

NOTES OF
ADDRESSES AND READINGS.

QUEMERFORD, 1906.



REVISED.

LONDON :
G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MEDITATION SENT WITH INVITATION TO THE QUEMERFORD MEETINGS .. J. W. B.	1
THE WAY OF THE CROSS .. T. H. R.	5
THE CROSS AND ETERNAL LIFE .. J. B—D.	16
READING. ROMANS VIII. 1-18	29
THE BRAZEN SERPENT, JORDAN AND GILGAL F. H. B.	57
CHRIST TRIUMPHANT S. H.	65
IMMANUEL E. C.	79
READING. EPHESIANS IV. 8-16	87
THE SUPPLY OF THE SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST. A. E. P.	115
THE WORD IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH J. A.	132
“THE WORD OF THE CROSS” AND “THE WORD OF THE CHRIST” H. D’A. C.	138
READING. EPHESIANS II.	147

NOTES OF

Addresses and Readings.

MEDITATION

SENT WITH INVITATION TO THE
QUEMERFORD MEETINGS.

IN seeking the Lord in view of the meetings I have been greatly impressed and encouraged by considering the *poor* man of Psalms xl. and xli.

The poor man being “nobody,” of no reputation, is here wholly and simply for the *will of God*. “I delight to do thy will, O my God.”

The poor and needy man is resourceless as to himself, hence depends absolutely upon *God*. God is a constant necessity to him, so that he *waits patiently* for the *Lord*. And that under the greatest conceivable pressure. Here there is room for *God*.

This is the man who is *serviceable for the*

will of God, who is working out His many thoughts to usward, working all things after the counsel of His own will.

He renders a frank, and unqualified, and unreserved testimony for God, depending solely upon God for support; he does not refrain his lips, or hide anything in his heart, or conceal anything to avoid consequences.

This involved him in innumerable evils, and identifying himself with the people of God's purpose—the "us" of verse 5 who were in their sins—he adds, "mine iniquities [though not actually his] have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me." This is the "horrible pit" and "miry clay" of verse 2. Compare Luke xxii. 39-44. When "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground;" when "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." He accepts that cup from His Father's hand; depending absolutely upon Him, praying and praying more earnestly; waiting patiently for the Lord under the greatest possible pressure.

The Lord supports the poor man depending upon Him and delivers him, setting his feet upon a rock (the contrast of the miry clay) and establishes his goings, so the "*pleasure of the*

Lord prospers in his hands." (We get our little pressures, but His was inconceivably great.) "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." We may take our part with the many, and looking on have the Lord in great esteem and be encouraged to *trust in Him*. "Blessed is the man that maketh the *Lord* his trust," and turns away from all the independence of man.

Psalm xli. "Blessed is he that *considereth the poor*." He will note the Lord's great interest in the poor; the Lord will deliver him—the poor—in the time of trouble. "The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." Verse 4 did not apply to the poor man of Psalm xl., but does to every other poor man, and it is well we should keep short reckonings. He was so absolutely for God that God's enemies were his enemies, expressed their hatred to God against him.

Verse 12.—Note God's great appreciation of the poor man. "As for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and *settest me before thy face for ever*." What can be more encouraging? (Compare Phil. ii. 5-11.)

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.”
 “But Israel’s God is ours.”

The result of *considering* the poor man is we *admire him and covet to be like him*. He is serviceable for the *will of God* and the pleasure of the Lord prospers in his hands; God has a great appreciation of him.

If we come together in the spirit of the poor and needy man, the *will of God* will be promoted by our so doing.

Doubtless the remnant of another day will find great encouragement in these psalms; but it is well we should get our portion in the present day.

J. W. B.

Quemerford.



THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

(MATT. XVI. 5, 27 ; XXVI. 31, 56.)

I FEEL, beloved brethren, my utter inability to speak to you of a scene like Gethsemane. What we want is to be in communion with its sorrow. I am conscious that it is a solemn thing to stand up this morning and give, what has been asked for in prayer, a lead to the meeting in any wise ; yet I read these scriptures, being sure in my own soul they present what the Lord would have before us, for what we greatly need is a deeper knowledge of the deliverance we get in the cross of Christ. But, dear brethren, if we are to know the deliverance we must find it by going the way of the cross. There is no royal road to the enjoyment of blessing, no skipping the steps of the journey. In order to it we all have to go that one way, the way of the cross. May we all learn it.

I think no one can have followed the scripture (Matt. xxvi.) as I read it, without being struck with the difference between the Lord Jesus and the disciples. You see the utter

weakness of the flesh in them. It was not that with the Lord Jesus; there was weakness in one sense, for He was "crucified through weakness," yet He moved through that scene of sorrow in a power that belonged to a divine Person. As you ponder that pathway you see perfection in every step. There is no giving way. You see One who is superior in Himself to everything that met Him; the weakness of His disciples, betrayal, denial, rejection, and the cross before Him. You see Him moving on in the path of doing His Father's will. When they come to take Him, Peter would smite with the sword, but Jesus said, "How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?" His Father's will was in the scriptures; again, "all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." The Lord gave Himself up to it. Nothing could move Him from taking that pathway of sorrow and suffering. There is that which is worthy of all our attention in this pathway of the Lord Jesus.

" In scorn, neglect, reviling,
 Thy patient grace stood fast,
 Man's malice unavailing
 To move Thy heart to haste."

There was not one hasty word, He moved in communion with His Father's will. In Gethsemane He was looking into that dreadful cup of sin and misery and guilt, and He said to

His disciples, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me"; but they slept. What depths of sorrow the soul of Jesus knew as He surveyed that cup! Our sins were in that cup, and yet how lightly we sometimes speak of the cross; and the judgment of God was there also, and Jesus must go that way, for it was written, "He was reckoned among the transgressors." We need, beloved brethren, to know this way of the cross better and to ponder the depths of sorrow which Jesus passed through.

All this leads me to speak of a thing that presses on me. How easy it is to take high ground. I do not mean that we are hypocrites in doing so, for we may be greatly attracted by what is put before us in the Lord Jesus Christ; but we have to learn ourselves. Peter was greatly attracted, he said, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death." Peter said what he meant undoubtedly, but he little knew himself. Indeed, in saying "I will lay down my life for thy sake" (John xiii. 37) he was taking a place that Christ only could take. It was what the Lord was about to do for Peter. Peter would deny Him. We see Peter's thought as to the way of the cross in Matthew xvi., "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." You may depend on it that the natural mind in us is enmity to the cross. It is one thing to say I can glory in the

cross as that by which I am saved from judgment, but can we say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross . . . by which *I am crucified*"?

In speaking of the sufferings of Christ and the pathway of the cross I do not refer merely to the fact that He paid our heavy debt, as I might pay a debt and there is an end of the matter. No, the cross has its moral bearings. Thank God, the debt is paid, but if I follow the Lord in my spirit through the pathway of sorrow up to the moment when He could say "It is finished," what a pathway it was! I feel afraid to say more lest I might weaken your apprehension of what Jesus passed through. In His life of love He had been familiar with grief, the fruit of man's sin, but on the cross He must taste sorrow and death in all its reality. It was no light thing for Him to go the way of the cross into resurrection life and power. There was not a question affecting God's glory or man's ruin that was not settled at the cross, and, thank God, it is that cross which gives us liberty before God. I can look up to the blessed God in the liberty of the cross of Christ, because the cross has met everything. What infinite delight has been brought to the heart of God! I feel my weakness in speaking of it, and can only count on God's Holy Spirit for the unfolding of it.

Let us now turn to the beginning of Matthew xvi. Look how weak the disciples were. How easy it would have been for the Lord to have reminded them to take bread, but He allowed them to forget it. They were crossing to the other side and no visible sustenance with them. The Lord allowed it that they might be delivered from looking to man in any wise—either themselves or others. Hence He says, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” The elements of human religion ran in those two lines. The Pharisees were ritualists; it was all appearance with them. The Sadducees did not believe in any higher state than man’s present state; there was no resurrection they said. Neither rise above man in his present fallen condition. The danger for the disciples and for us is lest we get tainted with the self-sufficiency of man. The cross is the answer to all that, it has brought in God’s power in resurrection and through it we are set in the life of Christ risen before Him.

The Lord had to say to the disciples, “How is it that *ye* do not understand?” and to shew them that all their sufficiency was in Him. Do *we* understand? Can we turn from ourselves and from human thoughts to the Lord? We shall not then take any place but that which the cross puts us in. Self has to come down to the truth of the cross, and Christ is

our life. It is in Him we are lifted up. There is no end to the blessing which the cross brings us into, but if I bring in anything of myself it is a bit of leaven which spoils all. Suppose I think of my weakness or of my strength, I am thinking of myself. Jesus has gone into the death of the cross and there is an end of self. He is risen and the Spirit fixes the heart on that Man. Now I can read my history in association with that blessed Man who is out of death. Never shall we forget the way into liberty; amidst all the joy of heaven we shall ever speak of the cross of Christ as our way into liberty and heaven.

I see that there is an effort made at times to take ground which we have not gone the whole road to reach. Peter wanted to take a high place in the confession of Christ. "Though all forsake thee, yet will not I," and he meant it. But in this chapter when the Lord speaks of the cross (and because of what man was the Lord *must* go that way) Peter says "Be it far from thee, Lord." That is just what *we* are, but the Lord moved on. Nothing stayed Him. When I see Him in Gethsemane, He was there feeling all that was before Him *before God*. If you and I could only have uncovered to us for a few moments what passed before the soul of Jesus, all the misery, sin and woe that could come on man, and then the judgment of God,

we could not bear it, much less touch it. But Jesus saw it all in the light of God, and felt about it in that hour of agony according to the divine glory. Perfect in bowing to the will of His Father He takes the cup and moves on to the cross to drink it. Within, I may say, there was perfect peace; without, nothing moved Him to haste. He let them smite Him and spit upon Him; what did not man mix in that cup? but "he opened not his mouth." We know how Paul said to the high priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." With Jesus all was perfection.

The cross obliterated all that man is, so that it is gone from the sight of God. Is it gone from our sight in the cross? Am I trying to take a position apart from the way of the cross, which leaves nothing before my eyes but Christ in resurrection life. Peter in John xxi. was again taking a foremost place. He threw himself into the sea to get to Jesus first. No doubt that He loved the Lord much, but the Lord said to him *three times*, "Lovest thou me?" Then Peter answered, "Lord, thou knowest all things." Yes, the Lord well knew the three denials, but those He did not mention for they were obliterated in His cross. It was a blessed moment for Peter. He is on right ground now. He can cast himself unreservedly on Christ's perfect knowledge of

all. *He* knew that Peter loved Him. Peter is really free through the cross.

