takes the impress of the seal, so, the moment the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, these bodies will take the impress of His glorious body then manifested ; the sight of Him will stamp its impress on the mind and heart, and on all the faculties of the soul, as well as on the resurrection body ; and thus we shall be conformed to the glorious pattern of the divine Redeemer.

The enormous quantity of gold, 108,000 talents, expended on Solomon's temple was not wasted ; the carved cedar wood was covered with it. It was fitted on to the carved work, so as not to obliterate the exquisite carving. In

His prayer, recorded in John xvii., the Lord says, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was;" and then He adds, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." The gold spread over the wood is emblematic of that same glory which the redeemed in resurrection will share with their glorified Redeemer.

David provided "onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones," and Solomon employed them to garnish the walls of the temple. These precious stones are emblematic of the graces of the Holy Spirit, and they intimate that while the redeemed, in resurrection and heavenly glory, stand before the throne in robes made white by the blood of the Lamb, and share with Christ the glory He bestows upon them, they are also resplendent with every perfection of grace and glory, the workmanship of the Divine and Eternal Spirit.

There are four different kinds of wood mentioned in connection with the temple :

1. The shittim wood, of which the ark of the covenant was constructed. The ark was made for the tabernacle, but was brought into the temple at the time of its dedication, and placed under the wings of the large cherubim in the holiest of all. Shittim wood is an emblem of humanity, and in the ark it set forth the sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The cedar wood is an emblem of incorruptibility in resurrection.

3. Fir, or cypress, is an emblem of resurrection strength.

4. Olive, or oily wood, is emblematic of resurrection spirituality, or the spiritual body.

Thus we have an illustration of 1 Cor. xv. 42-44, "It is sown a natural body (the shittim wood), it is raised a

spiritual body" (the olive or oily wood); "it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" (the cedar); "it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power" (the cypress).

Oh for grace to walk worthy of such glory, and such a hope! "Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Pet. iii. 14.)

COMMUNION AND INTERCESSION.

WORDS SPOKEN BY THE LATE DR. J. B. MULLOCK.

IN John vi. 33-35, Christ is presented in a twofold aspect—as the "Bread of God" and as the "Bread of life." We are apt to dwell on the latter aspect, as that which concerns ourselves; but in worship Christ as the "Bread of God" is the highest thought. The fire descending from heaven and consuming the burnt-offering on Israel's altar was an emblem of God's delight in the sacrifice of Christ, when He offered Himself without spot unto God.

God's delight in Christ can never cease; and this is brought before us in the continual burnt-offering of Num. xxviii. 1-3, "My offering, My bread for My sacrifices made by fire, a sweet savour unto Me, shall ye observe to offer unto Me in their due season . . . two lambs of the first year without spot, day by day, a continual burnt-offering."

In Genesis xviii. we read of the first feast that was spread before the Lord: "And the Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plain of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him." Abraham runs with joy and alacrity of heart to meet them. He was a pilgrim at his tent door, ready for the appearing of his Lord. He bowed himself and said, "My Lord, pass not

away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant." It reminds us of the word of the disciples at Emmaus, "Abide with us." The Lord never forces Himself upon us: His love is never unseemly; but He hears the prayer of any who now say, like Abraham, "Pass not away."

"Comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on," Abraham says. What fellowship! What knowledge of the mind of the Lord! Is He not with us to comfort *our* hearts, and to comfort His own heart in leading our praises? Through His merit and the sweet savour of His offering our praises ascend, to the glory of God.

"Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal," was Abraham's word to Sarah. In Matt. xiii. the same quantity of meal is mentioned by our Lord, when He foretells in parable the corruption of Christianity, as signified by the permeating power of the leaven; but here there is no leaven. "And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good." This reminds us of the prodigal's portion.

Having provided the feast for his heavenly guests, "he stood by them under the tree." It is a mystic scene, and that tree has a deep meaning. Our feast-day in the Lord's presence, on the Lord's-day, must be "under the tree"; it must be under the shadow of His cross, under that apple tree whose fruit is sweet to our taste. Peter is the only apostle who uses the expression "*the tree*" for the cross—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree"; and the cross seems to be thus called with reference to the tree of life in the garden of Eden.

Afterwards we have these wondrous words, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Shall I hide it from the man who met me at the tent door, who hastened to fetch a morsel of bread, at whose hands I have received the feast?

If we desire to know the mind of the Lord, we must learn to welcome Him as did Abraham. "And Abraham *drew near*"—here is communion—"and said, Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Is he thinking about a blessing for himself? No; he is thinking about the poor world, about his poor brother Lot, and he longs to save him. Thus shall we have the heart of Abraham in intercession for the perishing world, if we are in communion with the heart of God.

“ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD.”

GENESIS v. 22-24.

To walk with Thee, Thou God of grace
 Be this my one, my constant aim,
 To walk in true unswerving faith
 With Thee who ever art the same.

To walk as guided by Thy Word,
 With but Thy glory for my end,
 To seek Thy praise, and Thine alone—
 To this, O God! my will now bend.

To walk like Him who pleased Thee well,
 To follow Him, the perfect One,
 Help me, Thou gracious God, that I
 With patience my brief race may run.

To walk in holy fellowship
 With Thee, O God! and with Thy Son,
 As guided by the Holy Ghost,
 Is joy of heaven on earth begun.

W. H. B.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to reconcile the expression, "to depart, and to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23), with the statement in John xiv. 3, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself"?

The truth expressed in John xiv. is more fully stated by Paul in 1 Thess. iv. where, speaking of the result of the advent of Christ, he

says, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Resurrection is always regarded as essential to our full enjoyment of Christ, and to our entering into the place that He has gone to prepare. But this in no wise robs the intermediate state of the joyful sense of His presence, for, in speaking to the dying thief, our Lord says, "To-day shalt thou be *with Me* in Paradise." The very word Paradise is probably designed to lead us to link the character of the garden of Eden, and of God's coming to Adam there, with the way in which the presence of Christ is realized by the spirits of the blest. If, with all hindrances of the present time, His presence is so fully realized here, it is not difficult to see how that presence will become a far greater reality when the veil of the flesh is rent, and our spirits hold direct intercourse with the Saviour, Who can manifest Himself in the world of spirits in a spiritual manner, even as He will in the heaven of heavens be seen and known as He is.

Some have hesitated to recognize the difference between the present condition of the departed and the glory of the resurrection state, because they have dreaded an approach to the Popish doctrine of purgatory, but such fear is groundless as long as we keep to Scripture. The true doctrine of the intermediate state is in perfect contrast with the false; there is nothing in common between the scriptural truth of being "with Christ," and the fiction of purgatorial fires that prepare the soul for future bliss. But while Romanism teaches this false doctrine to maintain priestly dominion over the conscience, Protestant teaching has, on the other hand, so spoken of the intermediate state as to rob the Lord's second advent of its glory, and to make death and not the coming of Christ the believer's goal.

Let us seek to avoid both errors, and give each truth its proper place. The condition of departed saints is one of rest, and peace, and joy, for such are "absent from the body, and at home with the Lord." In 2 Cor. v. the apostle says distinctly that what we are longing for is not the unclothing, but the being "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," that mortality might be swallowed up of life." The house from heaven is the "spiritual body" of 1 Cor. xv.

We may not know whereabouts in the heavens above us the place of departed spirits is, but it is not where we shall be when the Lord comes to take us to the Father's house, nor can we regard it as the place in which the spirits of the just were prior to the resurrection of the Son of God, because the condition of departed saints as set forth in the New Testament is so different from that contemplated in the Old Testament. Still we must ever remember that, after all, the *conditions* make a place what it is.

THE TWO PILLARS AND CHIEF VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY MR. T. NEWBERRY.

The pillars standing before the temple are referred to more or less fully in seven different places in the Bible, and it will be observed that the statements concerning them differ, and at first sight appear to be contradictory to one another.* But we shall find that these apparent discrepancies, when prayerfully considered in the presence of God, and in dependence upon the Holy Spirit who inspired the writers of the Scriptures, prove to be divine perfections. There are difficulties in the Bible, and if we look for discrepancies we shall find what appear to be such; whereas if, on the other hand, we look for divine perfections and harmonies we shall find them in far greater abundance.

“Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own Interpreter,
And He will make it plain.”

In 1 Kings vii. we read that Hiram “cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high a-piece,” while in 2 Chron. iii. it is stated that “he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high.” In the latter statement the margin gives *long* for “high,” and it evidently means that when lying on the ground the two shafts together were

* In the *Supplement to the Englishman's Bible* will be found a collection of the portions of the Word of God in which these pillars are referred to, and paragraphs explanatory thereof. This work gives the result of upwards of thirty years' study of the subject, with much labour and patient investigation, the object being to present every particular and show the harmony underlying apparent discrepancies, and we commend the volume to the study of children of God.—ED.

thirty-five cubits in length; this would give seventeen and a half for each, and if we add half a cubit for the pedestal on which it stood, we have eighteen as the height of each.

With regard to the position of the pillars, the word which, in 1 Kings vii. 21, is rendered *in*, signifies *by*, and we should read, "He set up the pillars *by* the porch of the temple;" and this corresponds with 2 Chron. iii. 17, "He reared up the pillars before the temple."

On the top of each pillar was a chapter, or crown. In 1 Kings vii. 16 the chapters are said to be five cubits high; in verse 19 the lily work is said to be four cubits; and in 2 Kings xxv. 17 we read, "The height of the chapter was three cubits." The truth is, I apprehend, that each chapter consisted of four parts: (1) a square ledge at the top, half a cubit thick, on which were the pomegranates afterwards mentioned; (2) a similar ledge at the bottom; (3) a bowl or pommel of one cubit deep (1 Kings vii. 41); and (4) a belly of three cubits. The two last added together and covered with lily work would make the "*four* cubits" of "lily work," and the two ledges would complete the height of *five* cubits.

To understand the apparent variations in the number of the pomegranates on these chapters we must notice: (1) there were twenty-four on the upper ledge of each pillar, fronting the four sides or winds, together ninety-six; (2) four at the corners placed diagonally, raising the numbers to one hundred; (3) the same on the bottom ledge, making two hundred on each pillar; and therefore the whole number on the two pillars was four hundred.

These pillars, with their chapters, stood twenty-three cubits high, or about forty-six feet; they were about twenty-four feet in circumference and eight in diameter; and concerning their formation we read, "In the plain of

Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarthan." (1 Kings vii. 46.) I question whether in the present advanced stage of manufacturing skill any foundries exist able to cast two such pillars, but skill was given to Hiram to accomplish this enormous task. The Hebrew word signifies a *round pillar*, and they were not solid but hollow, the metal being of the thickness of a hand breadth, or nearly four inches. Those who are scientifically skilled in these questions say that the proportions of thickness and size here given are those whereby the greatest amount of strength is secured with the smallest quantity of metal. They prove to be, mathematically, like the cells of the bee, the wisest and best adapted for the purpose intended.

It is remarkable that these pillars did not support anything, and were not intended to bear weight; they stood as silent but eloquent preachers before the Temple of Jehovah—as the embodiment of most important truths. The names divinely given to them enable us to understand this; for, having reared them up, Solomon "called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left hand Boaz." *Jachin* means, *He will establish*, and *Boaz* signifies, *In Him is strength*. Stability is of God, and this divine stability is centred in Christ, who is both the wisdom and the power of God. As applied to the believer, these truths are beautifully expressed in 2 Cor. i. 21, 22: "Now He that *stablisheth* us with you *in Christ*, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The pillars were hollow, and this may remind us of our emptiness. The chapiters may be regarded as a type of "the earnest of the Spirit;" the pomegranates of the fruit of the Spirit; the lily work of the graces of the Spirit. The network on the bowl and belly of each pillar

is suggestive of temperance or self-control, as the seven wreathen chains are of subjection.

The brazen altar of the temple was twenty cubits square, and ten cubits in height, commensurate in length and breadth with the holiest of all, and equal in height to the cherubim of glory placed therein. The immense size and height would necessitate steps of approach, and in Ezekiel xliii. 17, the steps are spoken of as being towards the east. The prohibition of tools and steps in Ex. xx. 26 referred exclusively to the altar of unhewn stone there mentioned, and the necessity for it was afterwards obviated by the provision of suitable garments for the priests. (Ex. xxviii. 42.)

The brazen sea in the court of the temple took the place of the laver of the tabernacle. It was thirty cubits in circumference, ten in diameter, and five in depth, and stood upon twelve oxen. It was constructed to hold *three* thousand baths, while it generally contained *two* thousand. (See 1 Kings vii. 26; 2 Chron. iv. 5.) There were hewers of wood for keeping the altar supplied, and drawers of water for the brazen sea. It is said concerning the laver, "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet thereat," or *therefrom*, not therein (Ex. xxx. 19); the water in the laver was never defiled, but some was taken out for use. In the case of the brazen sea, the priests could not reach up to dip their hands into it, but the water had to be conveyed down to them. I have seen old drawings in which it is represented as flowing from the mouths of the oxen, which were probably hollow, like all the other large vessels. This leads my mind to the Lord's words in John vii. 37, 38, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall

flow rivers of living water." Then follows the interpretation, "But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive" when He was glorified.

I know of no definite Scripture where that promise occurs in so many words, but here I see it stated in type. This brazen sea is emblematic of Jesus in resurrection, in whom dwells all fulness of spiritual life, power, and blessing. I question whether the water was always flowing, but regard it as being drawn out when required, and there we have a beautiful embodiment of divine thought connected with ministry, of which the ox in Scripture is the emblem and type. This figure is applied by the apostle Paul to those who minister the Word, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." The ox treading out the corn for the household represents that servant whom his Lord has set over His household to give them their portion of meat in due season, and who by going over the sacred page again and again with unmuzzled mouth feeds himself as he treads it out for others. And the oxen underneath the brazen sea, through which the water flowed, may be typical of those who, abiding in Christ, and drawing out of His fulness as the glorified One, minister the Spirit to others, according to that Word, "He that ministereth to you the Spirit . . . doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. iii. 5.) This is true ministry; not setting forth our own thoughts, or the opinions of others, but receiving out of Christ's fulness, and so ministering grace to the hearers.

The fact that the oxen stood *three* on each side suggests the three standing branches of the ministry in the present dispensation provided by the Lord—evangelists, pastors, and teachers; the apostles and prophets having laid the foundations in the Scriptures.

Connected with the sea were "ten *lavens* of brass," five on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house, and "such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them." The inwards and legs of the burnt offerings were washed, and thus they became typical of Him whose inward thoughts, feelings, purposes, and desires were ever pure and holy, whose walk and ways were blameless and undefiled, and who "offered himself without spot to God." The cleansing of the priests by the water from the brazen sea is emblematic of the sanctification of the Holy Spirit through the Word.

The altar of incense in the tabernacle was of shittim wood and set forth Christ incarnate; that in the temple was of cedar, and was typical of Christ in resurrection; whilst in both, the divine glory of His person was set forth by the gold. This altar is a type of Christ as the One through whom the worship of saints, whether on earth or in heaven, goes up with acceptance to God.

The table of shewbread in the tabernacle shadowed forth Christ as God's provision for His ransomed people during their wilderness and earthly wanderings; but in the temple there were *ten* tables, five on each side, the larger number being emblematic of that larger provision for the redeemed in resurrection and heavenly glory. In our Father's house there is bread enough and to spare, not only enough for our wilderness journey, but sufficient for all the redeemed in glory throughout eternity.

One lamp-stand was made for the tabernacle with its seven lamps, but in the temple there were *ten* lamp-stands with their seventy golden lamps. Oh, what a flood of glory when lit! As they lighted up the golden floor, the vaulted roof, and the golden walls with their sparkling gems, it must have been a magnificent scene for the priests when they came in in their course to minister before God.

They were *lamp-stands*, not candlesticks; that which is expressed in the candle and candlestick is the popish idea of ministry, and the popular idea too, and it is utterly wrong. A candle is an independent thing; all that it needs is in itself; light it and it will burn until consumed. It is self-sufficient, and it will fetch its price in the market according to its calibre. A *lamp*, on the other hand, is absolutely dependent on the oil; there may be the lamp-stand, the lamp, and the wick, but if there be no oil there can be no light. So spiritual ministry according to God is absolutely dependent on the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Candles may be carried in a procession, but in the sanctuary of God only lamps are used.