There is one more word I would like to add as to Romans viii. 1-3. While there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus verse 2 goes on to say, "The law of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." *There* is the condemnation and there can be none for those in Christ Jesus. I think that many Christians have not the sense of the Spirit of God being in them as the *Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus*. A great many see the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost as a divine Person, and that He dwells in the house of God and is there in testimony to Christ; but when the Lord came to the disciples after His resurrection and breathed on them, saying, Receive ye Holy Spirit, we may say that certainly He breathed of *His own Spirit* into them, yet I suppose they did not fully enter into the meaning of it until the Holy Ghost came. What was the exact character of that which the disciples received when the Lord breathed into them I could not explain, as now we receive the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus through

receiving *the* Spirit. The effect is to set us free in the life of Christ. It is important to distinguish between the Spirit as a sovereign and divine Person and as the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus. It says lower down, “If *Christ be in you* the Spirit is life.” *Christ* is our life and the Spirit is given as the Spirit of that life—resurrection life—so that we live of Christ. We come into blessing by *the work of Christ* :—

“The work that Thine own Son hath wrought
Has brought us back in peace and free.”

Then it would be a great help if each one saw that the Spirit is in them, not as their own life apart from Christ, but as the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and yet it *is their life*. So the apostle said, “I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” When He rose from the dead He was beyond death and judgment in resurrection life, and the Spirit sets us free in that life. It works out in a practical way ; the mind of Christ is wrought in us and the mind of man is nowhere. A very proud man becomes lowly and humble because the Spirit is the power of living association with Christ, and his soul is in touch with the grace of Christ in going to the cross. Then affections are formed in the saints, the affections of Christ, they know Christ’s relationship with the Father,

and they say, Abba Father! they realise the love of Christ to the saints. Much is said about love's circle, we enjoy it in the life of Christ. The apostle said to the Thessalonians, I have no need to write to you as touching brotherly love, for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another. It was the upspringing of the life of Christ in them. Thus we get into the thoughts and affections of Christ because we are in the life of Christ. They are wrought in the soul by the Spirit. They are Christ's affections and yet they are mine. How could that be in any way save by the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus. He does dwell in the believer as a divine Person bearing witness with his spirit—that is, the spirit which is formed in him as having the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus.

I do not say that every young believer will be able to follow me in all that I have said, but I would like each to understand how the Spirit is connected with Christ in your soul—Christ who went to the cross for you and rose again. The Spirit is not given to enable *you* to be something, not even, like Peter, to be something in your love for Christ. He brings you down to the nothingness of the cross, and sheds *the love of God* abroad in your heart. We must go the way of the cross. I am afraid we have been seeking to take a high place

without knowing the truth of the cross of Christ. Our old man has been crucified with Christ. We can reckon it to be so through His grace, and that we are alive to God in Christ Jesus, the Spirit being the Spirit of that life. If you follow the scriptures I have read you will see how little the disciples were prepared for the way of the cross, yet it is the only way by which we pass into liberty. There the life of the old man is gone that we might live in the Spirit—the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus.

T. H. R.



THE CROSS AND ETERNAL LIFE.

(JOHN III. 14-16; 1 JOHN II. 29; III. 1-24.)

I DESIRE to follow on the lines that have been marked out, the cross and the life of Christ. The great thought of the Father for man was eternal life. The Lord distinguishes between that which is earthly and that which is heavenly in John iii., and connects eternal life with things heavenly. He says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" and proceeds to speak of eternal life. It was in the thought of God for man before the world was. It is no mere remedy for the ruin of the creature. It is not like forgiveness of sins or justification which meet the need of man; it belongs to the Father's counsels before the foundation of the world—man was to have eternal life. In the epistle it is said to have been with the Father. I do not doubt that the expression "with the Father" is characteristic, and not a mere question of time, but it is important for us to note that it is said to have been "*with the Father*," that is, it is

connected with a new order of relationships for man. Our Adam life was not with the Father.

In order that man might be brought into this the Son came forth. He came forth from the Father, and came into the world, and when He came into the world the Father drew to Him all those that were the subjects of divine counsel. He speaks in chapter xvii. of "the men which thou gavest me out of the world." The Father had drawn to the Son all those that were His. He says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." They were brought to the Son by the Father, that the Son might give them eternal life. He says (chap. vi. 37), "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. . . . And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Again He says (chap. xvii.), "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." It might be thought that the Lord called His disciples around Himself, and in a way this is true, but in addressing the

Father He attributes their coming to Him to the Father's drawing.

Now to these He manifested the Father's name, gave them the Father's word and the Father's words. He brought the Father before them, and His object in doing this was that the counsels of the Father concerning them should be fulfilled. In the estimation of men these were not of much importance in the world, neither were they. The Lord speaks of them as babes: "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. xi. 25.) Peter, John, James, Matthew and the other disciples were of very little value in the estimation of the world; but it was not a question of what they were in themselves, but of what they would be by the work of God. It was not a question of what lay in them, there was nothing more in them by nature than in Saul of Tarsus, who was chief of sinners, and when he knew himself he has to say, "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." (Rom. vii.) And this was just as true of the great people of the earth as it was of these babes. But the delight of Christ was in them, for they were the Father's gift to Him. And having received them and loved them, He loved them to the end.

And the Father has drawn you and me. It

is just as true of us as of His disciples that we never should have come to Christ if the Father had not drawn us. Without His drawing we should have remained away for ever. We had no desire to have to do with the Father and the Son. We kept away in the darkness as long as we could, but there came a moment when we came under the drawing power of the Father,

“ And when was come the moment,
Thou, calling by Thy grace,
Didst gently, firmly draw us
Each from his hiding-place.”

You could not explain how it was you left your hiding-place and turned to Him—to the light that exposed you, and gave you to see what a poor, wretched, sinful thing you were. You could not very well tell how it all came about, that you dared to face that light which exposed you to yourself before God. Perhaps you say it was your need that brought you; but I do not think so. I do not think that *mere need* will bring any one. It was not his need that brought the prodigal. He would never have come had he not felt his need, but when the famine arose he went down to the swine's trough. It was *bread* that brought him. It was the knowledge that there was with his father that which he needed that caused him to repent and face the light.

I have often thought it was a strange kind of inducement to come to Jesus the woman of Samaria presented to the men of the city, when she asked them to come and see a Man that told her all things that ever she did. None of us would wish to come into the presence of a man that knew the half of all that we have done. But somehow the message had the right effect upon them, just as it has had effect upon us ; we were led to seek the presence of One who knew all that we had done. But the grace was there that gave her moral support in the light that manifested everything.

There are things in connection with our coming to Christ that we cannot well understand, but it was all the drawing of the Father, the object being that we might get to know the Father and the Son, and this we are told is life eternal. We have been drawn to Christ that we might know the Father's name, the Father's word, and the Father's words. And these are wonderful words of life. Peter speaks of them (John vi.) when many of the disciples of Jesus went back and walked no more with Him : he says, " Lord, to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life." These were the words that the Father had given Him, and the disciples had received them, and by these words they knew that He had come

forth from the Father, and that the Father had sent Him. And His object in coming was to bring the light of the Father to us, and fit us for the place given to us in divine counsel. That is a very short, simple and complete statement of His in chapter xvi.: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." When He came forth from the Father He was in the form of God. He left that sphere of divine glory and came as man into the world, and now He has gone back again, but He has gone back *as Man*. He has not gone into a place inferior to the one He left. I admit it is a new place for man, but it is not a new place for the Man who has gone there. Man was never there before, but that Person who is Man was there before. I will quote His own words: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (Chap. vi.) He has gone back into the place He had with the Father before the world was. But His going there as Man has prepared a place for other men, *we* can be there now. A place has been made there for *us*. His advent into the world, and His declaration of the Father's name, and the word and words of the Father spoken by Him in the ears of His disciples had fitted them to be in that place along with Him. They were brought by

Him into the relationship with the Father in which He was, and into that love wherewith He was loved. It was necessary for the Son to *come* if we were to be in that place, and also necessary for Him to *go*, otherwise we could never have been there. What I am speaking of is entirely heavenly, and none but heavenly people have any title to this. The Lord speaks of it as heavenly things.

Take Adam in innocence. He was made of dust. He was formed out of the dust of the ground, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. He was not formed for heaven. He was of earthly origin. But the second Man is out of heaven. He is of heavenly origin. But not only is there a heavenly Man, but there are heavenly men. Who are they? Those who have been begotten of God. The light of God that Christ brought into the world has formed a heavenly generation. We are of God. That light has become life in our souls. In order that such things might be brought to pass, the Son of God had to be manifested, and to go into death also, for only in this way has the love of God been declared. The love of God came to light in all its power in the cross, that cross where a complete end has been made of all flesh in the judgment of God, and *flesh* is all that you and I were by nature; and we know that there is

no good in the flesh. Paul speaks of having more to boast of in the flesh than any other man, yet he says that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. We may reason that if there was no good in his flesh there can be no good in ours, and that reasoning may be very correct, but if we are to *know* it we must learn it experimentally. We all have to find it out for ourselves. We may have to learn it through much failure and sorrow, but learn it we must if we are ever to *know* it. It has been exposed at the cross, it was all brought to light there, all its folly and enmity against God. It knew not God revealed in Christ; it spat in His face and put Him on the cross. Who would trust it after that? Its lawlessness, its enmity against God, its loathing of all good came out there, and when and where it came out it received its judgment. There God condemned sin in the flesh, and ended that state for us, so that we might be in relationship with Him in Christ.

Of this the brazen serpent was the type. It came in after the children of Israel had been nigh forty years in the wilderness. In the desert with God the flesh had been tested and proved worthless, and its end in the judgment of God was set forth in type in the lifted-up serpent of brass: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." There flesh was set

aside in the judgment of God. The life of flesh was brought to an end that man might have the life of Christ—eternal life. And there the love of God came to light; the heart of God was revealed by that cross, which was the witness of the hatred of the human heart to God. The love of God was declared in the gift of His only-begotten Son. And all this was necessary if man was to have eternal life. In chapter iv. we get the well of water in the believer springing up into eternal life; in chapter v. the Father quickening the dead by the life that is in Himself, and the Son quickening by His almighty voice, and in chapter vi. we appropriate the living bread.

And in the manifestation of the love of God the whole world is in view. In chapter iii. it is "God so loved the world"; in chapter iv. we get Jesus confessed as "the Christ, the Saviour of the world," and in chapter vi. He is the bread that "gives life to the world." When the Son of God was here as sent of the Father all that God was in grace was declared world-wide. The living bread was for the life of the world. The Jews wanted a sign and spoke of their fathers eating manna in the desert. But, as the Lord tells them, they ate and *are dead*. In contrast with this He was the living bread that came down from heaven, that a man may eat and *not die*. This bread is

for our appropriation. It is given to us that we may make it our own. But I must first of all appropriate Him in death. I have a right to this bread, for it is for the life of the world. I have a right to say that His death is *my* death. I have a right to it because God has given it to me. It is for men universally. Every one has a right to this bread. But if I make that death of His *my* death, what does that mean? It means this, that all that death applied to in me is made an end of. It was in this way the apostle could say, "I am crucified with Christ." If I can say this, it means that I have brought the cross to bear upon myself; I have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood. I have parted company on my side with all that was brought under the judgment of the cross, and I live in the life of Christ.

In the Epistle of John you get the *nature* of this life; the life is divine, and the nature of that life is the divine nature—you are born of God. There are two great characteristics of that life, and they are righteousness and love: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," and "he that loveth is born of God." I think we may make mistakes as to these characteristics. I do not think righteousness is to be seen in the details of a man's life

merely. I do not think it is that which might have been seen in such a man as Saul of Tarsus. A man may have an outwardly blameless life, and yet be without the knowledge of God. Righteousness is seen more in connection with his approach to God. Abel is taken up as an example of a righteous man. Possibly Cain may have been upright in his ways amongst men; but I should judge a man by his approach to God, that is to say, by his attitude toward Christ. I would judge him by his altar. And this is what we get in this chapter. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground as an offering, thus asserting that his relations with God were all they ought to be, and if anything was wrong the fault did not lie at his door. This was wicked. Abel came by Christ, and God had respect to his offering. The man that does righteousness is the man that approaches by Christ.

As to love, it is not what is known in the world as philanthropy. It is the love of God declared in Christ I would look for. I should look for love to the brethren, that self-sacrificing love that was seen in Christ. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The only way in which we have seen this divine love expressed was in the giving up of life for its object. Therefore whether it be righteousness

or love it is not what may be found in the world, but that which came to light in Christ, *and this is all divine*. And the effect of walking in righteousness and love is, that we have confidence toward God, and whatsoever we ask we receive of Him because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. No request that we present to Him is unanswered if we please Him in our walk and ways. "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

My object in speaking has been to call attention to the counsels of the Father, who has given us such a wonderful place before Him in love, and to the advent of the Son into the world, to give effect to these counsels. He has brought to us the knowledge of the Father, and has gone back as Man into that place from whence He came, so that there should be a new place for man, not only for man in His Person, but for us also who are in new relationship with the Father and in the life of Christ. The nature of this life comes out down here in those who possess it, and we may thus be able to judge those who pretend to partake of this life.

The object of the epistle is that we may know that we have eternal life. The fathers

have it, the young men have it and the babes have it. It is the possession of believers. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." May we be better established in the truth of it. What a life it is! A life that never had a beginning, and will never have an end—the life of God. But if we are to come out in the nature of that life down here we must bring the cross to bear upon everything that we are in the flesh.

J. B—D.



READING.

(ROM. VIII. 1-18.)

F. H. B. What was specially in your mind, Mr. H., in suggesting the passage?

S. H. I thought of it specially in connection with what Mr. R. was bringing before us. Perhaps it might be unfolded a little.

T. H. R. One important thing for us to see is that in the end of chapter vii. you have done with man—"O wretched man that I am!" shews that you have found out what man is. God's way of deliverance is really by the Spirit. The Deliverer is Christ: it is God in one sense, but it is by Christ and through Christ, and in reality the power that practically effects it is the Spirit.

F. H. B. The Spirit is the power for our entering into the deliverance that has been secured for us in Christ.

S. H. Yes; so that we come into liberty; for that we need the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

G. R. How would you say deliverance is wrought?

T. H. R. Deliverance was wrought in the cross. The first thing in the Spirit's work is

to put me thoroughly into accord with the work of the cross.

QUES. How is that brought about in us?

T. H. R. I think really by experience of our own evil and helplessness.

J. B—D. What is he reasoning from, what is in Christ Jesus?

T. H. R. Yes; you go back to chapter vi., and, as has been often said in this room, you have changed your man. The difficulty is to change your man.

J. B—D. Chapter vii. is to shew you what that man is.

T. H. R. Yes; you have got an "I" that does not answer to God. The soul comes to this, "O wretched man that I am!" Then comes the question, "who shall deliver me"?

J. B—D. Then he is thankful for the deliverance of chapter vi.

S. H. We have to come in the history of our souls, to what has been accomplished for God in the cross of Christ; so that Christ displaces "I" for me as well as for God, and He becomes everything to me. Deliverance comes to us really in the knowledge of divine Persons. It says in chapter vi., "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," and in chapter vii., "ye also are become dead to the law by the

body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Divine Persons in this way become known, which will affect us and form us after God.

J. B—D. Is it not touched on in chapter vi.: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord"? God is declared to our hearts. God becomes an object to your soul instead of sin.

T. H. R. There you do not go further than reckoning.

J. B—D. You must have a greater object than yourself.

S. H. You could not have a greater object than yourself, except in the knowledge of divine Persons.

J. B—D. Is not the way God comes out and declares Himself in chapters iii., iv. and v. the way you are controlled in chapter vi.?

T. H. R. Yes; if you are controlled. If it is only relief for my conscience I have before me, I have got myself before me for the moment.

S. H. Where you get clear is at the beginning of this chapter. We are able to take account of ourselves as in Christ Jesus. Is not that the point the apostle brings them to?

T. H. R. I have often said the Spirit is no use to you until you are in Christ Jesus. There is no life or anything of that kind apart from Christ Jesus.

W. H. Are not the exercises of chapter vii. necessary to us before we know deliverance?

T. H. R. It has often been said that nobody gets out of Romans vii. until they get into it. The difficulty is to consent to this, that I have been crucified *with Christ*. Many people try to feel themselves dead, to realise some state in themselves. They look for some state of deliverance, but they only realise deliverance in the Deliverer.

J. B—D. People look to get a state where all exercise is over.

T. H. R. They will never get there as long as they are down here. Even in Canaan there were exercises. What the man says in the end of Romans vii. is not how do I get deliverance, but "*who shall deliver me*"?

A. E. P. Deliver from what?

T. H. R. From myself.

J. B—D. From the service of sin.

T. H. R. Yes; it is I myself.

S. H. Liberty is making use of the deliverance effected by the Deliverer.

H. D'A. C. I suppose there comes a time when you get outside that question: you do not go on saying "*who shall deliver me*?"

W. G. B. You were saying that the difficulty is to get a person to wish for it. Is it not affection for divine Persons that would lead you to desire it?

T. H. R. Yes; but I am sure there is another thing, and that is, you are sick of yourself. Peter had affection for divine Persons, but he did not know himself. The moment the Spirit of God brings you into accord with the cross of Christ you can say "I am crucified with Christ." It is not then that you are crucified, you were crucified when Christ was crucified, but you have come to the moment in your history when you can say "I am crucified with Christ."

W. J. It has to be maintained all along the line.

T. H. R. Yes.

T. M. G. Is not that what the apostle means in saying "I through law am dead to law, that I might live unto God"?

S. H. I think we have very little sense that man has lost God, so to speak. It seems to me that what comes out in connection with the point of deliverance is, that I realise that I am fully recovered to Him in another Man, who is the Son of God. We have been made dead to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another, &c., that we might bear fruit to God. (Rom. vii. 4, N.T.)

T. H. R. Then the Spirit can lead you on the divine side.

S. H. Then I shall find out the power of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

E. C. Does deliverance exist short of resurrection?

S. H. No; that has been settled in the epistle.

E. C. Then is deliverance to be had in this world at all?

T. H. R. No, not fully. The fact of the case is, you do not get deliverance fully in this chapter till verse 11. That is full deliverance really.

S. H. It has often been said that every Christian is brought to it. If all do not reach it in their souls so as to be in the enjoyment of it in their lives, they reach it on their death-beds. We want to be in the enjoyment of it *now*, so as to walk after the Spirit, please God, and enjoy new relationships, as those led by the Spirit and awaiting adoption, that is, the redemption of our body.

T. H. R. I quite agree with what you say. Life and peace are in Christ, therefore the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.

S. H. I find a great number of people who think because they have the doctrine they have the thing, but when you come close to them what you find is that they are not free

with divine Persons, they are not really in liberty.

G. G. What do you mean by not being "free with divine Persons" ?

S. H. There is very little intimacy with Them, so that They become the object of their affections. We find ourselves at home with divine Persons and marked by the peace of Christ. I think it is illustrated in Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." We begin to understand the import of what is presented in Christ Jesus, that is, the unfolding of new and heavenly relationships, place, and affections presented in the Head, and my home is there.

W. J. I suppose in Romans viii. we have the life of the husband developed in the power of the Spirit. It comes out first objectively and then has to be experienced.

F. H. B. Deliverance must be experimental or it is nothing.

T. H. R. Yes ; do not you see the Spirit is that by which you livingly enjoy things. I could take a boy out of the street and adopt him, but I could not give him the feelings of a child. What God does is really to put us aside entirely ; by the cross He puts us off that line altogether on to the line of what Christ is. In chapter viii. we have the things of *God* brought in by the power of the Spirit. A

wonderful thing is life. Everthing is living with the Christian, therefore if it is life it is communion. You cannot have communion with the truth apart from life, then I live in the things of God, in the things of Christ. I could not do that apart from the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

F. H. B. The difference between a person who is delivered and one who is undelivered is this, an undelivered person is self-occupied, and a delivered person is occupied with Christ.

S. H. Would you think in the verses in the beginning of the chapter that we come to the point when God's new creation begins to be available for us? He has set forth Christ as the great Head, and this is the moment when we reach it, though in Romans it is not developed.

J. B—D. I thought it was more a statement of scripture, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

S. H. I was thinking more of "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." I should think it answers very much to John xx., to Christ risen. This brings us to the point when Christ risen becomes available for us. They are to live of His life, and He breathes into them and says, "Receive ye Holy Spirit."

F. H. B. I think verse 1 is an absolute statement. Then there is the question, how far can I take account of myself in that way?

I think that is what Mr. H. means by availing ourselves of new creation.

S. H. It is in a peculiar way that the Spirit is presented in the beginning of this chapter, not as an indwelling Person, as God's Spirit, but more as the impulse that gives life, and this would be in connection with a new sphere.

J. B—D. Would it not be what comes out in chapter v., "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts"?

T. H. R. Yes, I think so.

A. S. L. To refer to the point of "no condemnation" for a moment, I thought it always was looked at in contrast to the man in chapter vii., where the desires were all right and the man was all wrong.

F. H. B. Now he takes account of himself, not in connection with what he is in himself, but what he is in Christ Jesus.

T. H. R. Yes; you must go back to chapter v. 18. If a man is in Adam there will be the thought of condemnation; that was the bearing of the one offence; it was towards all men for condemnation.