In the holiest of all there was no lamp-stand, for the Lord said that He would "dwell in the thick darkness." (1 Kings viii. 12.) There were ten windows in the temple, but not one in the holiest. God had said, "I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat" (Lev. xvi. 2), and in both tabernacle and temple the Shekinah glory was the light thereof. In the temple described in Ezekiel the glory will enter by the way of the east, and fill the house. (Ez. xliii. 2-5.)

The ark of the covenant made for the tabernacle in the wilderness was brought into the temple at the time of its dedication, and was placed under the wings of the large cherubim in the holiest. These cherubim were ten cubits or twenty feet high, and reached from wall to wall, their wings meeting in the centre over the blood-stained propitiatory. In the wilderness the staves were never taken out of the ark, because it was the emblem of Christ ever present with His people in their journeyings; but in the temple they were taken out and placed behind the ark as no longer needed, yet the ends were seen from without, suggesting that in the glory we shall ever have

the memorial of Christ's faithful presence with His people in the wilderness.

These large cherubim are, I believe, typical of the whole company of the redeemed in resurrection and heavenly glory. They were made of olive wood and covered with gold, and thus set forth the risen saints, in spiritual bodies and partakers of the divine nature, as filling all heaven with the wondrous tale of redemption by the blood of the Lamb, and the sweet memorial of redeeming love; for Christ and His work will be the central theme throughout all eternity.

SILVER AND GOLD :

WHAT THEY ARE NOT.

THE utterance of Peter to the lame man at the gate of the temple which was called beautiful—"Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee" (Acts iii. 6), seems to contain within itself the great principle, that as Christ Himself was "as a root out of a dry ground," so the Christianity which He brought into the world was to be essentially independent of the riches, the wisdom, and the power of the world. In the advancement and progress of the spiritual kingdom, which the advent of the Holy Ghost was designed to establish, all that was simply of this world was to be set aside.

When Peter said, "Such as I have, give I thee," he meant the power of God, and those riches of His grace which are treasured up in Christ for faith's continued reception and use. As the Church of God has failed in the exercise of faith, and thus ceased to realize the power of the cross and the grace of the Spirit, it has sought to compensate for the lack of the heavenly and the spiritual by falling back upon the wisdom, the power, and the wealth

of the world. God will never tolerate this, and, whatever appearances may seem to indicate, the real result has been spiritual feebleness and poverty. God will not give His honour to another, and will never deviate from the lines of His own appointed procedure. He who sent "His only-begotten Son"—"the brightness of His glory," to be the babe lying in the manger, will never own any principle in our Christianity which violates the lowliness of the babe of Bethlehem.

It is painful, as we run our eyes down the religious periodicals of the day, to read the continual cry for "money, money, money," as though that were the one pressing need for carrying on the work of God. One cannot help feeling that if an equally urgent and united cry were raised to God, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, there would not only be results in spiritual blessing a hundredfold, but, without even mentioning the need of money, the heart of the church of God being touched, funds would flow in for the service of God, so that for what *He* would have us do there would surely be no lack.

It is true that means are wanted for everything that has to be done here, but it makes all the difference in the practical carrying out of the work of God, whether God Himself be before the eye, the money being expected to follow as He sends it; or whether the question of means to carry on a work come first, and God second. Let us lay it down as a fact that God never lacks means for what He has to do. There is much that appears to us most desirable to be done, for which means seem to be wanting; but we may rest assured that if God wants the work to be done the means will be forthcoming in due time. And it is good for ourselves personally to wait, and to seek with prayer and fasting to be found vessels meet for the Master's

use, so that we may take up our service directly from the hand of God, and we shall then rejoice to remember that God bears the charges of all the work to which He sends those whom He has fitted as His instruments for it. *They* will find tokens of God's care for them, even as Elijah found at the brook Cherith, that, without any anxiety on his part, the God who had sent him thither, and had sent the ravens to feed him there, saw that the brook was dried up, and said to him, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath."

The plans, devices, and schemes of all kinds to raise money—many of them a disgrace to Christianity, and a dishonour to the cause of Him whom we call Master and Lord—all bear testimony to the sad fact that what is elsewhere known as the "almighty dollar" is as much an idol in the Church of God as it is in the world that knows not God. It would be well if in this matter the people of God heard and heeded the remarks of the world around them, for while the world uses such means for its own objects, and sees no harm in them, it righteously condemns them in things connected with the religion of Christ, even though it may not fully recognize that as the domain in which divine principles, set forth in the Word of God, alone should rule.

There is a blessing and a divine guidance attendant on the poverty of Christianity which we little realize. It calls for self-examination as to anything in contemplation; it necessitates patient waiting upon God for the removal of hindrances; and it leads to that absolute trust in God and dependence upon Him which are verily essential in all work for Him. It is, no doubt, very humbling to our proud hearts not to be able to do some great thing which we desire to do; but it is *on this very account* that the discipline of poverty is so wholesome, and the want of means beforehand so great a blessing. This path of dependence

may often be not easy, but it will be trod in the sunshine of the love of God which makes the rough path smooth, and those who tread it, even with weary feet, will find the everlasting arms underneath them and ever sufficient for their need.

We say we believe in God ; we profess that our work is the work of God. We are ready to call ourselves the servants of God:—do we realize what all this involves? Is there any truth in that mighty promise given by the risen Lord to His people, as He sent them abroad into all the world to sow the seed of His word, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age?” Can the child of God, entering upon any work, however great or however small, to which God may have called him, take to himself the assurance given to Moses, “Certainly I will be with thee?” To these questions faith can but answer, “Yes;” but if so, what will be the result? Surely the result will be that we shall find fulfilled to the very uttermost those oft-repeated words, “I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” (Josh i. 5.)

One great cause of all this painful solicitude about money is that the people of God allow their faith to lag behind their conscience. God would not have us act beyond our faith, but He would have us exercise our faith in Himself in the line in which our conscience is exercised as to His will, so that our conscience toward God and our faith in God might ever go hand in hand. If it were so, there would be less work only half done, fewer services abandoned, and not so many undertakings that seem to live only by begging and pleading.

It is well for us to remember the words of our God, who says to His people, “If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof.” (Ps. l. 12.) We are slow to learn that God *is* GOD, who

ever works out all things according to the counsel of His own will, while He requires of us that we as good soldiers of Jesus Christ entangle not ourselves with the things of this life, but strive to please Him who hath chosen us to be soldiers. The ways and means are the concern of the great Captain of the heavenly army, and it is the soldier's privilege and joy to let his Captain provide for all his need, temporal or spiritual.

If these thoughts appear to some to be too high-flown and too super-mundane for our Christian life down here, we believe they will be approved by those who have learnt in communion with God to live in heavenly places, and have obtained grace from Him to bring their acquaintance with Him, with His love, and with His promises, to bear upon their walk and warfare on earth while engaged in His service, and fighting under His heavenly banner.

H. G.

GOD'S WORD AND MAN'S REASONINGS.

THIS is a day of speculation and scepticism, a day in which every utterance of God that is thought worthy of man's notice is brought to the bar of human reason, and allowed to stand or not as it accords with or differs from what men call science. In former days, when men "did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind," so that while "professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the uncorruptible God for an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Rom. i. 22, 28.) It is still true that man seeks not the knowledge of God, that he will not have His revelation of Himself and His ways, that, proud of his own wisdom, he turns his back upon God, and wanders in his

self-chosen path till he becomes so debased as to find pleasure in seeking his ancestry amongst "four-footed beasts and creeping things," which (he says) got into being somehow. This he prefers to bowing before God as Creator of all things, and owning the truth that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;" and that *thus* "man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.)

We need not wonder if those who disallow Christ disallow Moses too, and, because they refuse to listen to Him who is the "Wisdom of God," are left to eat the fruit of their own devices, and to prove the truth of the solemn word, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." But alas! it is not only avowed atheists and infidels who are thus saying, "Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" Even many who profess to be Christian teachers are bowing down before the new idol of *Evolution*, and books that enunciate this doctrine are admired and commended by Christians who fail to see that if once it be really received the doctrines of Eden and Calvary, of sin and salvation must give place to it, for to the entire teaching of the Bible the fiction of evolution is diametrically opposed.

But if this is the newest doctrine it is not the only doctrine that is antagonistic to the word of God, and it is very sad to see how many of His true children are seeking to defend the Bible by diluting and explaining away its plainest statements, to harmonize them with the supposed teachings of astronomy and geology, and then asserting that "Rightly understood it does not contradict these sciences." The statement is indeed true, that "God's works rightly read are not likely to contradict God's words rightly interpreted." No Christian ever supposed that they would, but the *correct reading* of God's works is something very different from *man's ideas* about God's

works; and God's word *rightly interpreted*, is very unlike God's word *distorted* to mean what it is deemed necessary that it should mean.

The Pentateuch, or five-fold Book of Moses, stands or falls with the Gospels, and therefore he who owns Christ as Lord stands committed to the acceptance of every statement of those early records. To question the literal truth of the first three chapters of Genesis is to question the authority and truthfulness of Him who repeatedly endorsed the writings of Moses as a complete whole in the very form in which we now possess them; who also referred definitely to the statement of these chapters that when God in the beginning created man, He formed a male and a female, and Himself enjoined the law of marriage as set forth in them. (See Gen. ii. 24 with Matt. xix. 4-6.)

I neither write for the learned, nor as one who has deemed it incumbent upon him to, master the so-called sciences before protesting against the patronizing way in which well-meaning men set themselves up as apologists for Scripture, but I raise a note of warning to any who have ears to hear. The habit many have of accommodating the teachings of Scripture to the changing theories of the worshippers of science, and then, as self-constituted judges, asserting that the Bible is true, is more calculated to minister to the natural pride of the heart than to lead to that trembling at God's Word for which He looks in His own people at least. (Isa. lxvi. 2.) Those who are seeking to defend God's Word in this fashion, instead of trembling at it and bowing to it, may well ponder some questions asked by one of old: "Will ye speak unrighteously for God, and talk deceitfully for Him? Will ye contend for God? Is it good that He should search you out? Shall not His excellency make you afraid, and His dread fall upon you?" (Job xiii. 7-11.)

He who would enter into the kingdom of God must become a little child, and he who, being in that kingdom, would go on to spiritual manhood, must behave himself as the weaned child, listening in simplicity and faith to the voice of God in the Scriptures of truth. Of course men will say, and many of the children of God will say, Ought we not to study science? I will try to give my own answer to this question by presenting two pictures. Here is a man proved guilty of rebellion against his king; he is under sentence of death, and his execution depends upon his sovereign's word. He knows not when that word will be spoken which will instantly and irrevocably seal his fate, but he holds in his hand a document from the king calling upon him to own his wrong, and submit to his sovereign, and assuring him that the moment he does so he shall be freed from the sentence and be exalted to a permanent place of honour in the very palace and presence of the king, who at great cost to himself, has made all this possible, and will find delight in fulfilling his word. Instead of considering this gracious message he throws it aside, and even ignores the fact that he is under sentence and in danger. He spends his time in curiously examining the roof and floor of his cell, and indulging in all kinds of speculations about their formation. Thus slighting the grace that would bring him freedom and honour, he seals his rebellion, and further dishonours him whom he is responsible to obey. Who will not say the man is mad? Yet his folly does not equal that of those who spend their days in studying the stars, and speculating upon the age of the earth, while they ignore their condition as sinners under the wrath of a holy God, and deem His gracious word of reconciliation through the death of His Son beneath their notice.

Take another picture. Think of some banished one against whom the sentence has been cancelled, a convict,

whose fetters have been removed, a rebel who has been pardoned, and who is journeying to the palace in which he is to dwell with the king. He is told that on the journey he has the opportunity of enriching himself, and that the riches he gains will be to his praise when he reaches his journey's end. He travels through a vast plain, having on one side of him gold mines in which he is called to work, and jewels and precious stones which he has ability to gather, while on the other side, buried in sand, are cockle-shells and curious stones which he is told are of no real use to him, and cannot be taken into his future home, and that any search for them would only retard his progress. Instead, however, of working in the gold mines, and gathering the pearls, he sets to work energetically to dig in the dust and lade himself with stones and shells, simply turning aside for enough gold to keep him from starving by the way. He toils along under his heavy load, the sand fills his eyes so that he ceases to see the treasures that lie around him, and even gets to the gate of the palace without being aware of it, though it has been shining on purpose to cheer him on his journey. The gate opens to him, but he is told that before he enters he must put down *all* that he is carrying, and he has to go in with nothing more than he had when he started. He takes one look back, and now beholds clearly the whole way he has come. He sees the gold that might have been his, and the precious stones that might have adorned him, and what would he now give for a little more time on that road! But that time cannot be had.

Here is a feeble portrait of a believer who neglects his Bible, slights precious occasions of fellowship with God and His people, and turns from opportunities of service to Christ in ministering to His members and seeking the salvation of the lost, to dabble with that science which is

as shifting as the sand, to gather stones that belong only to earth, however curious they may be, to pursue knowledge which will "vanish away" when that shout is heard which will call us to the side of our Lord. Each believer will then be with Him and bear His likeness, and with perfect sight and understanding will take a view of the pilgrim pathway for ever behind him. Will there be no *regrets* in that moment? Will there be no longings for lost opportunities?

Of course there are studies connected with mining operations, as well as with engineering of all kinds, and other things pertaining to the present life, which may be carried on in the fear of God, and in true service to the sons of toil. These things are worthy of the name of science. Men ascertain *facts* and make use of them, and so facilitate the discovery of minerals, and lighten the toil of their excavation. The same principle holds good in every department, and we are all greatly indebted to inventors. But all this is very different from that which men call science, upon which they pride themselves, and which they set against the Scriptures of truth, though at its best it is mere speculation. It is against this that we are warned—"oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called" (1 Tim. vi. 20, R. V.), meaning, as one has said, "the kind of knowing which sets itself in array against the gospel of Christ, and which boasts of its superior insight into the nature of things." Men search out what they suppose to be facts, and then draw inferences from them. And these *inferences* from *supposed facts*, they dignify with the name of science or knowledge, and those who call themselves theologians accept these notions, and cumber the first of Genesis with interpretations that rob it of all its grand simplicity, and falsify its plainest statements.

We are called upon to decide whether in this matter we will follow "the course of this world" and accept the conclusions of its wise men, or will walk in the old way, content to say, "*Through faith* we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Heb. xi. 3.) Men, *professing* to be men of science (*i.e.*, knowledge), stumble over the sublime utterances of the first of Genesis, and wander in the wilderness of scepticism till they are lost on the dark mountains of atheism, while the *true* men of science can say, "*We know*," because GOD has spoken. We read these truths in God's Word, and we believe them on God's authority. We have His bare affirmation that He created all things, and we accept the profound assertion without a question. Not as the result of reasoning, nor as the fruit of discovery, but as having heard the voice of the Creator Himself giving His own account of His own work, do we know and worship Him *as* "the Creator of the ends of the earth."

This point being settled, the reverent contemplation of creation as the work of God is well calculated to help His people in humility and faith and worship, and of such treatment of creation Scripture is full. It is indeed true that we have before us the still more wondrous and glorious work of redemption, but we should consider that a fresh and fuller revelation of God does not *supersede* what has preceded it. For it is the same God who reveals Himself, and the God who is ever the same. When heaven is opened to the beloved disciple the *first* song he hears is an acknowledgment of God's glory as Creator: "Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power: for *Thou didst create all things*, and because of Thy will they were, and

were created." (Rev. iv. 11, R.V.) And immediately after Pentecost those who had been filled with the Holy Ghost "lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, *which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.*" They acknowledged God as Creator when they prayed to Him concerning the opposition of the rulers to Himself and His Christ. Jeremiah was strengthened in faith in the same way: "Ah Lord God! behold *Thou hast made the heaven and the earth* by Thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee." The Psalmist found comfort in the assurance, "My help cometh from the Lord *which made heaven and earth;*" while many psalms dwell with rapture upon God's glory as shown forth in creation. And when God would reprove Job, it was with the declaration of His glory in creation and providence that He did so. We shall indeed ever delight in redemption as that wondrous work of God in which He is fully revealed, and by which the glory and stability of His new creation are for ever secured; but we shall never forget that had we not been created we could not have been redeemed, and we shall ever adore our God as the One who formed the *old* creation as a stepping stone to the *new*.