F. H. B. "No condemnation" is realised in chapter viii.

A. E. P. Is not verse 3 necessary to that?

A. S. L. Is it right that one should say that in the Epistle to the Romans it is not a question of the state of the Romans, or how

far any of the Romans had entered into it. That is not in view, but rather the unfolding of the whole gospel. The actual state of the Romans does not come up before the writer. Without being arrested by the state of the Romans, like he was with the Galatians and Hebrews, he is writing the truth for saints everywhere.

S. H. I think the Epistle to the Romans is not proclamation : it is rather the teaching of the gospel to the saints.

F. H. B. What is set forth in chapter vii. shews the road by which every one gets into the good of the gospel.

A. S. L. It has been said that it is not literally any man's experience, because it shews that the desires were always right and the performing them was always wrong.

T. H. R. It has been said, too, that chapter viii. 1 answers to chapter v., verse 2 to chapter vi., and verse 3 to chapter vii.

S. H. Until we see the state is condemned, we are not prepared to see the important place the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has. I become nothing, and God everything.

E. C. What is the meaning of that expression "condemned sin in the flesh"?

T. H. R. I do not know that I could put it stronger than it is put.

A. E. P. It is what He did at the brooks of Arnon.

QUES. What did He do there?

GEO. C. Will you kindly make it clearer? You are speaking in parables.

J. B—D. They want you to explain it.

A. E. P. Because the brazen serpent came out at the brooks of Arnon. "Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon."

T. H. R. That is a great thing, only I have to be brought into accord with that. I thoroughly bow to God's judgment of the whole state. Dear Mr. Stoney used to say, I have known plenty of men who could knock the old man about, but have you passed on to the other Man? There is a sort of satisfaction in knocking yourself about, a monk could do that. I have no doubt the cross brings in the thought of *suffering*. It is not merely saying oh, the old man is dead and done with, but *how* did it die? In the sufferings of the cross of Christ. It is like what we had this morning: no one can go with the Lord to Calvary without seeing that He *suffered*. How did He suffer? It is like it was with Abraham when he was going to offer up Isaac. I can understand a man doing an heroic deed on the spur of the moment, but going three days with

Isaac by his side, that man must have entered into what the suffering of death meant. That is what I understand by suffering.

J. S. A. That is "the word of the cross." You must enter into "the word of the cross" before you can enter into "the word of the Christ."

T. H. R. What he says to the Galatians is, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" "I," said Paul, "through law am dead to law, that I might live unto God." How did Paul become dead to all that state of things that the life of Christ in him might spring up to God? He said, "I am crucified with Christ," and you have had Him set before *your* eyes crucified.

W. J. The Spirit of God maintains that holy judgment in our souls.

S. H. That brings constant suffering. The moment we get into touch with divine Persons we see what Christ has suffered in that way. There is an affecting verse which we do not take much account of: "knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Christ," that is, we have got to suffer, in view of living to God.

J. B—D. What difference do you make be-

tween the bitter water and what we are speaking of now ?

T. H. R. I think the bitter water was really what Mr. H. was saying, that you keep up the import of the cross.

W. J. There was the proving of what flesh was before the brazen serpent.

T. H. R. You cannot say merely, I have got deliverance through the death of Christ as a past thing ; you must take it up practically, that is the force of crucified.

W. H. Does the cross and crucifying carry the thought of reproach as well as suffering ?

J. M. G. Is not God bringing every one of us into accord with what is done in the cross ?

S. H. The tendency with every one of us is to stop on the negative side and not get over to the positive side. If we step out into the positive side it will have more effect on souls than all the preaching.

T. H. R. You cannot step into the positive side except in the life of Christ. The Spirit linking you with Christ enables you to be in the truth of the cross. It is in the power of the Spirit of life that you mortify the deeds of the body.

S. H. What has so frequently affected me in John xx. is the pains the Lord takes to identify the disciples with Himself in His life as risen. The first action of the Lord after

He was risen from the dead was to dissociate His disciples from everything connected with this scene. "He breathes into them" in order that they should be associated with Him in life as risen. Where actual power comes in with us is, that it lies in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, so that we can in mind dissociate ourselves from Adam and associate ourselves with Christ as risen, outside of the condition of condemnation.

T. M. G. That practice goes on.

W. J. It is springing up practically into everlasting life, that is where deliverance is known.

QUES. What is the meaning of the expression, "the law"?

T. H. R. "Law" means a governing principle.

QUES. What is the force of not walking after the flesh? Is it, not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit?

S. H. I not only dissociate myself from "the flesh," but I take account of myself as "in Spirit."

W. J. After all this is intensely objective. It is that we may be linked on with the Giver.

T. H. R. A remark that Mr. Darby made very shortly before he died was, that when Christ was here the life was here: now Christ is up there the life is there. If the Spirit links

you with the life of Christ Jesus it must take you out of the whole sphere of the flesh in that way, because your life is where Christ is.

S. H. I was going to ask if this is the unfolding of the doctrine of what we get in John vii.?

T. H. R. I think I should more connect it with chapter iv. Here it hardly goes beyond *life*. I think the way in which the Spirit is presented in John vii. takes in the thought of *place*. He comes from Christ glorified and brings out to us while down here the knowledge of the Father's things; Christ in glory can give them to us by the Spirit.

S. H. That would be one detail of it; I mean the doctrine as to the reception of the Spirit. I thought of it as to the various ways in which He is presented to us in Romans viii.; the Spirit of God; the Spirit itself.

T. H. R. I don't think here it goes beyond the power of life. In John vii. it is really the river in the believer which, in the millennium, will flow out of the heavenly city. This, in Romans viii., I take it, is more in connection with Christ's *resurrection*. John vii. depends on His ascension and glory, and the result is heavenly things can come down to earth. This links you with the life of Christ and sets you free from man here and links you with that other Man. I do not think this goes much

beyond "life" here. When you come to John vii. you have got ascension and glory.

J. B—D. It is what takes the place of the feast of tabernacles.

T. H. R. Yes, you do not get the feast of tabernacles yet, but you have got heavenly things here by the Spirit, come from Christ glorified. I do not think the evangelist merely preaches relief but he has got heavenly things in his heart.

F. H. B. In these passages here you have the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. The formative work of the Spirit is prominent.

T. H. R. You see it is connected with newness of life *down here* because it says, "That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." It is not the Spirit putting you in touch with heavenly things and glory.

H. D'A. C. Not new creation.

T. H. R. So it has often been said it only just touches the point of being "in Christ."

J. B—D. So what you never could do before you fulfil now, the righteous requirement of the law. They are fulfilled by love, I suppose.

T. H. R. One of the most blessed results of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is that you feel the state of this present creation according to Christ.

W. J. You have the sensibilities of Christ.

T. H. R. I think to see the life of Christ going through this scene, touched by every sorrow, and feeling everything according to God, and then that I can say that life is mine in the power of the Spirit, that is to me wonderful.

W. J. You are not a Stoic.

T. H. R. No, indeed you are not.

W. J. So in this epistle you are set up to walk in God-consciousness.

T. H. R. Yes, to walk down here. The mind of the Spirit is life and peace. In Colossians "Risen with Christ" is more status. I am to go through this world as a risen man, but not gone to heaven, where a risen man belongs.

W. J. The difference between Romans and Colossians is that in Romans you have changed the man and in Colossians the place.

T. H. R. Not exactly the place, but the status. In Romans you are dead to sin.

W. G. B. Might I ask, before we leave verse 3, would it not also carry the thought of the condemnation of sin, wherever it is found, whether it is found in fallen angels or men?

T. H. R. I do not think that is the subject here. I have no doubt, if you come to the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, you get the whole taking away of sin, but that is not what you have here in verse 3.

REMARKED. It is sin in the flesh not sin in angels.

W. J. So what you have in Romans viii. is this, you have first the well of water before the serpent of brass. The order is reversed here.

T. H. R. Well, you know it runs with it, but I would hardly say it is the well of water. It is *the law* of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus *setting you free* from the law of sin and death. You hardly get the well of water springing up in verse 2. You get the power of life in that blessed Man risen from the dead. Christ is out of death, and I am linked with the life that is out of death by the Spirit.

W. A. W. It is John xx. rather than John iv.

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. Every verse has its own force.

J. B—D. Verse 3 brings a little more into relief what is in verse 2.

W. H. Is not verse 2 the outcome for us of what God did in verse 3?

T. H. R. I have no doubt it comes in order. We have Romans v., vi., vii., and these three verses are the summary. Life and justification go together in chapter v. The justified man is alive but not in the old life. Supposing a man pays the penalty of the law and dies, and then supposing you could bring him to life again,

you cannot justify him in the old life which sinned. Justification is only in the life of another. Then you get chapter vi., you count yourself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus. The Spirit comes in on that line and he says, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Then, in chapter vii., you get *the* law and the law condemning. Under the first husband there is nothing but condemnation. Now you get the law in chapter viii. 3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

F. H. B. "That the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I think it is a very great point in Romans to see that it is not simply a question of setting man free, and free with God, but of setting man up in righteousness down here in the world where he was known as a sinner.

S. H. That is his liberty, his freedom.

F. H. B. Not only that he is free with God, but he becomes a righteous man here.

S. H. What I spoke of as liberty is that you can appropriate the new scene into which you are brought in the power of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

T. H. R. I do not think Romans carries you quite as far as that.

S. H. But is it not necessary that you should find the germ of everything in Romans?

A. E. P. After the brazen serpent they were able for the land.

A. S. L. In Christ Jesus there is no condemnation; that is very far from being all that may be said of what is in Christ Jesus.

F. H. B. You would want to read the epistle to the Ephesians.

A. S. L. I wanted to know where I was to go. Is it not the church there?

S. H. Yes, it is unfolded in it.

E. C. Does not this epistle include more than the church?

T. H. R. No, not what we are considering now. When you come to prophecy (chapters ix.-xi. and on) it has the character of the everlasting gospel; but as to the Spirit and these chapters it is what belongs to the saints now. I think Colossians is necessary for us practically, but as to the statement of the truth you go straight from Romans to Ephesians; from individual blessing to the church.

S. H. Yes, because if you have not Colossians you cannot understand the nature of the life in which we can enjoy what is unfolded to us in Ephesians.

T. H. R. I think Colossians ii. is one of the most important chapters in the epistles.

S. H. I will tell you the reason why I referred to John vii. as well as John iv. We have been in danger of founding our own doctrine on the gospels. I think the epistles unfold to us the import of the teaching of Christ in the gospels.

T. H. R. In point of fact, and it is an old remark, when you are young you read the gospels with pleasure; you find children like them; but there comes a time when if you are really exercised you leave the gospels and go to the epistles to see the way the Spirit reasons out the truth from the facts of the gospels. Then, after that, you go back to the gospels and see how it all came out in Christ Himself. I think a great many have thought they could get into things without going the way that scripture indicates.

S. H. I find certain things in the gospels, and if I put my interpretation on them without having regard to the teaching of the Spirit in the epistles I shall go wrong. With regard to John vii., if I take it to mean that I can give the Spirit to anybody, it is contrary to the doctrine that is unfolded in 2 Corinthians i., "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who

hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

T. H. R. I think there is another thing with regard to that, which we have to take into account, and that is, that we must not separate the Spirit and Christ. I do not look at living water as simply the Spirit, but what the Spirit unfolds of Christ. I think the words of Christ were living water, they were Spirit and life; the words which spoke of the grace of His heart had the character of living water.

F. H. B. We have been disposed to make light of doctrine. If we neglect Christian doctrine we shall get into sentimentality.

S. H. I do not object to people making applications of scripture, but we have to bear in mind what has been said in years gone by, that there is only one interpretation.

J. S. A. What is very important is what Mr. R. has been saying, that we should not dissociate the Spirit from Christ. It was said to me recently that when Christ gave the Spirit He (the Spirit) left heaven; I quoted what Mr. Darby often referred to, that when Christ gives He does not give *away*, but brings the recipient into enjoyment with Himself of what He gives.

T. H. R. People look for evidences of having the Spirit, but what I look for is this, that *Christ* is before the soul. I may not know

how He made Himself known to me, but I do know now that it was by the Spirit. I think it is a true test for everybody which we get in 1 John iv., "Hereby ye know the Spirit of God : every spirit which *confesses* Jesus Christ come in flesh is *of God*." I do not take that in the letter, but if a man has the Spirit you will find Christ on that man's tongue. He does not talk about the Spirit but about Christ.

S. H. Another important point is that the Spirit is never presented objectively to us. He comes to report as to Christ.

QUES. Might I ask if you connect John iv. with the sealing of the Spirit?

T. H. R. I do not think it is exactly the same thought. The moment the Spirit is given He is the seal, the earnest and the anointing. The idea of sealing is God putting His mark upon you. God has appropriated you for Himself, for His own purpose.

QUES. Did you say the Spirit is never presented objectively?

S. H. No; He is never presented objectively. There is a danger as to this. He has come here and taken His place (if you can speak reverently of one divine Person taking a subservient place) to be the Servant of Christ, just as Christ when He was here was the Servant of the Father.

J. S. A. So it becomes a test of the Spirit's

action in a person whether or not he is occupied with Christ.

QUES. Is the Spirit looked at here as power or a Person?

S. H. He is presented here as power: He is not only a Person, but the power of life.

W. J. The Spirit is looked at in three ways here—as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ and the “Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead:” what is the difference?

T. H. R. As the Spirit of God He brings God in instead of man, as the Spirit of Christ He is the Spirit that dwelt in Christ when He was here, and so the Spirit of that blessed Man. The Spirit never became incarnate, and in that sense could never have entered into the things of a man as Christ could; but when the Lord was here the Spirit could come and abide upon Him. He could mix Himself with every thought and feeling of that blessed Man; He did not produce it, it was all there, but He could come and mix Himself with everything in that perfect Man, for all was of God, and now the Spirit can be in us as the Spirit of that Man, so that I part company with the old man for that other Man.

W. J. When you speak of mixing you refer to the meat offering.

T. H. R. I do. The other thing is that it carries you on to resurrection. All the bodies

of the saints now in the graves have been indwelt by the Spirit, and I believe their dust is in the keeping of the Spirit of God ; I have no doubt the Lord is over all as well.

J. B—D. The Spirit of God dwells in us as the guarantee that we shall be raised.

T. H. R. Here more it is the full answer to " Who shall deliver me ? " When you get actual death before you, and you realise what death is as the break-up of everything here, it might bring clouds on your spirit, but the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, and therefore you have the assurance that He who raised Christ will raise you up, because of His Spirit that dwells in you. " If Christ be in you . . . the Spirit is life." I do not think you can have the Spirit as life apart from Christ. It says, " Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ* he is not of him," that is the Spirit that abode upon that blessed Man. Then it goes on, " If *Christ* be in you . . . the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

A. J. P. Is it Christ in us by the Spirit which is life ?

T. H. R. Yes ; He is.

A. S. L. How do you regard John xx. ?

T. H. R. That is the Spirit of the life of that risen Man.

J. B—D. The Spirit of God's Son.

A. S. L. Was it a kind of typical act or

symbolical proceeding of what is true for us to-day?

T. H. R. Things came out in order. John iv. was more life, the well of living water, the life of Christ in you springing up to everlasting life. Then connected with that you get communion and worship, because you cannot have communion apart from life, and life in the power of the Spirit. I could never have any communion with what is in Christ apart from the Spirit and as having the life of Christ. When you come to John vii. that is connected with Christ taking a place in glory. What is going to come out by-and-by? Everything will then come out *from glory*, but the Spirit has come out now. It says in the end of Hebrews ix.: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." I have no doubt that refers to Moses and Aaron (Lev. ix. 23); Israel are waiting for the priest to come out as witness that the sacrifice is accepted inside; then they will be blessed; but Christians know the acceptance of the sacrifice before Christ comes out, because it says (chap. x. 15), "whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." The Holy Ghost has come out *to us* as a witness that the sacrifice is accepted inside. "Heavenly light makes all things bright," so that not only can we take up the groans of creation down

here, but I think we ought to be able to minister heavenly light to people. If I went to see sick people as having drunk of Christ I could minister something of heavenly things to them.

J. B—D. Living waters go out of the temple. We should carry healing with us.

T. H. R. In the end of Revelation it says, "Let him that is athirst come." I do not go to a soul and say, If you *go* to Christ you will get the water of life. No; I am there myself, and I say, If you *come* to Christ you will get it. I have heard of the gospel being preached by people who are not converted: I have no doubt they say, Go; but we say, Come. John xx. is rather anticipative.

QUES. Is it more the spirit of sonship?

T. H. R. In John xx. they saw life in a new condition—resurrection life. I think that just brings you to Colossians. They were conscious of the Lord in a new state, altogether beyond death.

S. H. The breathing into them is used in contrast to the creation of Adam.

T. H. R. It should be breathed into them, not breathed on them.

QUES. What is the difference between chapter xx. and chapter vii.?

T. H. R. The one is connected with resurrection and life, the other with ascen-

sion and glory. Chapter xx. took place on earth.

REMARKED. With heaven in view.

T. H. R. But it took place on earth.

REMARKED. It took place in connection with, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."



THE BRAZEN SERPENT, JORDAN AND GILGAL.

(NUM. XXI. 5-9, 16-18; JOSH. III. 2-8, 14-17; v. 2-5,
8-15; COL. II. 8-13, 20; III. 1-6.)

It has been before us already to-day that the only way into blessing is through death, by the death of Christ, by the cross. That means not simply that it is the only ground on which God can take up man for blessing—that is perfectly true: if God takes up man for blessing at all, it must be on the ground that all that he is in the flesh has been set aside judicially. That is only part of the truth—we must travel by the way of the cross ourselves, in order that we may enter into the blessing to which God has called us. You and I have to travel that road that we may enter into the blessing to which God has called us in Christ. If we think of Christ Himself He has gone that way. If He was to associate others with Himself He must go that way. He became Man that He might die, and by death and resurrection He has entered the place where He now is as Man gone up to God in glory, and there He is the living expression of the mind and thought of God for

His people. If that be so we must travel that road. How do we travel that road? It is in the spirit of our minds. We have in our minds to be brought to appreciate the death of Christ in its varied aspects. I want to speak of three of them, typified in the passages I have read.

Canaan for the children of Israel was the land of promise, the place of blessing. God did not take them up merely to deliver them from Egypt and the power of Pharaoh, but to bring them into blessing.

Every one has a history; no one enters on all these things at once. On God's side everything is complete and secure in Christ, but when we come to enter into what is on God's side then it is a matter of history.

The brazen serpent we have had before us already, in which the *state* of man has been judged; we have seen how that man has come under the judgment of God, and has been removed from the eye of God. How did we come to the appreciation of that? The brazen serpent was something every one had to see. The blood in Egypt was what God saw; it was not a question of what they could see, but the blood was the ground on which God could come out for His people as a Saviour God, and on which He could establish His purposes of blessing for them. In the brazen serpent it is not simply a question of what God sees in it, but what I

see. All that comes in in connection with the exposure of the state of man through the testing under law. The Spirit of God does a work in us by which we are made to realise the need of the death of Christ in all its various aspects. We all have to go through these things. Nobody ever did appreciate the death of Christ without going through this testing. As our brother said this afternoon, many have never got out of Romans vii. because they have never got into it. And why have they never got into it? Through want of exercise and purpose. We all have to learn what we are in ourselves, and to realise that death is *upon us*. We have to learn what we are as sinful men. Have we all come to that? Have we seen ourselves to be worthy of death and nothing but death, that death is upon us as the judgment of God?

There is something more serious even than that, I have to learn that death is *in me*. There is the utter incapability of the flesh for good. Man goes on battling with sin till he realises this, and cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There is nothing but death *upon me* and death *in me*: that is the end of the testing. How does relief come? God has taken all this into account. What I have been condemning in myself God has condemned in the death of Jesus. On that ground God can give the Spirit;

on no other ground could it be possible, else it would be to put a sanction on man's flesh. The ground is that He has judged me in all that I was in the flesh, and having done this He has done with it. It is my privilege to reckon myself dead to sin. The Spirit is given that the believer may live in the life of another Man. In the life of that other Man now I can live to God, and that is where I enjoy liberty. That is where liberty comes in, I get living water.

I want to point out, as has been said to-day, that living water is not simply the indwelling of the Spirit. There are many believers to-day who have received the Holy Spirit who know but little of having living water because the Spirit's work in them has been hindered. The living water is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, so that the heart is made responsive to the revelation of God in Christ. It supposes a work of the Spirit in the believer. In John iii. the Lord is the witness, He brought down testimony from heaven. He came down to reveal God, to set forth all that the blessed God is. "What he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." He is the witness there. In chapter iv. He is not the witness: He refers to what He was the witness to. He says to the woman, If you only

knew God in the character of a Giver. He deals with the woman, His hand is upon her, He deals with her to make good the will of God in her. He was dealing with her to make good in her the revelation He had brought down from heaven so that she might become responsive to it, answer to it. The result is she becomes a worshipper. Worship is the response of the heart to all the revelation of God in Christ. In order to this we must know what it is to sit at His feet and hear His word; we must come under His hand. The Spirit bringing home the love of God to our hearts makes us responsive to it, we are formed by the revelation, there is the springing up to everlasting life.