"Creation! wondrous thought! There was a time
When yonder sun—that golden orb sublime,
And yon sweet, tranquil moon, that glides serene,
And those bright, countless gems in glittering sheen,
Were not,—when this green earth was yet unborn,
Yea, when those 'morning stars,' that hailed the morn,
And echoed back the Great Creator's voice,
Which called on all the angels to rejoice—
There was a time when all those armies bright
First stood before the throne of holy light;
When God said 'Let them be,' and forth they came
Creatures of light and love to bless His name."

THE BURNT-OFFERING.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON LEVITICUS I.

THE burnt-offering, like all the other sacrifices, was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who "offered Himself without spot to God." To set forth the perfectness of the anti-type, God required that the animal to be offered by the Israelite should be "without blemish." It must not only be outwardly perfect, but no blemish must be found within. After it had been slain its skin was removed, and thus the animal was fully exposed to view. We only see skin-deep, but "the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. xvi. 7.)

Further, it must be cut up into pieces. The head, which is the principal part, the seat of intelligence and understanding, is first mentioned. Naturally our understanding is totally corrupt; we are like those spoken of in Ephesians iv. 18, who walk "in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts." Christ's perfect understanding resulted in a perfect walk, and the prayer of Paul for the Ephesian saints was, that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened.

The inwards and the legs were to be washed with water. This water represented the Word of God, as shown in Eph. v. 26, where the apostle, instructing us concerning Christ's care for the Church, says, "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." Christ did not require cleansing as we do, but He was sanctified, that is, set apart for God, according to the word

in John xvii. 17-19, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." David said, "Behold Thou desirest truth in the inward parts," and it is only as our inward parts are sanctified that our steps will be clean. God enlightens the understanding, and thus shows us what requires cleansing. His word is also our safeguard, as we read, "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." (Ps. xxxvii. 31.) In the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, heart, walk, and speech were all for God.

The animal to be offered in sacrifice must, as we have said, be perfect because it represented Christ, and since we too represent Him we also are called to be "holy and without blame [*or* blemish] before Him."

In Leviticus i. we have three classes of burnt-offerings, varying in the degree of their costliness according to the ability of the offerer: (1) a bullock; (2) a sheep or goat (3) a turtle dove or pigeon. In this dispensation also some of God's people are richer than others, but who are the rich and the poor now? In 2 Cor. viii. 9, we read, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty *might be rich.*" Thus every believer is *rich* in Christ, but *practically* we are rich only according to the measure in which we are drawing from His unsearchable riches.

Now let us contrast two passages in the book of Revelation. The Lord's word to Smyrna was, "I know thy works and tribulation, and poverty, *but thou art rich*" (Rev. ii. 9); while the solemn charge against Laodicea was, "Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that *thou art*

wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." By the side of these two passages place James ii. 5, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, *rich in faith*, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" Thus we see that God accounts those rich who are rich in faith, while in His sight they are poor who have but little faith, little knowledge of Christ, and consequently know little of living for eternity.

The rich saint has an enlarged apprehension of Christ, as represented by the first offering, for the three offerings show different estimates of the value of Christ, and the persons presenting these offerings represent three different believers, all ransomed with the same price, but having different estimates of the one sacrifice. The poor believer is set forth by the one who brought a dove, yet that dove was accepted, and became a "*sweet savour*" to God. Why did the apostle Paul give up his learning and worldly position and whole life? We get the answer in Phil. iii. 8-11, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Our poverty of soul comes from our knowing so little of Jesus and His love. Paul could say, "The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. v. 14); and, in Heb. xi. 24-26, he tells us that Moses knew something of this constraining love, for he speaks of him as "esteeming the reproach of

Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." He prayed for the Ephesian saints, that God "would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with [*or* unto] all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 16-19.)

Let us note the general distinctions between the three offerings. The one of secondary value was to be killed on the north side of the altar, where a less full view of the laver and of God's house could be obtained; so he who knows least of the value of the death of Christ will know least of the truth about Him generally. The hand of the offerer was not said to be laid upon the head of the lamb, as in the case of the bullock; for the one who has the greatest view of Christ will most clearly see his oneness with Him.

The third offering was not cut into pieces, as had been the case with the other two, reminding us of the lack of a deep insight into the person of the Lord Jesus; and it was the *offerer*, moreover, who slew the first two, for it is he who knows most of Christ who confesses most truly, "My sins killed Him." The two principal offerings were washed, which may remind us that the fuller our knowledge of Christ is, the more we see how His blessed walk was conformed to the will of God, and thus gain the highest of all knowledge and the richest of all blessings. Let us seek to be growing into the image of Christ, and to be bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and let us remember that God smells a sweet savour of Christ in all who are walking in His footsteps.

TRIAL AND DELIVERANCE.

DELIVERANCE may tarry, but it will come. Deliverance from the trial is not the chief thing. The chief thing is deliverance from the sin of unbelief and mistrust, while the trial, perhaps, lasts long. God's delays ripen and enlarge, and sweeten the blessings which He stores up for us in time of trial. He "considers our trouble, He knows our soul in adversity." "Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies." "He doth not grieve willingly."

It may be our state of heart toward God specially requires correction; our consciences are dull and low, and must be elevated and quickened. Trials serve not only to cleanse the chief chambers of our ways, which are subject to the eye of every comer, but also to help us to examine into, and turn out, neglected corners of the heart, corners known fully to God, though passed by, perhaps, unobserved by ourselves. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Trials are under God's hand like the centurion's servants and soldiers, who were at his bidding. (Luke vii. 8.) God says to one or another "Come," and it cometh; "Do this," and it doeth it; and when the trial has performed all the service which God sees needful to be done thereby, then the command is "Go," and it goeth.

In the day of the Lord we shall see, if not before, that trials have been among our best friends and most active and efficient servants.

W. H.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER IN RELATION TO OUR CHURCH LIFE.

THERE is something peculiar in the position of these ordinances, which are so characteristically *external*, in a dispensation which is so essentially *spiritual* as the present, when worship must be "in spirit and in truth," and is not confined to any place, nor connected with meats and drinks or other outward observances. (John iv. 21-24; Romans xiv. 17.) When we remember, however, that we are not all spirit, but consist of "spirit and soul and body," we at once see a reason for these outward ordinances in a system that is so truly spiritual. The outward speaks to the outward, and He who seeks to mould our whole being to Himself, has in infinite wisdom appointed these rites in His Church, that we may give expression to what we believe, and that we may also have a means of judging of the reality of that which is inward, by our subjection to the outward, and be guarded against a mere sentimentalism which does not lead to definite confession of Christ.

This truth was once forcibly brought out by the remark of a godly member of the Society of Friends, who, with two others, was visiting mission stations in India. In conversation he admitted that since he had been in India he had seen a reason for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper that he had never seen before, for the educated natives in Calcutta had said to him, "Your Christianity is just what we like; it has no baptism to separate us from our people, and no Lord's Supper to break our caste; it is all spiritual, and we can hold it spiritually while outwardly remaining where we are."

This led him to feel that there was a divine wisdom in the appointment that these ordinances should be outwardly observed, which he had never contemplated.

The careful reader of the history of the Church in the past, and the thoughtful observer of that which is ever passing before our eyes in the present, must acknowledge that these ordinances have often been rocks on which mere professors have made shipwreck, and by means of which their hollowness and unreality have been made manifest; and they stand as beacons to warn the unwary and to testify against those who glory in the *word* of an orthodox confession, and not in the *deed* of a holy example. God desires truth in the inward parts, and to test the reality *there* He brings us into contact with that which is outward, as John in his epistle tests the reality of love to God by the outward act of feeding the brother who is hungry, and clothing the one who is naked. (1 John iii. 16, 17.) The Blessed One in the guise of the carpenter was God's test to Israel, and so has God ever appointed tests of our obedience and our faith. The Bible is truly a book of tests, to prove all things.

Let us now consider these precious ordinances and what the Lord would teach us through them.

One evident difference between them is that the one—baptism—is never repeated, while the other—the Lord's Supper—is essentially of frequent recurrence; and in this they strikingly resemble the Jewish ordinances of circumcision and the paschal supper.

In Romans vi., Paul says that those who are baptized, are baptized into the death of Christ, for it is by death and resurrection we are brought into the body of Christ, and made members of Him who is risen from the dead. To this he draws attention in 1 Cor. xii., where he says, "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether

Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free." So baptism by water becomes the beautiful symbol of our union in resurrection with our Head in the heavens, who through death leads us into the new creation, where God is all in all. It is thus that baptism becomes the symbol of the putting away of sin, not simply by the washing out of the stain of guilt, but by the death of the guilty, as we read ; " In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body* of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are raised with Him." (Col. ii. 11, 12.) Our justification thus stands in death and resurrection, of which baptism is the figure, and by which, like Noah in the ark, we pass through judgment into that resurrection-life that lies beyond, and find ourselves in the covenant of grace—new creatures in a new creation. Baptism shows us the eternal security of our position and standing in Christ, for we are like those who stood on the Canaan side of the Red Sea, with the resurrection song in our hearts and on our lips. (Exodus xv.) This sure standing is the portion of the whole body of the redeemed, and constitutes the common ground of our relationship to Christ and one another, and out of it springs the fellowship of saints. Having a crucified and risen Christ as our centre, we know that we are given by God the Father to Christ, and therefore of necessity given to one another in Him ; and as our blessed Head could say, " All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine," so likewise we can say in our measure, for we belong to one another, not on the ground of what we are to one another, but on the ground of what we are to Him, as the gift of the Father to the Son.

* " *Of the sins* " should be omitted. See R. V., which in this follows all Textual Critics. The omission is important as showing that it is not sin only that is put off, but the body of sin and death itself.

The standing which baptism teaches us corresponds with the standing of the redeemed in glory, as expressed in the new song, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." Baptism *ought* to include all the redeemed, and to exclude all others, and it would then be the emblem of our union with Christ and with one another. It is not a baptism into any church or sect, or local assembly, but *into Christ*, in the all-embracing character of that blessed relationship unfolded in our Lord's prayer in John xvii., "Holy Father, keep in Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are." But in this matter Satan has misled in two opposite ways, on the one hand introducing infant baptism, which brings the world into the professing Church, and on the other hand making baptism a ground of separation among those whom Christ has joined together. But, whatever evil has been made of this holy ordinance, we are responsible to look at it in its apostolic light, and to see in it a figure of salvation; as Peter says, in speaking of the eight souls saved in the ark, through water—"the like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now *save* us." By means of it we take our stand as God's saved ones, and profess to own our relationship with all other saved ones. As those who make this profession, it is well for us to remember the words of our Lord concerning those who believe in Him, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me; but whoso shall offend (or stumble) one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that . . . he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. xviii. 5, 6.) Could words be more solemn than these which were uttered by Him who died to save? They seem to form the key to Paul's

words in Rom. xiv., where we learn that he that is weak in the faith is to be received because God has received him and that he is not to be judged or despised, because Christ died for him. Truly Matt. xviii. and Romans xiv. demand the prayerful study and heart exercise of the children of God. May we receive one another as Christ has received us, to the glory of that God who gave us to Him and to one another in Him, remembering that the preciousness and value of each believer, however weak and wayward, can be measured by nothing less than the precious blood of the Son of God!

Let us now turn to the subject of the Lord's Supper. This is very different in form from Baptism, yet it presents to us very much the same truths; but while Baptism sets forth our standing in Christ, which is given to us once for all, the Lord's Supper has to do with our development and growth in conformity with that standing, in our daily life, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, as the former is the symbol of our new birth into the Kingdom, as set forth in John iii., by the death and resurrection of Christ, so the latter is the symbol of the truth, declared in John vi., that he that eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood hath everlasting life, and thereby grows up into Him, proving experimentally what His death and resurrection mean.

The aspects of truth presented to our hearts in the Supper are very varied and very precious, being all connected with the person of our Lord, as is intimated in the repeated expression, "In remembrance of *Me*." It is for this that the feast has been appointed, and the following are some of its prominent features.

1. It is a Memorial, designed to keep alive in our memories the grace of Him who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty

might be rich. It is not only His work, but *Himself* that is thus continually brought before us, and this has a very important bearing on the spiritual life, walk, and ministry of a child of God, for only in proportion as the Lord's presence is realized will affections be drawn out towards Him. It is when thoughts of Himself fill the heart that communion with Him becomes deep and real, and love is a constraining power.

2. It speaks of a broken body—of Him as “wounded” and “bruised,” “oppressed” and “afflicted” on our behalf, according to His own word when He had broken the bread, “This is My body which is given for you.” It is herein that the sufferings of Christ are especially represented to us, and that He is brought before our eyes as the crucified Lamb of God.

3. It tells of atoning blood, for in giving the cup to His disciples He said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.” Thus, as Paul says, we “do shew forth the Lord's death,” and this ordinance which has continued through eighteen centuries becomes one of the most striking proofs of the reality of the death of Christ.

4. It is the witness of our common membership in the body of Christ, inasmuch as all who partake of it in faith are “one bread and one body, for,” adds the apostle, “we are all partakers of that one bread.” And thus it is the outward expression of what the communion of saints is—communion that exists not in any selection on our part, but because of our common relationship to Christ.

5. Being appointed by the Lord to be observed “till He come,” it is a reminder to us of His words to His disciples at the supper, “I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom.” (Luke xxii. 29, 30.)

Thus the feast comes to us fresh with the joy of a faith

in the *past*, a communion in the *present*, and a hope in the *future*, while it ever tells us of Him who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." It is pre-eminently a communion feast, held in communion with the Christ who died, the Christ who lives again, and the Christ who is coming; and that not simply in the joy of the individual soul, but in the collective fellowship of the many; and it outwardly represents that to which the Lord gave expression in John xvii., when He prayed that all the members of the family of God might be one with each other, because one in Him, even as He is one with the Father.

The feast of the Lord's Supper is therefore not the property of any one church, or local assembly, but of the whole Church of God, and we may truly say there never has been but one table—one loaf and one cup—even that which Christ Himself gave and blessed, when, before the cross, He instituted this feast of love and handed it down, with His blessing, to be observed by His people till we partake of it anew with Him in the Kingdom of God.

It is remarkable that the word used in the expression "the *Lord's* supper" (*Kuriakon*) is only used in one other passage in the New Testament, namely in Rev. i. "the *Lord's* day," and the fact should remind us that both the feast and the day have special reference to *the Lord*, and that His rights have to be owned and His lordship recognised in both. We have no rights at His table, the rights are *His*; *He* is the Inviter, *He* is the Host, and we are the guests. This is easily written, but nowhere, perhaps, have the will of man and the pretensions of priest or church more completely set aside the authority of the Lord than at His table—the place where it was specially required that His lordship and no other should be owned. As in baptism, so here; man has on the one hand brought

to the table those who are not in the family of God, or on the other hand has made it the table of a party, thus keeping from it those whom the Lord would have there. The Lord's table stands on ground common to the whole Church; it is the place for *all* saints not disqualified, according to the judgment of the Lord Himself, by either evil living, or fundamental unsoundness in the doctrine of Christ. Some of us make our boast in the blessed doctrine of the one body, of which all Christians are members and in which there are no sectarian restrictions; but let us remember that the Lord's table, as an outward ordinance, tests the profession we make, and is a witness against us if our theory and practice do not agree.

Reference has already been made to the striking analogy between the Christian ordinances under review and the Jewish rites of circumcision and the paschal supper. Circumcision was imperative on every male child in Israel, and so is baptism on every member of the church, in which there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Gentile. Every Jew who was not prevented by absence or ceremonial uncleanness was required to keep the passover, and he who forebore to keep the feast was regarded as one who had violated the covenant, and was on that account cut off from his people. These Jewish ordinances were primarily rites, and in the second place typical symbols; but the ordinances of the Church are primarily symbols of spiritual truths, and in a secondary way rites commanded to be observed. It is important to mark this distinction, lest baptism and the Lord's supper become, in the minds of any, what many by a mere ritual observance make them, that is, the ground of salvation.