The next point is, what we get in Jordan. Jordan really typifies the death of Christ as that by which we pass out of this world into the scene of life where Christ is. We get the answer to that in Colossians. We get things ministered to us as we really want them. I believe the effect of knowing what Christ has done for us, how He went into all the sorrow and suffering of death to set us free, the effect of that is to awaken affections towards Himself. He becomes the Object of our affections. The apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 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." I am free now. The more I think of His love in dying for me the more free I am, the more I am knit to that blessed Person. Who wants to join Him in spirit where He is? Only those whose hearts are knit to Him. You get a beautiful example of it in Mary Magdalene. He had met with her as Saviour when she was possessed with seven devils and thus endeared Himself to her. When she lost Him she lost everything. I do not believe anybody goes into Canaan if Christ is not more to him than all the world. She had no home, she stood at the grave weeping. Then He said, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." I am not going to join you in your circumstances but you shall join Me in My circumstances. She found Him in resurrection, but she followed Him through death. In spirit she died with Him. That is how it works. The Spirit produces in our hearts desire for Christ. Is Christ more to you than everything in this world, so that you would leave everything here to reach Him and join Him where He is?

Now I come to another point. The first thing Joshua commands them is to circumcise the people. Death has to come home to me. We have the antitype to that in Colossians, "putting off the body of the flesh by the circum-

cision of Christ." What does it mean to put off the body of the flesh? Does every Christian put off the body of the flesh? It is his privilege. When a man is walking after the flesh or making use of its energy, how can such a person talk about putting off the body of the flesh? It comes about in this way, when I find what God has called me to in Christ I find I have something in myself which is a terrible hindrance. The flesh is incapable, it cannot enjoy one of God's things. If a person walks after the flesh it spoils his taste for divine things. It is only in the Spirit I can have to do with Christ and enjoy heavenly things. It is my privilege to put off the flesh, to accept what has been effected for me in the death of Christ; and to renounce it entirely. I do not think we get rid of the reproach of this world till we take this ground with Christ and renounce the flesh once for all. But there comes another point, it has to be kept up. If this is the ground you have taken, what will be the effect? You will certainly be seeking the things where Christ sitteth. There is no life anywhere else. "Our life is hid with Christ in God."

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." The truth has not only to be accepted but it has to be kept up practically. All our weakness comes from the toleration of

the flesh ; there is not the continual self-judgment. There is suffering in connection with it : we have to suffer in the flesh. If I am to live in the life of Christ and in the sphere to which that life belongs, I must be prepared to suffer. “ If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.” If I am to live in the Spirit I must suffer in the flesh. That is where the Spirit of God would lead us and how He would teach us to suffer in the flesh.

F. H. B.



CHRIST TRIUMPHANT.

A WORD IN A DAY OF SURRENDER.

(GEN. II. 15-17; EPH. IV. 9, 10.)

I DESIRE, as the Lord may help, to bring before us a word that may lay hold of us. In attempting to do this, I know very well that if anything is to be effectual it must be something from Christ Himself. While desiring this one feels in touching these scriptures like one of old who felt himself to be "a child." (Jer. i. 6.) If he could say that, how much more can we, in view of the great advance made at the present time (the introduction of Christianity) in contrast to that moment. It was a very different communication that was made to Jeremiah, but as we too come into God's presence, we feel the surpassing greatness of that by which God seeks to affect us at the present time, and as we seek to speak of it we can only say that we feel as children in the presence of it. Yet if it lays hold of us it will transform us and alter the whole condition of things which is in our midst. It is only as the Lord calls us back to that which is peculiar to, and distinctive of, the present moment that we can be in unity with

one another; this alone can give character to us and put us in suitableness to the Lord. There is not a heart but can say, we desire to be suitable to the Lord and to be agreeable to Him. We can only learn what is suitable to Him in Himself. That is the burden of what I have to say, that our hearts and the eyes of our understanding might really be directed to the One in whom alone we can learn what is peculiar to the present moment.

That is why I read the verses in Genesis in connection with those in Ephesians. In both these scriptures we get the situation set forth in the respective heads. It is only as we understand the situation that we can have a common object to bind us together in affection and unity. The only way in which we can understand the position, when God made man, is by seeing the position God set forth in him whom He set at the head of everything: the position had to be learned as it was set forth in Adam. He was created and set in a certain position, and then the terms in which he was to hold the position were given him. The great contrast between Adam and the One who is Head now is that, while Adam was first set in the position and then had the terms presented to him, the One to whom we have to look as Head, and in whom we have to learn everything, passed through all the time of temptation

and trial and all the sorrow (that which was so blessedly brought before us yesterday) of the cross and His pathway here : and thus He was tried and proved in every way *before* the position was given Him. In the one case man, Adam, was tested after the position was given him, and in the other Christ has gone up far above all heavens, but before He went up He was tested, proved and tried in every detail and then the position was accorded to Him. Hence we see that the position is secure. The One who is there, a divine Person, has entered in as Man, but before He entered upon the position He was tested and tried in every way and responded perfectly to the test. Before He entered upon the position He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. It is the place He took as Man in death by way of the cross. He endured the cross, with all the sufferings which have been brought before us, and glorified God in life and in death ; always superior to the enemy.

I would speak of what is collective rather than individual, though both one and the other are founded on that blessed moment when He, the Son of Man, would enter into death, and "descended first into the lower parts of the earth." Why did He descend into the lower parts of the earth? To remove all that lay upon the object of His affection, who was to share with Him in the position He should

afterwards take as the ascended One. "He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." Beloved, what a position! We may think that the position which was accorded to Adam was glorious, but if there was glory connected with that, how much more glorious is the position delineated in our Head! He is supreme there: He is in a position which is unassailable. Adam was in a position which was assailable. Our Head is now in a position which is unassailable. Christ could be assailed when He was here: man could despise Him and spit upon Him: Satan could assault Him; but never more can He be assailed by man or Satan. Christ has ascended up far above all heavens, is supreme there; He holds the position and holds it securely. There never can be a possibility of surrender on His side. Do we see Him there, beloved brethren? Have we ever taken account of the position at the present moment? If we were asked what is the situation at the present moment, what should we answer? The position at the present moment is not on earth, "Christ has ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

The Spirit is given to us from that One who has ascended up on high. In giving us of His Spirit He has not parted with the Spirit which

He received as the ascended Man ; He has given to us of His Spirit, and it is in order that we might know we are united to Him in the position He occupies there. If anything could entrance the heart that has any affection for Christ it would be in the appreciation of the position given to Him. Paul was caught up to the third heaven, but Christ is ascended up far above all heavens. There was never such a situation created before, and the light of this heritage has been revived to us, but the light of it is not enough. Are we in the enjoyment of it by the Spirit of God, of the situation that is set forth for us in our great Head at the present moment ? Are we satisfied with reading about it or do we enjoy union with Him ? We are not merely linked with Him ; a link might be broken. We are united to Him in an indissoluble bond, and that is only set forth in marriage. Union was ever in God's thought for the church and marriage is taken up to give us a thought of what it is to be united to Christ, to set forth the character of the union that exists between the Head who has ascended far above all heavens and His members down here. Does it entrance our hearts to think that the situation which has ever been under the eye of God, the light of which has been revived to us, is that we are united to Christ in that place where He is gone far above all heavens ? He

is to give character to all things from that place where He is, He is to fill all things ! Heaven and earth are to take their character from Him in the world to come ; the whole universe will take its character from Him mediately through the church. Is He filling us now ?

Do we value our heritage ? or like Esau despise it ? What are we doing with it ? The invitation comes from all sides to surrender it. Satan could assail Adam but he cannot now assail Christ ; he can assail the members of Christ and we shall only be inviolable as our eyes are kept by the Spirit of God upon Christ where He is. The assault is not on Him up there but on what is of Him down here. He has entered into a position where He is unassailable, but we are down here, and Satan can assail us, and we shall only be preserved in unity as we have one common Object before us. Whether it be in regard to our relationships as saints, or in regard to service, nothing will hold us in unity but the power of the Spirit of God enabling us to stand in the good of the revelation of God which our Head has made good for us and which is held intact by Him ascended. How it would affect us ! How it would alter us to have that position constantly before us ! Whether as teachers or preachers, how it would alter our whole thoughts and bearing towards each other.

The one word which I desire to abide with every one of our hearts is that the position is set forth alone in Him, the Head, on high. What a wonderful effect it would have! What a stripping off of things from each one of us! How we should find ourselves together! Whilst working in different circles, either as preachers or teachers or otherwise, there would be complete unity if each of us were seeking to give character to our service from the blessed position which is occupied by our glorious Head. What a wonderful position it is! Do we value it?

It is no use ignoring for one moment the condition of things existing amongst us. What is to remedy it? Is it any use finding fault with one another? Nothing will rectify it but turning our eye up to the Head in the position which He has taken, and each one taking character from Him; then the ministry will retain its separating, sober and heavenly character. I will not go into details, but every detail must be governed by that Person and position. Whether as teachers or preachers or whatever service we seek to fulfil, it is only as we address ourselves to that position and to the Head that rectification will be possible and everything adjusted suitably to the Lord. It is the desideratum we all desire. I am sure there is no one here who would wish that strained rela-

tionships should exist; they can only be removed as we get our directions from the Head and He becomes everything to us. He is going to fill all things; meanwhile is He filling us? May we keep our eyes on the Head. He will only fill us with Himself and the things from that place where He is gone. Everything that is formed down here at the present moment is formed in view of that place. The One who is there has given gifts that something may be effected here in accord with Himself and His place. What is being effected here by the Spirit is not to remain here but is going up there. What a character it would give to our service if we carried it out with this before us, how unworldly it would be. Everything that is effected down here, if it is according to Christ, must take its character from Him, and from the place to which it is all going. Let us really be exercised with regard to it. Let us take courage from the present moment and onward. Let us seek that our eyes may be fixed on the One there: let us take character from Him. If Adam had held his position, this scene would, I suppose, have taken character from him. The position *is* held by our Head. The surrender is here, not there, and our state proves that there has been very great surrender. If we are to be maintained in unity, we must have but one common object before each one and we shall

labour to maintain a testimony in accord with the Head. We all know the call there is to us to surrender the position, and this proves that Satan sees some feeble testimony to it and desires to submerge it. Why I desire that every one should have the position before him is that there may be no surrender down here. The proof that the position is not before us is that many are prepared to surrender it. It is precious in the eyes of the Lord that we should hold the position. It will not be an easy path, it will bring us into conflict; but if we desire to be pleasing to the Lord, to be agreeable to Him, we shall desire in the power which He accords to us from that place where He is by His Spirit to hold to the position, by His grace.

I just quote one word from the prophet Jeremiah, shewing the path which is precious in the eyes of the Lord at the present moment, and which will preserve us from surrendering the position. Many conflicts have come upon us from time to time. Every conflict which has come upon us has been an assault upon the position to cause us to surrender—to cause us to come down to a lower level—and many, alas, have done so. It does not make any difference how the assault came, each has been an effort to induce us to go with the mass, and virtually deny that the Head has ascended up far above

all heavens that *He* might fill all things. If we see the importance of this, and that every conflict that has come upon us has been an assault upon that position, I would ask in all affection and earnestness, are we prepared lightly to give it up?

In the days of Jeremiah there were those who had departed from their place of privilege, backsliding Israel; but what does the Lord say to the prophet? "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." Are we prepared to amalgamate the precious and the vile at the present moment? *Never!* If we see the position as set forth in the Lord ascended up far above all things. But Satan would ever seek to get the old man recognised in some way. We shall cease to be His mouthpiece unless we separate the precious from the vile. "Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them." That is a very seasonable word for us. If there be an assault made at the present moment, let us seek in humility and self-judgment to be strengthened in the position, to hold to the position and to continue in His grace to separate the precious from the vile. Beloved, oh that we might listen to that word: "Let them return unto thee; *but return not thou unto them.*" (Jer. xv. 19.)

May the Lord thus keep our eyes upon Him,

the great Head, and that we may see the great characteristics are all set forth in Him. I will just read a verse or two in Romans to illustrate that. We must keep the Head before us. If for one moment there is the slightest separation between us and the Head, we lose everything; as one we loved, but who has been now long with the Lord, used to say, If but a sheet of tissue paper separates us and the Head, all vitality is lost. If we give up the Head for one moment, all vitality is gone and a lifeless condition comes in; we can only derive from Him the characteristics which are to mark us at the present moment and maintain us in life.

I just quote from Romans v. 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." There we have the great features of what came to pass in the first man, Adam, set before us. Now when we come to Him who is "out of heaven," in verse 18 it says, "so by one righteousness towards all men for justification of life." (New Trans.) That is what is set forth in Him on the individual side. Then you get a similar thought in 1 Corinthians xv. It is confirmed there again, "For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead."

Now just one practical word as to our having the true position constantly before us. We were speaking of deliverance a good deal yesterday. Deliverance will liberate us in a practical way so that we are free from ourselves and free to look out to Christ where He is. That is the way the cross affects us. He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. What does this mean for us? The practical effect of understanding this and the new position is, that we are maintained in deliverance from all that is connected with the first man, and new things come before us, so that it can be said, "your having put off according to the former conversation the old man, which corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts; and being renewed in the spirit of your mind;" this contemplates growth in spiritual apprehension of the new things that have come in, in connection with the Head in heaven who is to fill all things. Then He begins to fill us. How does He fill us? "And [your] having put on the new man, which according to God is created in truthful righteousness and holiness." (Eph. iv. 22-24. N. T.) What a transformation for us! I only just refer to these two thoughts, having put off the old and having put on the new. Do you think if we have put off the old man we shall be seeking to use him at all in service? Never!

The practical effect of having our eye on Him who has ascended up far above all heavens is "having put off the old and having put on the new." Who is in the light of this? The church is in the light of this, and I suppose before we can come practically into the apprehension of it in power in our souls, what is presented in Ephesians ii. is the way we must go, in order that we may be prepared to see Him in the place where He is gone. Chapter ii. closes by telling us who is put in the light of it. "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit." That is what is gathered together as the effect of the glad tidings. This is the effect produced in these saints by the reception of the glad tidings and the Spirit's work. The church is viewed as united to Christ, and supposed to be in the blessed light of the position which He has, and as united to Him seeking to hold to it as that which is more precious than life; on the holding of which all our relations with one another depend. He has ascended up far above all heavens, but He descended first into the lower parts of the earth. How it touches our affections! Then in the light of that, if we have put off the old man and are being renewed in the spirit of our minds, how can we seek to

use anything down here to effect that which God proposes to do for His own satisfaction.

I desire that our eyes may be directed by the Spirit of God to the One who is there. As we are held there in the power of affection to Him who is worthy of that position, and who is to fill all things, we are not occupied with one another. The result will be that things are not only rightly held there, but in some measure they are rightly held here, and we are not moved away from the position. The Head will never be moved from His position. May we each be held, so that we do not surrender it ; for His name's sake.

S. H.



IMMANUEL.

(ISA. VIII. 12-20.)

OUR brother has just been speaking to us about the situation, and having our eyes upon the position which has been made good in Christ, and I want to say a few words in connection with the scripture which I have read upon "direction" and being kept for that position. We have in the two chapters (Isa. vii., viii.) three things: history, prophecy and the intermediate place which the Lord occupies with His disciples, while waiting until by-and-by every good word of God will be established and have its fulfilment. The keynote of all this we have in the word "Immanuel."

In the beginning of chapter vii. it says certain things "came to pass in the days of Ahaz." It is important that we should have in our minds what kind of man Ahaz was, and the circumstances of the day in which he lived, in order that we may understand the meaning of that which the prophet is addressing to him. Just to recall to our minds the character of the man we have here, I would ask you to turn to 2 Chronicles xxviii. It would be hard to find

another place where Israel is spoken of as being in a lower state. This was the man and these were the circumstances connected with him at the time the prophet addresses him. At this time there was a confederacy made to destroy Judah—in fact, to use the expression we have had this morning, to wipe out the situation, and the question was, was it to be done? In presence of their enemies their hearts tremble and bend like a tree before the wind. They did not know where to turn to; they had no resource. The prophet comes and says, You have got a resource, do not be afraid of these men, they cannot harm you. God sends a message to you, and He is going to remove these men and wipe them out clean, and He will maintain you in the position in which He has placed you. Moreover, God says, as it were, I mean what I say, ask a sign of Me as proof thereof. But Ahaz would not trust the Lord, and so the Lord sends a second time, saying, “Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.” Ask of Me what thou wilt; I will be tested to any extent, from the lowest to the highest, from an atom to a solar system. Call upon Me by all the forces that are in creation; test Me. Now that was a *carte blanche* and should have encouraged Ahaz; but he said, “I will not ask, neither will I tempt the

Lord." No, he could not do so because he was not near Him; he had no true knowledge of Him and therefore he had no confidence in Him. But we are told in the Book of Kings what he did instead; he sent down to the king of Assyria. On the surface he was most religious; at the bottom he was most sacrilegious and iniquitous. He said, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." Now the Lord says, "I will give you a sign instead." In verse 13 the prophet says, "Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." That was a wonderful sign, surpassing all human conception—the ridicule of unbelief to-day. It is the beginning of the gospel of Matthew. That gospel introduces to us the King and sets up the kingdom in its power and glory. It gives us, amongst others, two titles of Christ. First, "Jesus," Joshua, the great Captain of salvation to bring them into the land; and then "His name shall be called Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us"; and the whole gospel of Matthew rests upon those two titles, including also and protecting the church which He builds, thereby the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it.

In Isaiah viii. 7, 8 we have the second attack

of the king of Assyria in the latter days: "He shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." The prophet so addresses Him, as much as to say, Have you forgotten your name, O Immanuel? You gave it as a sign, and now Thy land, O Immanuel, is to be overflowed by this scourge! But God cannot renounce what He is, and when He is called upon by the name He had given as a pledge, at once He responds (verse 9), "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us." He must be as good as His word.

It is an immense relief to the soul in any measure to reach God; to leave phenomena and to reach the source; to get from the visible to the Invisible. Let me ask some of my younger brethren here: Have your souls ever reached God? Have you ever tried to define in your minds the undefinable? Have you ever travelled in your souls to reach Him?

Because, remember, Christ died the Just for the unjust to bring us on that journey. "He died the Just for the unjust to bring us to God." In the beginning God created everything. He is the First; He is the Last; He is the self-existent One. When you come to God your soul has reached rock bottom. "Now," He says, "that is the answer I have given; that is to you as a sign." I often say to my soul in my poor feeble way, "My soul, wait thou only upon God." I like to read that verse which says, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." He will establish everything that He has written in His word; He will establish every desire He has begotten in your heart, and more, He will go beyond them, He will satisfy Himself. He will rest in His love absolutely and undisturbedly and everlastingly. We need not be a bit afraid.

In one of the Psalms we read, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Every good and blessed word of God will be established by His almighty power.

There are here then the two things: history

and prophecy. We are not in history; it is past. We are not in prophecy; it is to come. Then where are we? We are here (Isaiah viii. 11), and between the two points, history and prophecy, Christ takes up the line of things set forth in these verses: "For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." (Vers. 11-16.) That is the place Christ occupies in a certain way to-day until the moment comes by-and-by when every purpose of God will be established. Now, He says, in verse 18, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel." It is a very wonderful position that we occupy: we are in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. He is waiting until by-and-by when He will arise and come forth with power

and establish everything according to the thoughts and purposes of His heart. In the meantime He is at the right hand of Him who is in the heavens. Now, He says, "Behold, I and the children." Have our hearts entered into the wonderful nature of the place that Christ occupies, sitting at the right hand of God, waiting? And if Christ is waiting we have to wait too. We do not like it sometimes. Then meanwhile "when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" (Ver. 19.) All those things are going on in the meantime. All those bewitching things are brought in to divert the mind from what is set before it—from the position that has been created for us. What then is the directing word? "To the law and to the testimony." There it is. We have got it written in the word. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." To the law and to the testimony, and by the present glory of Christ the word of prophecy is confirmed, a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in our hearts, the special hope of the coming of Christ for the church.

That prophecy should drive us out of this

world and keep us away from what is here is good and right and proper ; that Christ should win our hearts and affections to Himself where He is is better ; and meanwhile Christ is the bright and morning Star for us, and for Him we wait to take us to be with Himself. Not one good word of God shall fail ; everything shall be established ; we are not in fear. " Immanuel " is the sign He gave, and it is the assurance that everything will be established according to His will. We have only to wait in patience until He comes forth to make good everything according to His word, not one jot or tittle of which shall fail, however little it may seemingly be fulfilled at the present time.

E. C.



READING.

(EPH. IV. 8-16.)

A. E. P. I thought it might be helpful to be clear about the unity in chapter ii., and the unity which was referred to this morning, that we might see how "the unity of the faith" comes in.

W. J. What do you mean by the unity in chapter ii.?

A. E. P. "To make in himself of twain one new man."

G. R. Would you say that has come to pass in Christ risen? There you find another order of man in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

F. H. B. Then out of twain He makes one new man.

G. R. It is no longer two but one, and that one is the new man.

F. H. B. Perhaps it would help, Mr. H., if you briefly mentioned the points which you said led up to this.

S. H. We are not reading chapter ii.

F. H. B. It would help if you mentioned the points without going into it very much. I suppose what we have in the fourth chapter is largely based on what we have in the second.