The point however to be specially borne in mind is, that as the Jewish ordinances were the inheritance of every one belonging to the family of Israel, so the Christian

ordinances are the inheritance of every one belonging to the heavenly family; and, as in the former case, so in the latter, nothing but the direct command of God can deprive anyone of the privilege of their observance, or can justify their non-observance. Applying this principle to the Lord's table, we must see that those who take their stand as belonging to Christ alone, disowning sectarian ground, are under the necessity of opening their doors as wide as Christ has opened them, and of closing them only by His command. No one carefully examining the Epistles, with all they unfold of that which grieved the Spirit of God and pained the heart of the apostle—whether in the matter of laxity of morals, as at Corinth, or in the falling away from the truth, as in Galatia—can help being struck with the fact that separation from the fellowship of the Church is so sparingly touched upon. That which is, too often, the easy remedy for evils in these days, forms a very small part of the instructions given by God for securing the well-being of His saints. This is singularly evident in the Epistles to the seven Churches of Asia, which unfold so much in doctrine and practice that grieved Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire. If one thing marks His dealings with these Churches more than another it is His patience; and surely in these days of confusion God claims the exercise of double patience and tenderness in all that concerns His house, and particularly in regard to these ordinances.

The question may naturally arise as to the relation of the local assembly to these ordinances, and the reply plainly is, that the local church has but to carry out the principles that apply to the whole Church, the Church of the firstborn, which "are written in heaven." In 1 Cor. xii. we see what the body of Christ is, and this is given as a pattern which the Church at Corinth had to keep in

mind, and prayerfully and patiently to seek to carry out, as we are told in chap. xiv. The intervening chapter tells us that the spirit of love is to rule all, and to govern every action, so that there may be no schism in the body, but that, by this more excellent way of love, faith and hope may be kept in harmony with the heart of God, and may remain with us to the end; and that the ever present love of God, by its never failing power, may control our hearts and lives in His Church, and make our church life here a true exhibition, in measure, of what our life will be hereafter in the city of our God. At any rate let this be the aim of each; and they who attain thereto in the difficult and trying path of fellowship here will, in that day, hear from the lips of the Master the words, "Well-done, good and faithful servant!" for He well knows what self-renunciation is involved in seeking to walk, in our church life, in the footsteps of Him who "pleased not Himself." Self is the rock on which we are in danger of making shipwreck, even though it may often be in professed zeal for the hallowed name of Christ. H. G.

 BE TRUE.

Thou must be true thyself,
 If thou the truth would'st teach :
 Thy soul must overflow, if thou
 Another's soul would'st reach :
 It needs the overflow of heart
 To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
 Shall the world's famine feed :
Speak truly, and each word of thine
 Shall be a fruitful seed :
Live truly, and thy life shall be
 A great and noble creed.

H. Bonar.

THE SYMPATHY OF OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

BY THE LATE J. L. HARRIS.

IT is blessed to meditate on the sympathy of our Great High Priest—His unflinching and unselfish sympathy. We are often so overwhelmed with our own burdens and our own trials that we are unable to enter into the trials of others; or being at ease and in prosperity we have no heart to sympathize with them. But the marvel is that the Lord Jesus, who is at God's right hand, is able to sympathize with the weakest of His members. What a memorable word that is, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me?*" When Saul was persecuting the disciples, haling men and women, and committing them to prison, he little knew that those people were living members of Christ.

We find the Lord's sympathy with suffering expressed in the days of His flesh; and I doubt whether there ever was such sympathy as we find at the grave of Lazarus. I see two wonderful words in front of me at this moment, "Jesus only;" but there are two more as wonderful—"Jesus wept." That was a marvellous thing, that, when He knew He was going to raise the dead, He sympathized so fully with those in sorrow. He did not say, See what a great thing I am going to do; see what a wonder I am going to perform. No; but He showed the depth of His feeling from the bottom of His heart, for "Jesus wept." Such sympathy qualifies Him to be our High Priest, as we read in Heb. ii., "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest—(merciful toward us, faithful toward God)—in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He

Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."

We find that He was grieved for the hardness of heart in those He was with, and He sighed deeply when He found a man who could not hear, though He knew He was going to open his ears. Sometimes things happen which almost tempt us to distrust God, and then we write bitter things against ourselves; but He is merciful and faithful and able to succour.

In Hebrews iv. 14 we have the greatness, and may I humbly say also the littleness, of our High Priest: "We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, *Jesus the Son of God.*" He was poor, "despised and rejected of men," "a worm and no man," "a reproach of men and despised of the people," "*Jesus of Nazareth,*" "a root out of a dry ground;" yet "GOD manifest in the flesh," "God with us," and the One "who is over all, God blessed for ever." This seems to give Him the true character of His priesthood; and we find Him in another character just before (verse 12): "For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." When on earth Jesus knew people's hearts, and we constantly find Him answering the *hearts* of those with whom He came in contact rather than their lips. We are often self-deceived, but Jesus discerns our heart: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." These statements introduce us most blessedly to the priesthood. The prince of this world came to Jesus and found nothing in Him, nothing he could lay hold of; Jesus never acted contrary to the will of God; but when

the enemy comes to us he finds plenty in us upon which to work ; and therefore it is good to have the encouragement to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

It is on the ground of the priesthood of Christ that we are called to “hold fast our profession.” Now our profession is a very lofty one ; we are “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling ;” brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ, seated in heavenly places in Him. We profess to have passed from death unto life, and to be looking forward to the glory. Paul told Timothy he had “professed a good profession before many witnesses.” May God enable us to profess a good profession, and act up to it, for to be living witnesses for Christ is a hard thing. Were it not for Him as the High Priest of our profession we should never be able to maintain our witness for Him. As such He is in the immediate presence of God, and there we need Him, for we already have right and title to be there in spirit, and we shall be actually there by and bye.

The high priest of Israel was the representative of the people ; he went into the holiest once every year, and that entrance was a type and shadow of the great reality, even of the entrance of Him who is now appearing as our Representative above. The Jewish high priest had engraven on his breastplate all the names of the tribes of the children of Israel, so in deepest sympathy our High Priest bears our names upon His heart. Let us also remember that the high priest was judge as well, and so the Lord exercises priestly judgment in the midst of the churches (Rev. i. 3), for the Father “hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

We have not a high priest like Aaron, but one whose sphere is in the heavenlies ; He is there not merely because man rejected Him, but He is there that God may be

glorified, and He is making intercession for us. This is the climax of Rom. viii. 34, for the apostle could go no higher. He is sympathizing with us, and making intercession for us, while we are down here for a little while. Some of us have trials and sorrows and difficulties, and we need one who can sympathize, and God has provided One who is suitable to us. We should not know His suitability if we had not the proof of it in Scripture. What sorrow was ever like His sorrow? and what sympathy was ever like His? God says, "I have laid help upon One that is mighty I have exalted One chosen out of the people." We all know what a weary world this is, but we also know something better; we know that we are associated with Him whom God owns as His "Fellow," and that He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

Perhaps we do not sufficiently consider the effect a weak body has upon us; and in our circumstances Satan would often tempt us to say, "All these things are against me." Yet remember that you have One by you who is able to enter into your infirmities, who has suffered, being tempted, and who is not only able to sympathize, but also to send relief. What a blessed thing it is to be able to draw near with *boldness*! The ark was in the holy of holies, into which the high priest entered once a year, but surely not with boldness; it was a day of great solemnity, the singular one of the year, the one day when Israel had to do more especially with God, but there was no liberty even for the priest. He could only enter in with blood, which he sprinkled for himself and for the errors of the people, the whole being a shadow, intended to set forth and to magnify Christ as the great propitiation. He is the One whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation or mercy-seat, through faith in His blood—the meeting place between God and the sinner; and our throne of grace is

sprinkled once for all. That expression "once for all" is the key-note of the epistle to the Hebrews. Christ entered "once for all," and therefore we have boldness to enter at all times.

The vail of the temple hid the holiest from the eyes of men, but when the vail was rent that holy place was thrown open. The vail was rent from the top to the bottom; it was not by the hand of man, but by the hand of God Himself that it was rent; and thus our mercy-seat is no longer shut up, but we can draw near to it with holy boldness. It is indeed surprising that we who know what we are should have access with confidence, not to a throne of judgment, but a throne of grace. Those who have the deepest sense of their own unworthiness are those who will come with boldness to the throne of grace. Think of David as he is before us in the fifty-first psalm, and what his thoughts were after he had committed his awful sin; his heart was well-nigh broken as he says, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." He sees what he is in God's presence, yet he pours out his soul unto Him, and is able to say, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." And see how the psalm ends: "Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion;" his heart was enlarged, for he had found grace. Let us learn to go to God first; to go to Him before we go to friends, for we shall find the throne of grace always open, and Jesus always ready to sympathize. When we go to our friends how apt they are to turn and say, "It is all your own fault, did not I tell you it would happen?" But the contrite heart never gets such an answer from God.

There are two things we want, *mercy* and *grace*. The Spirit of God never uses one word too many, though we do. I needed mercy as a sinner, and have obtained mercy; but I always need mercy. God is *rich* in mercy, therefore

let us go and draw largely ; “ for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance ; ” “ He will *abundantly* pardon.” I must ever remember that I am a sinner saved by blood, and therefore in my daily walk I need mercy. But there are times of special need, and then it is the devil would tempt us by telling us that we are beyond the reach of God’s grace. Let us watch against this temptation ; for it is a fearful thing to limit God. This was the great sin of Israel : “ They turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.” This is our “ time of need ; ” we shall want strength and nourishment all the time we are here. We cannot be satisfied with yesterday’s supply, but need fresh supplies each day, and therefore it is a blessed thing to have a throne of grace where we may “ obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

THE HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP AND HOPE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 17—iv. 1.

NOT in any boastful spirit, but in that “ humility of mind ” which was so characteristic of the great apostle, did Paul exhort the beloved Philippian saints with the words, “ Brethren, be followers together of me.” He *could* thus encourage others to imitate his example because he knew that, from the beginning of his course, his sole aim had been to follow Christ, and he was conscious that by the grace of God he was living upon earth as one who had been called “ into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” That Paul found much within him to mourn over in secret, we may rest assured, yet his constant self-judgment prevented any open

display of it. But if those who knew Paul had good reason for regarding him as pre-eminent among saints on earth in his conformity to Christ, he did not thus regard himself, for it was his delight to add, "and mark *them* which so walk even as ye have us for an example."

The reason for such words of exhortation comes out in the solemn statement, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." The word *walk* denotes the profession of Christ, and it intimates the sad fact that even in Paul's day there were those who named that holy name and did *not* depart from iniquity. Over such Paul wept, while in strong language he sketches their course and the end of it. Of how many now must it be said that though professing the name of Christ, they are enemies of His cross! For while, to all who truly receive Christ, His cross means salvation with eternal glory, it at the same time means mortification and denial of that sinful and carnal self which received its doom in the person of the great Surety. And he who does not know something at least of this side of the cross, does not know anything of the other. Of course the mere professor knows absolutely nothing of either, but it is to be feared that in these easy-going days, even the majority of those who are really trusting Christ for salvation know very little of the first great lesson of discipleship as set forth by the Lord Himself, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." (Matt. xvi. 24.)

To such the expression "who mind earthly things" must seem peculiar. The word "*mind*" denotes that they care for, give the thoughts and affections to, earthly

things. This is the natural habit of all the children of Adam, and something wonderful must take place before we can do anything else. In the case of those who are really Christ's, that wonderful change has taken place which is implied in the next sentence. As if to give a reason for regarding it as something strange for one who names the name of Christ to be minding earthly things, Paul proceeds, "*for our citizenship is in heaven.*" The truth of this one blessed statement received into the heart of a child of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, *must* raise him in heart and affection from earth to heaven. As we dwell a little upon it may that Spirit teach us its meaning!

Perhaps a glance at the former dispensation may help us. When God delivered Israel from Egypt, and established them in Canaan, He gave them a tabernacle, and in due time a temple, where He placed His name, and in which a priesthood appointed by Himself performed religious services on behalf of the whole people. In course of time He gave them David as their king, and under Solomon raised the kingdom to a very glorious condition. But we must never forget that David and all who were taught of God, were in some sense strangers here, and looked for higher things than could be found in the most glorious earthly land. Israel, however, failed to continue in God's goodness, and God's judgment was poured out on them; yet the charge of minding "earthly things" was never brought against them, for in earthly things God had blessed them, though indeed He taught them not to glory in wisdom, strength, or wealth, but rather in the knowledge of Himself.

But that dispensation having run its course, and the power that Israel had forfeited by disobedience and idolatry having for a time been given to the Gentiles,

the fulness of the time came for the manifestation of the Son of God. He came as the long-promised Messiah of Israel, and *as such* was introduced to them, being accredited by His mighty works. Instead of receiving Him they cast Him out, and delivered Him into the hand of the ruling Gentile power, by which He was condemned and crucified. Thus was the Son of God rejected by "the princes of this world"—its *leaders* in wisdom, religion, and rule (1 Cor. ii. 8), but God raised Him from the dead, and called Him to His own right hand; and these great facts mark the character of the present dispensation. The world is chargeable with the guilt of rejecting Him whom the heavens have received. The world says, He is worthy of the cross; God says, He is worthy of the highest glory He can bestow upon Him. And let it be distinctly remembered that no one who hears of the crucifixion of the Son of God can be clear of the world's guilt in the matter, except by taking his place by the side of the crucified One, owning Him as Lord and Christ, and trusting Him as the Saviour of the lost.

Those who thus receive Christ are taught that He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world (*or* age), according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal. i. 4), and that we are actually called out of the world, and belong to that Church which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, but is distinct from both. (1 Cor. x. 32.) The same epistle which tells of deliverance from "this present evil world" speaks of the Jerusalem which is above as "*our mother*" (Gal. iv. 26); and thus it unfolds to us the double truth of separation from the world, and heavenly citizenship. Perhaps it seems more difficult to embrace some of these truths now than in the day when they were first set

forth, because the world itself, at least as known to most of us, stands arrayed to a great extent in the garb of a nominal Christianity, and only those who are taught of God can discern that beneath this very thin veil its true disposition towards God and Christ stands unchanged. It will pay a certain respect to the name of God, it will even patronize Christ, but *submit* to Him as Lord it will not. This is the test. The one who is taught of God—and to whatever extent he is taught of God—owns his need as a sinner, glories in the atoning death of Christ as that which alone can put away sin, and bows to the authority of Christ as Lord, making it his business to obey Him; whereas the one who listens not to the voice of God does not truly own either the need or the value of the great sacrifice, while his heart rebels against any real assertion of the authority of Christ. All the former compose the Church of God, while all the latter are still of that world from which Christ has redeemed His own; and we must ever remember that of *all* who know Christ the statement is true, whether they have learnt its truth or not, "Our citizenship is in heaven."

This word expresses a very real relationship to heaven and the heavenly city; it tells of heavenly fellowship and heavenly blessedness, of new privileges and new responsibilities. That system of which the earthly Jerusalem was the centre had its own peculiar privileges and obligations, but henceforth the Jerusalem which is above was to be to saints of all nations more than the Jerusalem on earth had been to Israel, even in the height of their national glory. But to be a citizen of the heavenly city means to be a stranger upon earth; and this is exactly the position of those who are Christ's. We *are* strangers and pilgrims here because our true home

is above, and it is the apprehension of this truth of heavenly citizenship that will lead us to behave as such. The believer can look up to Christ at the right hand of God, and say, in loving and lowly reverence, and with a deeper meaning than the writer saw in his own words, "I am a stranger *with Thee*." (Ps. xxxix. 12.) He is at home where Christ is at home, and he is a stranger where Christ is absent.

No truth of Scripture tells more upon the daily life of the believer than this. The effect of it reaches to all the occupations of life, and to every sphere we may fill. It particularly touches and moulds the *motives* that underlie our outward ways, and determines the *object* we set before us in all that we do. It leads us to live for the future rather than the present, and to act so as to secure the approval of Christ in the day of His glory. The saints at Corinth had forgotten the great truth that they were called into fellowship with the Heavenly One, in the time of His rejection, and consequently were reprov'd by the apostle for reigning as kings when they should have been living as strangers (1 Cor. iv. 8); and the same thing, to a great extent, is solemnly true of the Church of God in the present day. There is no question that the one who makes it his business to live as a heavenly citizen will be accounted a fool by the world; but if he can say to the exalted Lord, "I am a stranger *with Thee*," the world's reproach will be more welcome than its approving smile. And even though some who are true children of God may misunderstand him, he can afford to be misunderstood because he knows that the day is at hand when all things shall be made manifest.

Has the believer, then, nothing to do with the world—its politics and governments and rejoicings? The answer to this question is found in the words of the Lord, "As

Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (John xvii. 18.) As the Lord was ever the faithful and true Witness—revealing the Father in the world, so we are called to be witnesses unto Christ (Acts i. 8), and, as His was a life of perfect submission to the written Word of God, we can only follow Him as our ways are controlled by that Word. He was never indifferent to the condition of things in the world around Him, neither can we be. Scripture has clearly marked out the relation of the believer towards the ruling power; he is called to *submit* "to every ordinance of man," except where such submission involves disobedience to the revealed will of God, and to *pray* for kings and for all that are in authority. (1 Pet. ii. 13; Acts iv. 19; 1 Tim. ii. 1-3.) The citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem is a priest, and it is his privilege to exercise his priesthood on behalf of all around him, but he is never called to come down from heaven to seek any place of power in connection with the government of this world, or to lay aside his priestly robes to deck himself with the tatters of earthly dignity. When Christ reigns, the believer will reign with Him; when Christ sits upon the throne of judgment, His people will be associated with Him; when the glory of Christ is manifested, the true dignity of His saints will be displayed; but to seek any place of earthly power and dignity is simply to follow the example of him who sat in the gate of Sodom. Abraham, as a true pilgrim, sought no place of rule or authority or earthly glory; and he asked for no possession but that of a burying-place in Canaan, "for he looked for the city that hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." If we have learnt ever so little of the grandeur and glory of that city of our God, we shall estimate the pomp and glory of the world at its true value; and if we know the reality of

that presence that fills the heavenly Jerusalem, and of partaking of the rich fruit from the royal table, in fellowship with the King Himself, we shall have no desire for the "dainties" (Ps. cli. 4) of those who, in their doings and their hopes, rise not above the world which in deed, if not always in word, rejects both the Father and the Son.

W. H. B.

(*To be continued.*)

NOTES AND REPLIES.

How are we to understand the statement in Hebrews iv. 15, that Christ "was in all points tempted like as we are"?

This sentence is rendered by Alford, "tempted in all things according to our similitude, apart from sin." The Greek word occurs only here and in chap. vii. 15, in the expression "*after the similitude of Melchizedek,*" and, guided by this use of it, we understand it to refer to our nature as men, rather than to the specific character of any temptation. It may thus be compared with 1 Cor. x. 13, "There hath no temptation taken you but *such as is common to man.*" The words in italics represent one Greek word, *anthropine*, signifying *human*. The meaning given by Alford to Heb. iv. 15 is not very different from that conveyed by the A. V., but it is less calculated to lead to that idea of absolute identity between the Lord's temptations and ours which has perplexed many.

With regard to the character of our Lord's temptations, it is well to remember that the threefold temptation presented to our unfallen parents in the Garden, as narrated in Gen. iii. 6, was substantially the same as those now presented to us. This is shown in 1 John ii. 16, and the temptations presented by the tempter to the Son of man in the wilderness are remarkably similar. They may be described as, (1) temptations bearing upon our physical constitution; (2) those arising from the world outside; and (3) those arising from the wisdom of fleshly religion. These are the three great spheres of our temptation, and the Lord Jesus was in all points similarly tempted. Matt. iv. explains Heb. iv. 15.

The point of *dissimilarity* is that in His case it was "apart from sin," while we, having been born in sin, have within us a nature which responds to the temptation presented. Our first parents stood "apart from sin" when the temptation was presented to them, but they

yielded to the temptation ; Christ stood “ apart from sin ” *all through*, for He in no wise responded to it. The similarity and the dissimilarity are dwelt on together by the apostle, that we might make no false deduction, nor fall into error by attributing to Christ a fallen nature, but ever remember that in His humanity He was “ the Holy One.”

Though, as stated above, the words of Heb. iv. 15 do not necessarily express absolute identity between the Lord’s temptations and ours, yet there can be no difficulty in understanding that He was tempted in the same manner that we may be, unless we confound the *temptation* to sin with the *desire* for sin. To tempt is the same as to test, and so God tempted Abraham ; God *tests* faith and obedience, while Satan *tempts* to sin. James tells us we are under the power of temptation when drawn away by our desire ; then there is sin, for the desire conceiving brings forth sin in the outward form ; but let it ever be borne in mind that sin consists in yielding inwardly, and not only in the outward act.

How are we to apply the parable of the virgins in Matt. xxv. ?

Whatever the difficulties may be as to the *prophetic* interpretation of this parable, the *spiritual* application seems simple. There are many points in common between the wise and the foolish virgins : *all* had lamps, *all* went forth to meet the bridegroom, *all* fell asleep, and *all* arose and trimmed their lamps. But there was *one* point in which they differed : “ they that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them ; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.” The one essential thing is the oil, which throughout Scripture is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, whether used as oil for the light, or oil for anointing.

In the parable of the sower the Lord says of the stony ground hearers, they “ have no root in themselves,” and here the foolish virgins have no oil in their vessels. The important lesson in each case is the same as that taught in John iii., namely, that no one can enter into the kingdom of God without being born again, for “ if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” No points of resemblance to what is true are of any avail, if the one essential thing is lacking. There may be knowledge of truth, reverence for the things of God, and a great measure of religious consistency, but without the quickening power of the Spirit of God all is but the semblance of life—the soul is still without God.

In these days of much profession and lamp-bearing, no truth is more calculated to exercise the conscience, and to lead us to seek to distinguish between that “ talk of the lips ” which tendeth only to penury and that “ truth in the inward parts ” which God requires.

THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN

TWO ADDRESSES BY MR. T. NEWBERRY.

I. THE SECOND EPISTLE.

THE three epistles of John furnish us with truth specially needed for the present time ; they give to the Christian mariner a chart of that part of the voyage which we have now reached, by means of which he may take the latitude and longitude. It is never so important to know our whereabouts as when we are getting to the end of a voyage, and are entering the straits. The Spirit of God has clearly marked out in our chart the characteristics of the last days, when we are near the quicksands, and have breakers ahead. According to the chronology of our Bibles these epistles were written about A.D. 90, when the apostle John was between 90 and 100 years old, and they furnish us with instruction that will be increasingly needed as we get nearer the end of the age and the period of the Lord's return.

The first epistle, read in connection with the gospel written by the same apostle, clearly defines the doctrine of Christ ; and the second shows the importance of guarding the truth of that doctrine against those who depart from it, against all who bring not the Christ of God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, the truth as it is in Jesus revealed and certified by the Spirit of truth. Not only do we need the altar and temple, as shown in the book of Ezra, but, according to Nehemiah, the walls must be set up, and the breaches repaired, so as to leave no gap for the enemy to enter.

Truth, love, and obedience, as set forth in the Scriptures, form a threefold cord ; they go together and are inseparable.

But the love is "love in the truth," and "for the truth's sake." Professed love without obedience is not the love of God; "for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." (1 John v. 3.) The word of God, by which we are born again, teaches us to love God, and His incorruptible seed liveth and abideth for ever.

Let us now turn to the second Epistle. Mark the words "*whosoever transgresseth*" in verse 9. We hear much now of differences of opinions and diversities of judgment. There is a giving up of truths that have long been established; and by many this is looked upon leniently and indulgently. In the latitudinarian spirit of the day some speak of it as large-mindedness, and others excuse it as simply a different mode of stating the truth, but we find that God stamps it as positive transgression, which may not be dealt with leniently. Anyone departing from the doctrine of Christ as taught in the first Epistle is a transgressor. Such departure is not only sin, but transgression, and the spirit that would deal lightly with it is a false spirit of charity. A man may be a first-rate preacher, may stand high in the church and the world, may be a leading man of the day, amiable in character, irreproachable in walk, and skilful in teaching; but if he departs from this doctrine he is a transgressor. God commanded of old, "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee, thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him" (Deut. xiii. 6, 8); and this is our only safe course now.

"And *abideth not* in the doctrine of Christ" implies that he once professed that doctrine. All doctrine has to be judged by the teaching of the apostles of our Lord and Saviour; as John says, "He that is of God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us;" and in the words

of Isaiah, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Such an one "hath not God;" the root of the matter is not in him; he is practically an *atheist*, "without God in the world;" he may hold certain doctrines, but he has not the Spirit of God. Simon Magus professed faith in Christ, and was baptized, but his heart was not right in the sight of God. I fear that in the character of a great deal of the professed preaching of the gospel in the present day *God* is left out. The gospel is God's testimony to His Son, and saving faith is the faith that accepts God's testimony to Christ according to His inspired word, brought home to the soul with power by the Holy Ghost who wrote the Scriptures. Through Christ we believe *in God*. (1 Peter i. 21.) He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ proves himself to be simply a way-side hearer, and is like the man who has built his house upon the sand, and not upon the rock. (Matt. vii. 24-27.) The only sure foundation stone is Christ, as God has said, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." Isa. xxviii. 16.) God's foundation is the "Rock of ages."

"The doctrine of Christ" is set forth in the title He bears. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for Christ signify *anointed*, and He was anointed, not with oil, but with the Holy Ghost. He could use the words of the prophet as His own, "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me." The angel said to Joseph, concerning Mary, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost;" and at the Lord's baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the visible form of a dove. It was "through the eternal Spirit" that He "offered Himself without spot to God," and after His death He was "quickened by the Spirit." (Heb. ix. 14 ;

1 Pet. iii. 18.) On His ascension the apostles testified that "having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 33.)

"The doctrine of Christ" is that He was the woman's seed, with a Father in heaven, but with no earthly father; that He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and yet that He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Though in the form of God, and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, He emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant; He laid aside His essential power as Son of God, to be obedient to His Father's will and dependent upon the Spirit's power, doing nothing except by the leading of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of Christ includes the personality of the Spirit of God, as co-equal and as *co-eternal* with the Father and the Son. This doctrine must be with us for ever, that is, throughout eternity.

The doctrine of Christ, as we have said, involves the truth of His being the Son of God; not simply His being born of Mary, but His divine and eternal sonship. The words of Psalm ii., "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee," were uttered before His incarnation and resurrection, and refer to the one day of eternity, the day of Jah, with whom past, present, and future are one eternal *now*—the eternal day of divine existence. There never was a moment when Father, Son, and Spirit were not—three persons in one eternal, unchanging Godhead. If the proper Sonship of Christ be denied, the proper Fatherhood of God is denied also. If there be no eternal Son, there can be no eternal Father. The only-begotten Son was not simply one received into the divine counsels; He was the Creator. Not only is it true that if there were no Son there could be no Father; but if there

were no Spirit there could be no Christ; and if no Christ no Christianity. He therefore who in this manner transgresseth is no Christian; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

The Christ of God is revealed to the soul by the Holy Ghost. When the Lord asked, "Whom say ye that I am?" and Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 16, 17.) Christ in us, revealed by the Father, through the Holy Ghost, is the hope of glory.

Now we learn how such transgressors are to be treated: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed." The word "God-speed" is not quite correct; it means "give him no greeting." This second Epistle thus teaches us that in these days of spiritual thieves and robbers we have need of bolts and bars for our houses, and for the churches of God.

II. THE THIRD EPISTLE.

We have dwelt upon the second epistle of John as that which warns the church of God against receiving any who bring not the doctrine of Christ. But if that epistle warns against quicksands on the left, the third epistle equally warns against hidden rocks on the right. We have to steer midway between the two. While on the one hand we seek to keep clear of latitudinarianism, and lukewarmness as to the truth, and the false liberality of the day with regard to evil doctrine; we must, on the other hand, take care that we are in full fellowship with all who hold, preach, and maintain the doctrine of Christ; we have to walk in the narrow pathway with a large heart, avoiding the dangers on either side.

The purport of this letter is evident, and by an examination of it we may learn the cause of its being written. Gaius, to whom it was addressed, was probably the brother of whom the apostle Paul speaks in Rom. xvi. 23, "Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you." He seems to have been a man with a large heart and ample means; by the providence of God supplied with the latter, and by the grace of God with the former. John received tidings of his beloved Gaius, and his heart rejoiced as he heard of his love shown towards the brethren whom Gaius knew, and to strangers whom he did not know. All alike testified of the love and liberality found in the house of one who was not only a man of love, but also a man of truth and practical piety. They bore witness to his helping on their way those who "for His name's sake went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." Such were dependent on the Lord for the supply of their need, and the apostle encourages Gaius in his service of faith and love. Fellowship with them meant fellowship with the truth of God, and was acceptable to the Lord.

But there seems to have arisen a perplexing case, and it may be that Gaius in his difficulty had written to John to ask how he should act. At least John seemed to have been aware of the dilemma in which Gaius was placed, and in writing, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, to help him in the practical difficulty of A.D. 90, he left instructions for our guidance in the nineteenth century. This difficulty apparently arose with reference to Demetrius, a man who had "good report of all men, and of the truth itself." If ever there was a good man he was one, sound in faith and doctrine, blameless in life, irreproachable in his moral character before the world. If tested by the Scriptures of truth, the truth bore its testimony in his favour, for he had drunk at the very fount of truth; and the beloved

disciple could bear his own personal testimony, and he adds, "Ye know that our record is true."

On his behalf, it would seem, John wrote to the church. The church then was one, but to what locality he wrote we are not told, nor does it matter, for the Scriptures were not written to satisfy curiosity, or to make us antiquarians. From the church John received no answer, for there was one there who took the matter into his own hand, and, so to speak, intercepted John's letter—one who had usurped authority in the church, loving "to have the pre-eminence among them." John well knew the evil of this, for he had been present when the question was asked, and himself had joined in asking it, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He had witnessed that object-lesson which the Lord gave, when, calling a little child, He set him in the midst, and taught them that true greatness consisted in lowliness. He had also received the Lord's words about exercising dominion and authority, "It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant." John had learnt that lesson, and he felt that this assumption of authority by Diotrephes was high treason against the authority of Christ.

Of Diotrephes it is said, he "receiveth us not." He may not have refused John personally—that would have been too barefaced, but John stood identified with Demetrius, and regarded the rejection of Demetrius as rejection of himself; if you receive my friend you receive me, if you refuse him you refuse me. But Diotrephes went further than this; "not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church."

John writes, let us bear in mind, as an inspired apostle. When we read the Epistles it is not a question of the

authority of Paul, or Peter, or John, but of the Holy Ghost, for the writers of the New Testament, as of the Old, "wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The "*us*" becomes very large if we look at it with this magnifying glass; but that is not all, for another voice utters these words, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me."

In the epistle to Laodicea, which, like the third epistle of John, has special reference to these days, we find Christ outside the church. He stands at the door and knocks, but there is no opening for Him; still He says, "If any man open the door, I will come in to him."

With reference to Diotrephes, John says, "If I come I will remember his deeds which he doeth," and we may read these words as the utterance of a greater than John. All our conduct in church matters will be reviewed at the judgment-seat of Christ. The hard speeches against the Lord's people are not forgotten, but will all come up there, when the Lord takes account of His servants.

In the epistle to the church at Philadelphia we get the doctrine of Christ in perfection in His own language: "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." He is the Holy One of God, holy in nature, in conduct, and in doctrine; and though He was made sin for us, He was at the same time, like the sin-offering, "most holy," or "holy of holies," in the sight of God. He is the Holy and the True—the One who answers to the truth of God, as testified by the Holy Ghost. He is a sovereign Christ, the only One who can open and shut, the only One who has any authority at all in the church. All others are under authority, and it is only as they act as those under authority that they are to be obeyed. Diotrephes

grasped at the sceptre instead of submitting to the Lord. The truth for the times is the Lordship of Christ in His own church, and the responsibility of His people to maintain His authority. A few years ago when mention was made of the Pope's intention to divide England into sees under Roman Catholic bishops, the nation was aroused, and there was a cry of treason against Queen Victoria. The nation has become more careless now, but the fact illustrates what should be the feeling of believers when any authority but that of the Lord Himself is set up in His church.

Christ keeps the church-book of Philadelphia, and, where He sees a little strength, He will give an open door which none can shut; He will lead His servants forth in His name as their Lord and Master. There is one Lawgiver, one Master, and we are all fellow-servants, hence the question, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" (Rom. xiv. 4.) One eats and another does not eat, but they act before one common Lord; Christ receives them, and we are called to receive them too. If a child of God acts conscientiously, and up to the light he has, the Lord will uphold him, and will lead him on to something better. As a brother once said, "I am to walk as my Master tells me to walk. I want to receive the truth of Christ, and to obey the authority of Christ; not to be identified with any sect, but with every faithful servant of Christ on the whole earth." This is a narrow pathway to walk in! One will say, "I cannot do this or that"; then do it not, but do not judge one who can. Learn from your Lord and Master, and He will keep you from evil, and will teach you to close the door against false doctrine wherever you may meet it, but also to keep your heart, house, and purse open to all who bear the stamp of truth, and walk in communion with Him.

REDEMPTION FROM LAWLESSNESS AND TRADITION.

TITUS ii. 14; 1 PETER i. 18, 19.

AN ADDRESS BY MR. J. R. CALDWELL.

IN these two Scriptures we have two of the many aspects of the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the former we read that Christ "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity" (or *lawlessness*), and in the latter Peter tells his fellow-believers that they had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ from the "vain conversation received by *tradition* from the fathers." The Lord Jesus as a Redeemer is a wondrous subject to contemplate, both for the babe in Christ and the most mature saint. How glorious is that person, of whom it has been truly said that He is the only One who can be both a worshipper and the object of worship, because He is both God and Man. The first two chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews beautifully set forth this; the first chapter shows the glory of Christ as the Divine One, the Son, the Creator, the Upholder of all things, the One who is infinitely higher than angels who were created by Him and are sustained by Him. The second chapter tells us that He became "a little lower than the angels," and unfolds to us the reality of His manhood, His partaking of flesh and blood, that He might be the Kinsman-redeemer, with right to redeem.

Paul speaks of the wisdom and prudence in which God has acted. He has considered the interests of all concerned in His work—the requirements of His own throne and government, and the interests of all intelligent beings, as well as of us the lost ones, on whose salvation His heart was set. How wondrous that the Eternal Son, the Word,

should become kindred to us, so near that He had the right to redeem, and yet not so near as to be touched with our defilement, or involved in any way in our ruin. It is said of men, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix. 7); but here is One who is *Man*, and is seen to be such in His sorrows, and tears, and sufferings, and yet is at the same time GOD—One who became Man that He might purchase us, and make us His own eternally, to fulfill in us all the counsels of God, and to delight His own heart in us.

In Psalm ii. we have the language of men, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." This is the outcome of the spirit of *lawlessness*, which will not be restrained by the will of God. Man acts as if he were his own master; he will do what he pleases, and thus sets up another will in opposition to the will of God. This spirit characterizes the world in all its departments; in its pursuits, its pleasures, its learning, its wealth, its religion—the object is self-pleasing and self-exaltation. Is the exquisite music introduced by man into religious services to please God? No, it is to please self; it is for his own ear. Are its exquisite buildings designed and erected to please God? No, they are for self-gratification; for man's own eye. Self is what man lives for, and the spirit of lawlessness is not decreasing. Now and then it breaks out and men see it, and then they are astounded, for they do not believe that man is so bad as he is. I once said to a business friend, "The word in Jeremiah xvii. 9, has kept me from much trouble. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'" You cannot trust man. Why? Because self is the object he serves, and lawlessness is the principle of his life. Now this verse tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ, among the many glorious results of this redemption work, has redeemed us

from *all* lawlessness—every kind and species of it—to Himself, that we may be His servants. The Hebrew servant who would give himself up to the service of his master was to be taken to the door, or door post and to have his ear bored through with an awl (Ex. xxi. 6) thus signifying that he gave up his own will in order to be subject to his master. Paul speaks of having a thorn, or rather “*a stake*” in the flesh, impaling, or pinning him to the ground; there was not much room for self-will there. We are to be bound to the Lord, as the Psalmist says: “Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” (Ps. cxviii. 27.) Christ is the altar, and the constraints of His love are the cords by which His people, as willing sacrifices, are bound to Him. The Lord asserts His right over His own, for He *gave Himself* for them. Each believing one can say with Paul, “He loved me and gave Himself for me.” As an old woman, standing in her doorway, shading her eyes with her hand, while she looked up, once said, “I have a whole sun to myself;” so the youngest believer can say, I have a whole Christ—the whole heart, the undivided affections, attention, interest, and power of the Christ “who loved me and gave Himself for *me*.”

The Lord’s words in John xxi. 18–22, concerning Peter and John, illustrate His entire right to do with us as He pleases. He predicts Peter’s future, and then when Peter asks, “Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me.” Do you think Peter murmured when thinking of the nails that were to be driven into his hands, because John’s lot was different from his own? We can say

“The hand our many sins once pierced
Is now our guard and guide;”

and, all power being given into His hands, He will do the best for us that wisdom, love, and power can do. If we are tempted to fret and kick and murmur at circumstances, let us look at Christ on the cross, and let our murmuring be hushed.

It would be well for us if we more truly took in the absolute proprietorship of the Lord. Most may be familiar with the story of the slave girl, who was for sale in the market. A gentleman bid again and again until, being the highest bidder, he purchased her. He then told her he had bought her to set her free. She did not at first understand what freedom meant, but as soon as the truth dawned upon her, she said "I will serve him," and she kept her word, and in after days when people remarked on the willing and untiring service she ever rendered, she had but one reply, "He redeemed me." We can say, as David said, "O Lord, I am thy servant, Thou hast loosed my bonds." And whom can we better serve? Will self recompense us? "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." Will the world recompense us? Oh, no! Dark, dark, hard, hard world. Will the devil recompense us? No, he will only laugh at his dupes. Make up your minds, then, dear young believers, to serve Christ, believing that He loves you; let us all see that we have no interests apart from Him. That is fellowship, having no interests apart from the Father and the Son. This may seem high doctrine, but we cannot pare down the standard however much it may condemn us.

Now let us look just a little at the other passage we read. Peter, in speaking of being redeemed from the *traditions* received from the fathers, refers specially to Jews, for in the case of Gentiles the "fathers" are not spoken of. A Jew might boast of his descent from Abraham, but Gentiles have no excuse for boasting of their genealogy.

The Jews were under the snare of traditions which had come down to them with all the weight and authority of the fathers. Perhaps these had at first been written in the margin of the Scriptures, or at the foot of the page, and then they became *additions* to what God had commanded. We see how the Lord treated these traditions in Matt. xv. The Pharisees complained that the disciples did not wash their hands before eating, but God never so commanded; and the Lord in His reply charges them with making the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions. We, too, are surrounded by traditions, but from those traditions we are redeemed. We believe that the blood of Christ stands between us and hell, between us and the world, between us and a guilty self; but do we believe that that same precious blood stands between us and *every authority* but that of *the Word of God*? The priests' ears were tipped with blood, and we, too, have redeemed ears, and are responsible to hear and obey what God says to us.

Many of us are ignorant of the power of tradition to neutralize the Word of God. I might refer to two Christians, both converted twenty years ago; the one seems scarcely to have grown at all, while the other has gone on step by step, and has become mighty in the Scriptures, and helpful to the saints, as well as a blessing to many an unsaved one. What makes such a difference? I believe the reason is that the one set himself to see how much of his old opinions and ways he could take with him into his new life, while the other put aside the whole thing, and started as "a new born babe," to learn afresh only from God and His Word. Are we prepared to throw overboard all traditions that will not stand the test of the Word of God? We can hardly imagine what an influence tradition has over the minds of many dear children of God.

Often when a truth is set before them plainly and simply from the Word, instead of bowing to it they will say, Oh! these are your peculiar views. But it is no question of views, but of the plain statements of Scripture.

Suppose a Buddhist were converted, what ought he to do? See how much of his old system he can bring into Christianity? Rather, we should say, put all aside, and come to the pure gold of the Word of God. But those who are simply Christians by education, when they are truly converted to God, are as much redeemed from their traditions, as the Buddhist is from his. When the Word of God is received as all-sufficient, and of supreme authority, it makes an immense difference in our lives. It affects all our relationships whether in the family or in the world, and we learn our responsibility to search that Word with reverent and lowly hearts to see in what way God—who has given His Son for us—would have us to worship Him.

We can have no divine certainty about anything except by the Word of Him who "cannot lie;" we cannot trust our feelings. Satan is perpetually seeking to undermine the authority of the Word by "oppositions of science, falsely so called." Men speak of the impossibility of Christ being taken up to heaven in bodily form; they question the truth of the resurrection, and of eternal punishment, and deny the teaching of the first of Genesis. But, even if we are certain on these points, Satan has other ways yet; he will seek to undermine the authority of the Word of God by bringing in questions of non-essentials and human traditions.

There are times when the smallest truth may be vital. Suppose you meet a Roman Catholic, who considers he is bound to hear the voice of the Church, setting human additions to the Word on a level with or even above the

Word itself. You seek to show him that he should listen *only* to the voice of God in the Scriptures. But if you held infant-baptism, might he not at once say, "You also are bound by the voice of the Church, for you cannot find that in Scripture," and thus may this outward ordinance, so often spoken of as a "non-essential"—upon which Christians should agree to differ—becomes by its perversion the occasion of rendering you utterly powerless to lay hold of the conscience of that Roman Catholic.

When Peter went to Cornelius, the latter said, "We are all here present before God, to hear *all things* that are commanded thee of God." Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, "I have not shunned to declare unto you *all* the counsel of God." Epaphras prayed for the saints at Colosse that they might "stand perfect and complete in *all* the will of God." May God write these *alls* on our hearts, and make us jealous for the entirety of His will, so that we may say with the Psalmist, "I esteem *all* thy precepts concerning *all* things to be right; and *I hate every false way.*"

MEDITATION ON PSALM XXXII.

BY THE LATE A. N. GROVES.

IN all the experience of the Psalmist as given to us here, we have that which exactly suits every true child of God; there is nothing of boasting or self-exaltation; nothing which reflects glory on the creature; but blessing coming down from above, by faith in the work and righteousness of another, a blessing that speaks of transgression forgiven (*i.e.*, lifted off); of sin covered (*i.e.*, atoned for); of iniquity not imputed (*i.e.*, never brought up again from the depths in which love has buried it). David was well able to speak of this mighty blessing, when, after all his

deep departure from God, and all his groaning under unconfessed sin, as indicated in verses 3 and 4, he at length made his confession, as stated in verse 5, "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." When Nathan the prophet, who was sent to him by God, reproved him, he said, "I have sinned against the Lord," and immediately obtained the Divine answer, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." (2 Sam. xii. 13.)

There is nothing that brings such glory to God as the forgiving of sin; because nothing so exalts the work of the mighty sacrifice, or demonstrates more clearly the eternal efficacy of the cleansing blood of Christ. The God who forgives sin remembers its penalty no more, but He leaves the account of sin forgiven on record, that all may be encouraged to trust in Him, whatever their trial may be, and whatever the burden of sin and sorrow whereby they may be oppressed. As long as God is God, there is always deliverance for the self-condemned, and He would have us prove the comfort of coming to Him and obtaining from Him the blessing of forgiveness, but it must be in His own appointed way. God does not promise to keep us from trial, but He promises deliverance out of it, and therefore the joy of the songs of deliverance may fill beforehand the lips and hearts of troubled ones, as in the case of Jehoshaphat of old, who caused the singers to say, while the battle with its dangers was still before them, "Praise the Lord; for His mercy endureth for ever." If it be thus with us, we shall indeed be what the singers were there called—"praisers of the beauty of holiness."

There is a way of increasing our trials, and there is also a way of diminishing them, and both these are pointed out in this psalm; in verses 3 and 4, sin unconfessed only

increased the burden, but when it was confessed (*v.* 5) deliverance was found; and what follows in the psalm shows us the joy of that experience which arises from renewed intercourse with God. This experience is most precious and profitable, and all blessing is traced to having found God in the midst of trouble. The result of every profitable trial, and of every chastening and training under which the soul is exercised before God, is *increased acquaintance with God*, as that precious word "Thou," thrice repeated in verse 6, indicates: "*Thou* art my hiding place, *Thou* shalt preserve me from trouble, *Thou* shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." The soul that thus turns to God, looking at every trial that befalls it, says, "*Thou* didst it." This at once quiets the troubled spirit, and the restored one who now seeks to learn God and His ways, hears God saying to him, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

In verse 9 we learn how the sorrows and troubles of the way may be relieved, and the burden of trial made comparatively light and easy. There must not be the self-willedness of the horse, or the stubbornness of the mule, which through lack of understanding, need the bit and bridle; but there must be the unreserved surrender of ourselves, our wills, our purposes, and our aims into the hand of our God. Then, the subdued will and the subject heart, so far from resisting the will of God, or murmuring at it, will accept that will, which is our sanctification, and then will be realized in their depth and strength, the gladness, the rejoicing and the shouting for joy, with which this precious psalm closes; a joy, which in its fulness is reserved for eternity, but which in a fuller and yet fuller measure may be realized even now, though we are passing through the furnace.

THE HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP AND HOPE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD.

(Continued from page 239).

HAVING already spoken of the heavenly citizenship of the Church, we now turn to its "blessed hope." That hope is expressed in the word, "From whence also we look for the Saviour." We may know very little about heaven, but we know there is One there who loves us, and who will soon fulfil His word of promise, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;" and for *Him* we are looking. This bright hope which the Church so cherished in early days was soon obscured, and, with rare exceptions, it seems to have been lost sight of, until the early part of the present century, when once again the truth was recovered from the mass of human traditions beneath which it had been buried. Since that time it has been received by many, though it is still true that *comparatively* only a small number of the Lord's people are intelligently waiting for Him; for many truly godly men are so under the power of traditional expositions of Scripture as to be unable to shake off the idea that things must go on as they are till the end of the world.

Our present aim is not to bring forward proof from Scripture that the proper hope of the Church is the coming of the Lord to receive her to Himself, because, by most of the readers of this paper, that is at least admitted; but we would urge the importance of seeking to prove in greater measure the living and purifying power of that hope. The word here rendered "*we look for*" is a very forcible one; it occurs seven times in the New

Testament, and always in connection with the hope of the Lord's coming. As one has said, "It does not mean a mere look, or glance, or turn of the eye, but the prolonged, persevering, earnest gaze of expectation. Just as Mary and Martha, when they knew that the Lord was in Jerusalem, would be continually looking towards Olivet in the expectation of seeing Him coming over the hill to their house; so with the same continued and wistful waiting, does the saint turn his eyes to the heavens, whence he knows that his Lord is to appear."

He for whom we wait is fully described as "the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." He will come as the *Saviour* to complete His blessed work of salvation; as the *Lord* to make manifest His Lordship over both the dead and the living (Rom. xiv.); as *Jesus*—the true Joshua—to lead His people into full possession of their inheritance; and as the *Christ*—the One who has been anointed by Jehovah for all His mighty work. The full glory of every title that He bears will then be fully displayed to His own, and will in due time be manifested to the whole creation, just as His saints will have the first blessed proof of that power by which He will ultimately subdue all things to Himself. Those who are taught by His Spirit already know and trust Him as the Saviour, but the fulness of that salvation of which He is the Author, cannot be known until His power to save has been extended to the body, which must be till that moment the body of humiliation. A "vile body" it is not, at least in the modern sense of the word "*vile*," and the Revised Version here gives the true meaning, "who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory."

The human body, simply as such, is of no small account in the sight of God, for it was formed by His own hand, and, however man may debase and dishonour it, he cannot

get rid of the evidence of its having been fearfully and wonderfully made. But when a sinner has trusted Christ, and is resting in Him as the Saviour of the lost, the body is looked upon as a *redeemed* body, and is sanctified as "the temple of the Holy Ghost." Yet, though so precious in the sight of God, it is still the body of humiliation; it is a mortal body, for sin dwells in it, and it is often proved to be weak, even when "the spirit is willing." It seems strange to find a necessity for asserting such simple facts as these, and yet there is such a necessity, for, among other delusions of these days, some are talking about a spiritual body, and even a glorified body, as being within the present reach of those who are Christ's. The tendency of all such fancies is to obscure the grand truth of the resurrection of the body, and even to lead to its denial.

It is clear to the careful reader of Scripture that Paul knew nothing of such ideas; he well knew that the body would be transformed, but he also knew that the mighty change for which he so longed could only be brought about at the coming of the Lord Jesus.

The magnitude of that change is intimated in the next sentence—"that it may be *conformed to the body of His glory.*" Who can form any conception of the contrast between the body of the believer in his present state and the body of the risen and glorified Son of God, who is at this moment in the heaven of heavens, in the immediate presence of God? The body of Christ, during that period which is definitely spoken of as "the days of His flesh" (Heb. v. 7), was in a *state* of humiliation, for He came in "the likeness of sinful flesh," though His body knew no sinful weakness, had no stain of mortality, and could not see corruption. That body is now a body of glory, and it is into the likeness of this that we are to be transformed, according to the high purpose of Him who predestinated

us "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many *brethren*." (Rom. viii. 29.) As we endeavour to form some conception of that future glorious condition we feel the force of the words "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." This we cannot know till we "see Him as He is;" but we can say without hesitation that the glorified body will be one that can never know pain or suffering, weakness or weariness,—a body every member of which will instantaneously and without effort respond to the wish of the mind, while the mind itself will evermore be in perfect harmony with the will of God.

The *corruption* in which the body of every departed saint is sown will give place to *incorruption*; the *dishonour* attaching to the body that "is dead because of sin" will be forgotten by reason of the *glory* of that body when quickened; present *weakness* will be superseded by abiding *power*; while all that is characteristic of the *natural* body will give place to the as yet unknown features of the *spiritual* body. What can be so dishonourable, or so weak, as the body which has to be buried out of sight because of its corruption? What can surpass in beauty and strength the body that shall be like the body of Christ, and shall both be *worthy* of the presence of God, and able to stand without fear in the full blaze of his glory? When the beloved disciple, who had even leaned upon the bosom of his Lord at the last Supper, saw Him in glory, he fell at His feet as dead; but when changed into His likeness no saint will fall before Him in fear or terror, though in loving worship all will delight to do so.

We should mark well that the *body* is to be *transformed*, and not another substituted for it. Great and marvellous as the change will be, it will be a *change*, and there will be identity. Reason may at once ask, How can this be:

or even go further and affirm its impossibility; but it is sufficient for the believer, that Scripture affirms that it shall be, for he knows that every one who receives God's word will in due time be able to say, "Thou spakest also with Thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with Thine hand." (1 Kings viii. 24.) To those who denied the resurrection the Lord said, "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?" (Mark xii. 24.) His is the power by which this mighty change shall be brought about, but that power is here seen in the hand of the Lord Jesus, for it is "according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." Victory is already His, and He sits at God's right hand as the mighty Conqueror of death and the grave as well as of the powers of darkness, but the full results of that victory will not be seen till all things are subdued to Himself. To this end will He exercise His power when the appointed time arrives, but the first display of it will indeed be glorious, when, in one moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all His saints shall be raised or changed, and the last trace of mortality or corruptibility shall vanish from every ransomed body.

The exhortation based upon this announcement of the "blessed hope" is very simple, but it was never more needful than now: "So *stand fast in the Lord*, my dearly beloved." This is a day of unrest, of instability and change. Truths that have been accepted for centuries are being denied by some and questioned by others; the very Scriptures—of which the Lord says to the Father "Thy word is truth"—are being subjected to the criticism of mere scholarship that rejects the supernatural, and many even of God's people are being more or less affected by the strong tide of scepticism that has set in, and the profanity with which men are presuming to handle holy things. The

difficulties of the day too, by reason of the hurry of the world, and its covetousness and competitions, are such as to seriously affect the Lord's people. Still the exhortations of God's word are the same, because God Himself is the same. No change in the world can affect either the foundation on which the believer builds, or "the hope of righteousness" which is his, and it is his privilege to rise above the confusion and the tactics of the world and learn by experience the calmness of the one who "trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." God has made provision for His own in the day of difficulty, as well as in the day of ease, and the promise is still as true, as the exhortation is binding: "Seek ye the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Luke xii. 31.) Our heavenly Father, who has, in infinite grace, made us His children, and the objects of His care, knows what things we have need of; and may we as heavenly citizens be content with those things which He gives, and, as partakers of a hope that maketh not ashamed, "*so stand fast in the Lord.*"

W. H. B.

" FAIR AS THE MOON."

When late I saw the moon at dead of night,
 In perfect beauty of her fulness rise,
 I watched her steps, and as she climbed the skies,
 Pondered the glory of her placid light.
 Musing, I said: A fountain out of sight,
 Ever the same, yon silver orb supplies
 With all her peaceful beams that cheer mine eyes,
 Until the sun display his power and might.
 Then poured I forth my prayer:—So may Thy Bride,
 Blest Lamb of God, till Thy appearing shine,
 And, in this world of unbelief and pride,
 Let her who is by threefold title Thine
 Walk in the Spirit—in Thy love abide,
 For Thee, her Lord, a witness and a sign! *R. C. Chapman*

DIVINE WORDS OF WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

LUKE xii.

IN the previous chapter we read that the Lord, being invited to dine with one of the Pharisees, "went in and sat down to meat," without observing their unnecessary custom of washing before a meal. It is quite possible that this Pharisee had some unfriendly design in thus inviting the Lord to his house, and that he expressed surprise at the Lord's omission in such a manner as to make his spirit manifest. But, whether it was so or not, the Lord knew his heart, and the hearts of others who were present, and spoke to them very solemn words concerning their cultivation of an outward religiousness which had nothing corresponding in "the inward parts," where God desires truth. He not only reproved the Pharisees, but also the lawyers who, while professing to be expositors of the Scriptures, took away the key of knowledge, and, refusing to enter into the kingdom of God themselves, hindered those who were desirous of entering.

Having spoken thus, the Lord apparently left the house, "and when He was come out from thence, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press upon him vehemently, and to provoke Him to speak of many things; laying wait for Him, to catch something out of His mouth." (Luke xi. 53, 54. R.V.) By asking subtle questions, raising angry objections, and distorting His words, they sought to draw forth something upon which they might found a charge against Him before the council. But not thus was the Holy One of God to be ensnared. "If any man stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man," and *the* perfect

Man was there, who, however great the provocation, never "spake unadvisedly with His lips."

While this was going on, crowds came together—"myriads of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another," and in their presence and hearing the Lord addressed words of warning to His disciples.

1. *On hypocrisy.*—The expression "*first of all*" is taken by many to be the utterance of the Lord, and if so it gives special prominence to the charge it introduces: "First of all, beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." To understand what hypocrisy is we have only to recall the words of Christ spoken at other times: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.) Before addressing these words to them He had warned His disciples not to do after their works, for "they say and do not," and He added, "all their works they do for to be seen of men."

Surprise has been expressed that any who are born of God should need a warning against hypocrisy, but no one who is really acquainted with the plague of his own heart will wonder at it. Hypocrisy is simply *appearing to be what one is not*, and this may exist in very varying degrees, though in a child of God of course it can never exist to the same extent as in one who knows not God. But are we not all in danger of thinking more of what we are in the sight of our fellow-believers than of what we are in the sight of God? And is not this the very germ of hypocrisy? Let us take, for example, some of the great precepts of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and ask ourselves such questions as the following:—Are husbands and wives

always as considerate of each other, and as courteous to each other, when alone as when in company? Are parents as gentle and firm with their children when no one apart from the family is present as when others are there? Are servants, whether in the house, the workshop, the factory, or the field, as careful not to waste time, or anything else they have to do with, as they would be if they knew that the eye of their master or mistress was always upon them? Do masters and mistresses always act towards their servants, whether in the matter of remuneration, or care for their comfort and welfare, as they would if they knew that everything was going to be published abroad? Are those engaged in business, or professions, always as careful to be strictly honest as they would be if they knew that all they did was perfectly transparent to the public? Further, are those of us who take part in public meetings as diligent with the Word of God, and as earnest in secret prayer, as our public utterances intimate? Does no believer hold out the hand to take a piece of the one loaf at the Lord's table, while allowing such feelings in the heart as prevent that hand being outstretched in cordial greeting and love to all others who, in the same meeting, are showing forth that death by which all alike have been redeemed to God? To sum up all in one, Is walking before God as great a reality to us as walking before others?

God be praised for all who can answer these questions satisfactorily in the presence of God, but it is natural to man as a sinner to make the best of himself before others, and inasmuch as we do not, when born again, get rid of that which Scripture calls "the flesh," so it is only by the grace of God that we overcome any of its workings. Therefore Peter calls upon believers to lay aside *hypocrisies* amongst other things that would hinder their feeding upon "the sincere milk of the word," and growing

thereby ; while Paul exhorts saints to “let love be without dissimulation,” or, literally, *without hypocrisy* (Rom. xii. 9), the word he uses being that which is connected with “love” in 2 Cor. vi. 6, and 1 Pet. i. 22, and is translated *unfeigned*.

The Lord confirms His warning against “the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy,” by the solemn statement of the second verse, which should begin with “but” rather than “for.” The force seems to be this : “But”—whether you are careful in this matter or not, any attempt at concealment will be ineffectual—“there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed ; neither hid that shall not be known.” There is a day of perfect revelation at hand, when the Lord “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,” and then each one shall have from God that measure of praise which is his due. (1 Cor. iv. 5.) To a church in which the authority of Christ was set aside, and His commandments made void, He said, “All the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts ; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.” (Rev. ii. 23.)

The general statement, that *there is nothing veiled that shall not be unveiled*, is followed by a distinct reference to words uttered, “Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light ; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.” Peter links together guile, *hypocrisies*, envies, and *evil-speakings* ; and does not the unkind word spoken of a brother or sister in private, that would not be spoken in their presence, savour of hypocrisy ? Who can estimate the amount of evil, and deadness, and distraction that has arisen in the Church of God through the tongue of the whisperer ? How often has a brother’s ministry

been weakened, when it would have profited the hearers, by a malicious, or even a *thoughtless* word or insinuation? Now if, before we speak of another, we were to remember that what we are about to utter we shall hear again, in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus, it would often materially affect our words.

2. *The fear of man.*—The Lord well knew that truth would provoke opposition, and that His disciples who were to *do* and *teach* His words would excite the enmity of those who *taught* the law and *did it not*. He had just before referred to the murder of prophets by their fathers, and had given the prediction of “the wisdom of God” in the words, “I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute.” Those apostles were now before Him, being trained for their mission, and to them He speaks words of comfort and encouragement. He calls them His “*friends*,” as those who were associated with Himself in the great business of speaking the truth, and suffering for it: “I say unto you My friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.” These words may be lightly passed over in this day of ease, but who can tell how many of the saints of God they have cheered and strengthened in the day of persecution? and who knows how soon others may be glad of the help they afford? There is One alone who is to be feared, even He who after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell, and those who truly fear Him will not fear man. But if this fear of God has its place, and no insignificant one, in the face of temptation to apostacy through fear of death, the Lord hastens to assure the disciples that they are cared for with infinite tenderness by the mighty God.

Sparrows, of which men think little, are not forgotten before Him whose watchful providence extends to the

meanest of His creatures; but His people "are of more value than many sparrows," and to them it can be said, "even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." This consideration of the tender and minute care of God for us should indeed lead to constancy on our part; but there is also another motive to this. The Lord ever brings the future to bear upon the present, and we must do the same if we are to "walk by faith and not by sight." The future will answer to the present as the harvest does to the seed-time; what is sown now will be reaped then. Those who confess Christ before men will be confessed by Him before the angels of God, and those who deny Him before men will be denied before the angels of God. The mention of denying Him seems to lead to a special reference to the conduct of the Pharisees towards Himself; first in speaking against Him as they were constantly doing, and then in the more terrible sin of saying that His mighty works, which were wrought through the Spirit of God, were done by an unclean spirit (*v.* 10). He had before Him the full result of this opposition on their part, and foresaw that when they had crucified Him, it would break out in all its fury against His messengers—these simple Galileans, who were unaccustomed to contact with the great ones of the earth, and might well be overawed by the thought of being called before them. He tells them not to be anxious *how* or *what* they should answer, "for," He added, "the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." This promise must have been a great stay to their hearts; and to see how abundantly it was fulfilled we have only to read the Acts of the Apostles.

3. *Covetousness*.—A forcible picture of the hardness of the human heart, and how little susceptible it is to divine teaching, is given by the fact that, in the midst of such

teaching from the Lord, "one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." The Lord's reply was very brief—"Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" but it furnishes a great principle for the guidance of a heavenly people who have ears to hear. In His matchless wisdom the Lord took occasion by this incident to instruct both the multitude and His disciples: "Take heed and keep yourselves from all (i.e., *every form of*) covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." This warning is enforced by the parable of the rich man whose ground brought forth so plentifully that he had no room to bestow his produce, and instead of making use of the storehouses God had provided, and laying it up by bestowing it upon the poor and needy, the widows and orphans, he determined to pull down his barns and build greater, and there lay up his store. It is a solemn picture of one whose thoughts were fixed upon himself, whom God's goodness did not lead to repentance, who deemed himself wise, but died a fool; and the lesson taught is of wide application, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." It is not *only* of a rich man that such a thing may be true, and, thank God, it is not true of *all* rich men; for there are those to whom God has given riches, and who, by His grace, have learnt to use them for Him, while some who have but little in this life are simply bent upon laying up treasure for themselves as far as they are able. The one who is "rich in faith" is "rich toward God," and, if such an one is also "rich in this world," he will not "trust in uncertain riches," but will thankfully obey the charge "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim. vi. 17-19); while if he be one of "the poor of this world," he will

rejoice to follow the example of "a certain poor widow" who put God before herself, and was commended by Him who "sat over against the treasury," and who sits there still.

Thus far on this subject the Lord had spoken to the multitude, but there is a special lesson for the disciples: "Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." The word *therefore* shows that there is a real link between this and the previous warning, and seems to intimate that undue anxiety about present things is a step toward covetousness, and that the latter would in time be reached if the former were yielded to. But if the Lord warns against anxiety, what precious considerations He urges to raise us above it! The life which God has given is more than the food that sustains it, and the body which He has fashioned is more than the raiment that covers it. God feeds the birds, God clothes the grass. Therefore "consider the ravens," and lay to heart the question, "How much more are ye better than the fowls?" and "consider the lilies," and receive the assurance, "If God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith!"

It is as though the Lord had said: You have been called into separation from the nations of the world, therefore be not like them; with them the first thing is eating and drinking, and this they "*seek after*;" but "your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things;" therefore let His kingdom stand first with you, do you *seek* that as earnestly as the nations of the world *seek* what is before them, and the promise is absolute, "All these things shall be added unto you." How tender are the words that follow: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's

good pleasure to give you the kingdom"—that kingdom which, in present possession and experience, is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," while in the future it is unmixed blessedness and eternal glory; and if He thus delights to *give the kingdom*, will he withhold what you need while on your way to it? This being the case, take care that you put your treasure into that kingdom, instead of laying it up on earth; "for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If ever this teaching was needed in the Church of God it is needed now, and it is good for us to remember that the wondrous privilege of a heavenly calling lays upon us the corresponding responsibility of being guided by heavenly principles in all the details of earthly life.

4. *The coming of the Lord.*—A heavenly pathway has a heavenly termination, and this is intimated in the words that follow, upon which only a brief remark can be added: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning: and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately." Thus would the Lord stir our hearts to *watchfulness*, and *readiness* for His return. How simple is the figure He uses. Servants who are told that the master may come at any moment, and are required to have all things in readiness for him, would, if they were thus prepared, rejoice to hear his knock, and run with alacrity to open to him. If, on the other hand, with the thought that he would not soon come, they had neglected to have things prepared, they would not be as ready to receive him, but on hearing his knock would wish to do this or that before admitting him. The Lord would have His people always ready; but to be always ready we must be always doing His will. In this, as in so much else, the state of

heart toward the Lord Himself is the great matter, for if the heart be held by the cords of His love, the ways will be ways of obedience, and there will be constant joy in the hope of His coming. May we all learn more than ever to watch and pray, and so experience the joy expressed in those words, "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." W. H. B.

THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING.

AN ADDRESS BY MR. W. LINCOLN.

THE Lord's word in John xiv. 3, is the promise of promises, "I will come again," or more correctly, "I am coming again, and will receive you unto Myself." When He came first, His object was to reach us; when He comes again, it will be to receive us unto Himself. It is to this scripture that reference is made again and again in the Word as *the* promise, *the* hope; not always citing the words, but assuming that we who love His coming will at once catch the thought.

But let us look at the connections of this passage. With John xiii. commences a new section of the Gospel; Christ, as it were, takes His stand at God's throne, as having in Spirit returned to God, by the way of the cross. Then in chapters xiv. and xv. He is taking us along with Him by the path He trod to get to God—by the cross. In chapter xvi. He unfolds the Spirit's work in connection with both these. If you read from verse 38 of chapter xiii., you will see what were the circumstances under which our Lord said, "I will come again," and spoke the words of chapter xiv., which are so full of love and grace to the unworthy

sinner. Of course we must conjoin with this the words, "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven." This is denial unrepented of; when we repent, however, God's way of dealing with us is a way of grace from first to last. Then look at the grounds upon which he says, "I am coming again." As One who is associated thoroughly with God, He would have Himself so associated in our minds; "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." I shall so return to My Father as to lift you up there, and then from the height of My glory I will come again and receive you unto Myself. Not merely "I will come again;" there is another half of the promise, which we must not let slip—"to receive you unto Myself," to make you quite at home with Me. He had spoken of a place, but now He drops the word "place," and puts in a far more beautiful word instead—"Myself."

The entire chapter is an expansion of this promise, combined with the words in verse 6. The remainder is divided into three parts, conversations with three disciples; conversations which He holds about the three great things we look for when He comes back. Our prospect is being with God; that is opened out in verse 6. We are brought unto God, not unto heaven only; we know not how, for it is beyond our conception. The great object of God is to set us under His eye for ever, that the void between the Creator and the creature may be bridged; and this is done in Christ. The highest creatures of the old creation are angels; yet we do not read of their always being with God, but rather of their occasionally being allowed to present themselves before Him, as in Job i. Such is not our prospect, but to be *for ever* with the Lord. Jesus sees to this. "Who by searching can find out God?" The only way He can be known is by His coming down to the creature. This

He has done in the person of Christ, and Christ, having come down from the bosom of God to the cross, carries us right up to the bosom of God, to whom He is "the Way."

Secondly, the Lord speaks to Philip, and it is about showing God, in reply to Philip's request, "Lord, show us the Father." The first joy we are looking for is to be with Him; the next joy is to see Him, and that is brought out in this conversation. One of the things so difficult to understand is, that it is not possible for the creature to see God save in Christ; as it is written, "No one hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son [or as some manuscripts read it, God], which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (John i. 18.) Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father;" the answer is striking, "Have ye not known Me?" (verse 10), and again in verse 11, "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." There are not two Gods; they are one, one in essence; Christ is the manifestation of God. He is coming again to receive us unto Himself, and through Him we shall see the Father, for the Father is revealed in the Son. And this is what we are looking for, to be brought right up to God.

This, then, is the second part of our prospect, and it is alluded to in the words, "I am the Truth." God is never in Scripture called "the Truth," the Holy Ghost and the Lord Jesus are, but the Father never. For what is the meaning of the word "truth"? It is the manifestation of God; and everything that does not reveal God is a *lie*; hence it is that John's first Epistle so abounds with the word "lie." The Spirit is called "the Truth" in 1 John v., for it is only the Holy Ghost that can give us a taste of God and of His love. The *truth* is the discovery of God to the creature, and this is only by the Lord Jesus and by the Holy Ghost.

Then, thirdly, there is a conversation with the same person that wrote those words, "Unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." In this conversation with Judas, we find the Lord speaks of the company of God, the Father and the Son; and we who have been breaking bread around the Lord Jesus, know that there is life in the company of God. As we sing in our hymn—

"Oh, this is life! Oh, this is joy!
My God, to find Thee thus."

The Lord Jesus said, "I am the Life," and in this third conversation He enlarges on this life, which is, having the company of God enjoyed in the soul. This is the portion of all the children of God, for "our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John i. 3), and the joy (verse 4) is in this life. Now, if we are in the company of the Lord Jesus observe what follows—*likeness*. If we look up to any upon earth, we are prone to get into their thoughts and ways, because we have respect for them; so if we are in company with the Lord, we see what must follow. And, besides, we have the Holy Ghost, and shall have Him in fulness when "we shall be like Christ, for we shall see Him as He is"—a twofold statement which expresses cause and effect.

And thus it seems that in this fourteenth of John, we have the portion of the children of God brought before us; even the hope of Christ's coming again to take us into full association with Himself in the heavenlies. There we shall be with God, we shall see God as He is revealed in Christ, and we shall be like Him. Thus these three conversations are explanatory of what is meant by being with Himself. Love cannot go beyond this, and love could not be satisfied with less.

But let us observe that John xiv. is not all future ; for we have the earnest now. Are we not brought nigh by the blood of Christ ? This is the first instalment. Cannot we see God now in any sense ? It is assumed in verses 17 and 19 that it is true now in part, for of the Spirit the Lord says, "Ye know Him ; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you ;" and concerning Himself He adds, "Ye see Me ; because I live, ye shall live also." Therefore, it is not *all* future ; our portion is now to see Him by faith, to walk in His love, and to be happy in His smile. And this is why other things are interwoven with these conversations ; as in verse 14, "If ye shall ask anything in My name I will do it." If we lived under His eye, as He would have us, we should be more in the habit of referring everything to Him. And again, in the third conversation, His words rather refer to the present than the future : "If a man love Me, he will keep My words : and My Father will love Him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." But we allow unbelief and Satan to cheat us out of as much of heaven as they can. Why do we not enjoy it ? This twenty-third verse answers the question ; if we did not allow ourselves in self-will, but were led by the Spirit of God, and walked in the Spirit, we should have now the felt companionship of God, though all present enjoyment is not to be compared with what we shall have when the Lord comes.

PICTURES OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE LATE H. W. SOLTAU.

WE all know how much better we understand a book if it is illustrated. Pictures are the *adorning* of a book, and this is exactly what believers ought to be as regards the

word of God—pictures or illustrations of the Bible. This puts us in a remarkable place.

In the second chapter of the Epistle to Titus various instructions are given concerning the conduct of believers, and connected with the last exhortation we have the striking expression, “that they may *adorn* the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” Pictures do not present more than the writing in the book teaches, but they are a great adornment. The writing describes something, and the pictures show it clearly. The writing is just as true without them, and the book is just as good, but it is not half so interesting. Just so believers ought to be pictures adorning the doctrine of God.

Let us carry this thought with us ; it is our responsibility that people should see the writing of the Bible in our lives. It is much easier to understand a thing if you see a picture of it, than if you only read a description of it. So it is much easier for men to see what God means—what God’s power is, what His mercy does, what His grace effects—and to understand it, if a believer is showing it forth in his or her life, than if they only read about it, or hear it preached.

The apostle says in another place, “Ye are our epistle” —our letter, not *letters*, but *letter*, as if Christ had sent down a letter for people to read. This is a beautiful expression—“the letter of Christ”—because it means that we are not individually epistles, but that altogether we form a letter. Just as a letter contains a good many words and sentences, and speaks of a good many things, so *each* believer should be showing some part of Christ’s letter, that *all together* may make up one letter, so that the world may have one complete epistle to read. One believer may be called especially to shew forth the grace of patience under peculiar circumstances of trial, another

the grace of lowliness in circumstances where pride would naturally triumph, another the grace of meekness, another gentleness, another love, according to the position in which each is placed, but all setting forth Christ, and forming one letter "known and read of all men."

As we read the Bible let us ask ourselves, Am I adorning this book? When we read of the graces of the Spirit let us say, Am I a picture adorning this page? Am I displaying all this fruit? If we had a book giving a description of different fruits, such as the peach, nectarine, fig, grape, or pomegranate, and if by way of illustration there was a picture of each kind of fruit, it would greatly help us to understand what they were like. So if believers are living expressions of the fruit of the Spirit, which "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," people will understand the meaning of it a great deal better than by merely reading the words. Let us then seek to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"—not in a few things, but in *all*.

The great reason for these exhortations is given in the eleventh verse, "*For* the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." First God gives us salvation; we taste His grace, and then that grace instructs us. Nothing teaches the soul so much as grace. The history of the life of Jesus, His ways, His thoughts, His words, all portray the grace of God.

His grace also gives us a hope, and teaches us to be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." It is a hope full of blessing when it shall be fulfilled, and it is a blessing to us all the way. We cannot hope for the

Lord's appearing if we are not loving Christ; but if we love Him we shall seek to know Him better, and shall long to see Him—to see "*Himself*." He will be the hope of our hearts, and we shall not be able to help longing to see Him. Grace has appeared already, and glory will appear by and by. Let us be learning the grace expressed in the word, "Who gave Himself for us." Let us learn more of His death, and then we shall love Him more, and hope more for His return.

His object in thus giving Himself was "that He might redeem us from all iniquity"—not only from condemnation, but *from all iniquity*, so that we are bought out of sin; and further "that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people." That is a beautiful word, "*unto Himself*"; that He might have us for Himself, for His own. Then we are "*a peculiar people*." Christ will not have a common sort of people. The Lord wants something very special, and the saints in glory will have nothing common about them; they will not have a common body, or a common joy, or common powers, or common affections, in the ordinary sense of the word common; they will all be peculiar—different from anything that has ever been seen before, except in the blessed Lord Himself. He was the one peculiar Man in this world, and He has redeemed us that we may be a peculiar people unto Himself. As we get like Him we shall be peculiar; we ought not to be an ordinary set of people, but should be "zealous of good works."

The Lord grant that we may be more and more peculiar by becoming more like Christ, growing up into His likeness. We can see Jesus in the Bible. The word of God is the reflection, the representation, of Jesus. Let us look at Him there that we may be more like Him, and may be changed into His image from glory to glory.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH ?

Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife."

REV. XXI. 9.

WHAT is the Church ? " A house not made with hands ;"
 Christ, the foundation Stone on which it stands ;
 A Temple reared on earth to tell the praise
 Of the Great Ancient of eternal days.
 What is the Church ? The Body—Christ the Head ;
 Members of Him, the First-born from the dead ;
 One Lord, one Life, one sympathetic soul
 Indwells the frame, breathes in and through the whole.

One family, though parted here beneath ;
 Sever'd by time, by distance, rank, or death ;
 Parted, yet gathered round one common board,
 Where Jesus sits unseen—their risen Lord ;
 A holy family that dates its rise
 From the first Lamb that bled in sacrifice ;
 A loving band, whose ranks shall be complete
 When circling round their Elder Brother's feet.

What is the Church ? Not wood, or brick, or stone,
 A temple reared by human hands alone,
 Or place where Christians meet for praise and prayer,
 Though e'en the Master deigns to meet them there.
 The Church ! It is the Lamb's own Holy Bride,
 Washed in the stream which issued from His side ;
 Bought with the ransom price He freely paid,
 When on the altar He for her was laid.

Church of the Living God ! She soon shall rise
 A glorious Temple towering to the skies ;
 With pearly gates and streets of heavenly gold,
 A Palace angels shall with joy behold ;
 A Crystal Palace for the Saviour King,
 To which creation shall its tribute bring,
 When He, who wept and sorrowed, groaned and died,
 Shall dwell for ever with His ransomed Bride.

From "Wild Thyme."

NOTES AND REPLIES.

What is meant by "the one shall be taken and the other shall be left," in Luke xvii. 34-36?

The Lord had just spoken of Noah and Lot, who were both *taken* from judgment, the one into the ark of safety, and the other into Zoar, which was preserved for his sake. The Greek word here rendered *taken* is, in John xiv., translated *receive*—"I will come again and *receive* you unto Myself." It is used of receiving into companionship, or taking into association with another, but it never bears the meaning which some have supposed it to bear in these verses, of taking away in judgment.

Those who were left outside the ark or inside Sodom were in each case left to destruction, and, therefore, the meaning here must be that when the Lord receives the church to Himself, according to John xiv. 3, there will be some, who have been closely linked with His people, who are left for judgment. In Luke xxi. 34-36, there is a solemn warning to the professing church not to be as those described in the days of Noah and Lot, lest that day come unawares and find them unprepared. Let it not be supposed from this warning that real believers may be left behind, for the utterances and warnings of Scripture are addressed to people according to their profession, and while they warn true believers against the evil heart of unbelief which is ever ready to lead astray the unwatchful and the unwary, they also intimate that as Judas was amongst the twelve, so will there be empty professors amongst the true disciples to the end.

In what way are believers connected with the covenants spoken of in Scripture?

Our relation to the covenants is determined by our relation to Christ. The security of all covenants is in Christ, and the security of our covenant relation to God hangs upon our standing in Christ. We have an interest in every covenant with which He is linked. The covenant made with Noah is ours, for we shall reign over the earth. With the covenant made with Abraham we have a special link, for we are told that Christ was the Seed "to whom the promise was made;" and as those who are His we have the assurance, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. iv. 15-29.) Whatever blessing the covenant of which Moses was mediator brings is ours, for Christ has fulfilled the law, obeying it first, and then suffering vicariously under it. God's covenant with David is ours, for we are made kings unto Him and shall have our place in the kingdom; and so is the priestly covenant made with Aaron or Levi (Mal. ii. 4), for

we are made a holy and royal priesthood. We may say that all these covenant glories are included in the "new covenant" of which Christ is the mediator, and they belong to the children of God, who are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Let us beware of any doctrine that would rob the church of God of God's covenant mercies, for by denying our share in His covenant some would unwittingly deprive us of all we have in Christ.

In what sense is it said of Christ that God "made Him to be sin for us?"
(2 Cor. v. 21.)

This verse represents the Lord on the cross as taking sin's place and bearing that which was due to sin. It is probably on this account that the serpent, which is the emblem of sin, becomes the precious type or figure of the great Sin-bearer. This statement may therefore be illustrated by the Lord's words, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," and may explain, what has to many seemed to present a difficulty, the fact that the brazen serpent was a type of Christ.

What is the force of the expression, "only in the Lord," in 1 Cor. vii. 39?

The expression "in the Lord" is of very frequent occurrence, and always implies that the act done, or to be done, must be in subjection to Christ's will and commands. In marriage it is to be according to the principles laid down in 2 Cor. vi. 14-17; that is, there is to be no yoking together of a believer and an unbeliever. But this passage does not simply mean that both persons are to be "in the Lord," but that the marriage itself must be "in the Lord," and to secure this many considerations are necessary. We have to ask, Will it glorify God? Will it help on the spiritual life? Will it be a hindrance to following the Lord fully? Such and many other questions will be asked by a godly soul, and considered before the Lord, according to the measure of its godliness. No one can lay down the line for another, for in this, as in every other matter, each must remember that he has to answer to his own Master and not to his fellow Christian. At the same time we may well caution one another against an unequal yoking in marrying, *even within the circle of the household of faith*. Marriage demands a three-fold congruity, of the outward, the inward, and the spiritual; that is, in all that concerns body, soul, and spirit. Alas, for one who marries even a believer simply because he can say, like Samson, "She is good in mine eyes"! May the aim of all be so to act as to have the assurance that the matter is good in the eyes of the Lord!