S. H. The object of the second chapter is really to prepare the state by which we can apprehend what is presented in the One who has ascended far above all heavens.

F. H. B. Is that by the work of God?

S. H. Yes, also by the way in which we are prepared to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, looking at new things entirely.

T. H. R. I think there is one thing that is important in considering Ephesians that I am not quite sure whether people are clear about, that is, you begin with God, man being dead in sins. It has often been said, if man is looked at as alive in his sins God will bring him into death: that was the line which was a good deal taken up yesterday. When you come to Ephesians you do not begin with man, man is dead in sins; you begin with God, and He is not seen as acting for the relief of man, though of course man is relieved, but to accomplish His own counsels. You must start with that else you fail to grasp Ephesians.

W. J. So death is made to yield the Man of God's purpose.

T. H. R. In reality the point is God quickening. God has come in to quicken that which was dead. In Ephesians man is looked at as dead, so that God acts not simply to meet the need of man but to accomplish His own purpose.

J. S. A. In saying "death is made to yield the Man of God's purpose," I suppose you mean that Christ is first seen as dead.

W. J. Yes.

T. H. R. You do not see Christ *going into* death in Ephesians, but as having gone there. The first thing you see is, that being here He has gone down to the lowest parts of the earth; then God comes in and raises Him from the dead. That is what you mean by death yielding the Man of God's purpose. It was not that He did not come down from heaven, and that He was not always the Man of God's counsels, but in this epistle He is seen first in death.

F. H. B. So death becomes an occasion for the display of the glory of God. God quickens out of death. You get that thought in John xi. when the Lord speaks of Lazarus, "This sickness is not unto death, but that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

W. J. So that you have in Ephesians the great thoughts of God.

F. H. B. Yes, God is the prominent object before the mind. I have often thought when reading Ephesians I am in a scene where God is all in all.

J. B—D. I suppose that is the fact in Romans, only on another line, God becomes everything. "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." We make our boast in God.

T. H. R. Really in Ephesians God begins according to His eternal counsel and according to all that was before Him ere this world came into being. It has often been said that Adam was not in God's mind first: Christ was ever in God's mind and all this counsel was there in Him. How it would have been brought about if it had not been for the fall is useless for us to talk about. God allowed the fall to come in. Evil having entered into the world it was necessary that the whole question of good and evil should be solved before the eternal purpose could come out. Now Christ having gone up to that place of purpose, the counsel of God is disclosed and the whole of the blessing purposed of God in man lies beyond the question of good and evil.

S. H. It is very important to see what you were drawing our attention to, that God works in a scene where all are viewed as being dead in trespasses and sins. We get a kind of parallel at the beginning when God moved on the face of the waters. God moved in a scene that was chaotic; then He brought forth creation and put a man in it. Now death rests on every one. If therefore any are to enter into what God is going to effect in the Man of His purpose there must be a new being who is capable of understanding this; so there must be quickening. That is the object of quickening. We may have the doctrine of quickening, but

we want to see the object of it before we begin to appreciate it. Man must be made to live in relation to the condition into which Christ has entered as risen.

F. H. B. The object of quickening then is that there may be a being to enter into God's counsels.

W. J. Will you say a little about chapter ii. as descriptive of the new state?

T. H. R. I am not quite sure that I should use the word "new state" here. It is more that God begins and brings out of death a new man according to His purpose and counsel.

S. H. A new man and a new world.

T. H. R. In speaking of a new state you a little connect it with what is old, but here you begin entirely anew. God always has worked from the fall onward. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." I have no doubt that all the way down there was a secret thread of purpose running underneath the whole government of this world, from the fall throughout all His ways and dealings with man and while He was working out the question of good and evil; but there is no question of good and evil to settle when God quickens what is dead.

S. H. That has all been settled before the new Head takes His place.

T. H. R. That is my point. In filling all

things it is not merely that they are filled with the glory of the Man set up in purpose before the world began, but that Man having gone into the lower parts of the earth is going to fill everything with redemption glory. New creation stands in redemption glory, so that we shall never forget that everything is based on the death and bloodshedding of Christ right through eternity, right on to the new heavens and the new earth.

F. H. B. That you may say is taken for granted. He just refers to it in this epistle.

QUES. He has "ascended up far above all heavens that he may fill all things." Does that Man fill all things with the revelation of God?

T. H. R. Yes, that is true; it was all effected by His going down to the lower parts of the earth. God will be all in all, but then God has come out in redemption, and everything is founded on redemption and so can never fail.

S. H. The purpose of God is founded on it. He can never forget it, and we can never forget it.

J. B—D. That is what came out when He descended, and He has gone up to fill all things with that which came out in the lower parts of the earth. Then the next move is the gifts. Is it for the building up of the body, or for the formation of the body?

T. H. R. For both. The first thing is the perfecting of the saints.

F. H. B. The saints individually. Is it not really the way by which Christ is filling the church now?

T. H. R. Yes, that is true; He fills it, but He forms it in Himself.

REMARKED. He is going to fill all things; but that which is being filled to-day is the church.

T. H. R. Yes; but it is all with Himself.

J. B—D. Is it not peculiar that the gathering of souls seems to be left out? You would not have the saints if they were not gathered.

S. H. That is not the point in Ephesians. When you come to the edifying of the body of Christ it is to put saints together. We are supposed to understand all that has taken place in Romans. Here it is not how they are gathered out, but why they are gathered out, therefore He sets Christ in that wonderful position. Christ gives gifts, and there is power down here to form the new man in moral correspondence to the place which He has up there. When therefore we get that thought with regard to the gifts it alters our thoughts entirely. Our thoughts have to be reconstructed as to everything. God works in an orderly way, and if we do not we bring in confusion. We have to get back to what God

is working for and how He proposes to effect it. Then we shall be working orderly and there will be perfect unity. We shall not be seeking to get out of the way of each other, but shall realise how necessary we are to each other.

F. H. B. We are made to feel more and more how we need every one. We cannot do one without the other. We should be courting in every possible way the company of one another.

S. H. We are very necessary to each other. Christ has taken up each one of us in some way or other to carry out that which He has in view. One class of servants would not think that they are more honourable than another. If we do not get "the position" before us we do not work for a common end. That supposes that you have the mind of God as to His object. If we have a common end each would be working in view of what God has effected in the One ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things.

T. H. R. The wonderful thing is that God is going to fill everything with glory by means of Man, not the divine glory in itself, that could not be seen, but with the glory of God in the face or person of Jesus Christ. Every moral trait is coming out in Man. Even angels can look upon the glory of God coming out in Man.

REMARKED. They do. "He was seen of angels."

T. H. R. Therefore it gives me a very great idea of what God has formed man for.

S. H. That is the great importance of the work of redemption, because what God is going to fill the world with is the glory founded on and revealed in redemption rather than the glory of absolute deity.

W. H. How would the two glories of John xvii. come in? The glory in which we share and the glory in which we behold Him? Is the latter deity or redemption?

T. H. R. One, I think, is displayed glory, which the saints share. There are not two glories in a sense, but there is displayed glory, which is more connected with the kingdom. Every glory belongs to Christ, but "my glory" the church will admire and see, but we cannot share it.

S. H. It is one thing for there to be a glory which we shall see, and another thing for there to be a glory which is to fill the universe, in which the saints can share.

T. H. R. You get two things in John: you get in chapter i., "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." I have no doubt that was veiled in the tabernacle of His flesh save to His own; what we were singing this morning:

“ Veil'd Thy glory, yet 'twas witnessed
By Thine own while here below.”

They very little looked inside the tabernacle and saw that glory. That is one aspect of His glory. Then you come to chapter ii. where He turns the water into wine, and it says, “ This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory.” There you get another aspect, which is a sort of pledge of that which will fill this world with happiness by-and-by. All put under Christ, and Christ's glory will be over it. The other is the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, and we behold it and see how the Son as Man is loved.

QUES. Is not that the peculiar privilege of the church ?

T. H. R. All those in resurrection will see it.

REMARKED. It is a great point to see who those are who do behold the glory, not those who do not.

W. H. Is it deity glory ?

T. H. R. No, no.

A. E. P. It is the glory of the eternally loved One of the Father. The disciples heard the voice out of the cloud, “ This is my beloved Son.”

S. H. There is a glory we share with Him, but there is also a glory which is peculiar to Him.

W. J. Will you say a few words about verse 12?

T. H. R. The first great thought is the perfecting of the saints, and it is a great comfort to see that God thinks of every single soul. There are three subjects in scripture: first, the question of the soul's individual relation to God, which is in principle the same in all ages; then the whole plan of God's ways and dealings with the present scene which He created, that is taken up in Israel; thirdly, His eternal counsels and purposes which come out in the church. These three subjects are the whole testimony of scripture. In all ages there was the thought of the soul's individual relation to God, and that on the ground of redemption, only you cannot get the thought of perfecting the saints till Christ is in glory. "Perfecting" is fully fitted out. I think it is the effect of the glory of Christ upon you.

J. B—D. Yes, but down here.

F. H. B. You are really fully qualified to be engaged with those things that are connected with Christ in glory.

T. H. R. There are two words used here in the original. The word "for" ("for the perfecting of the saints") is *πρός*, it gives you the idea of the thing immediately before you; the other is *εἰς*, with a view to. The first thing immediately before the apostle is that every

saint may be perfected. You would not fit into your niche in glory if you were not.

A. E. P. You would not fit into your place in the body.

W. G. B. It was said at Quemerford a year or two ago that it was articulation, a word used by surgeons.

T. H. R. You get it in another place, "Be perfected," in 2 Corinthians xiii., that is, fully fitted out.

A. E. P. It was suitable to their relationship there—"be perfect," "be of good comfort," "be of one mind," etc.

S. H. When we get the thought, "for the perfecting of the saints," it shews how necessary the saints are to us. They may not be accessible to us, but I have to keep them all in mind.

T. H. R. So you get, "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the free giving of the Christ."

W. H. Are the gifts used to this end, to the perfecting of the saints?

T. H. R. That is the first object of the work of the ministry. It is not putting a thing down in front of us, like you might put a plate of fruit down in front of children and say, Help yourselves. God would have it ministered to the saints, so the ministry is a most important thing.

F. H. B. Mr. Darby connects it with the "edifying of the body of Christ;" he only puts a comma between.

W. H. Would not the work of the ministry cover a larger ground than the gifts, and be that which every joint supplies?

T. H. R. I think here he is speaking of the gifts. It is important because the gift comes in in connection with the great fact that He has led captivity captive, and therefore it has often been said that nothing can stand against a gift. I might go and talk to a soul and quote some text without any result; an evangelist comes along and says the same text, and the soul gets blessing. Satan cannot stand against it.

F. H. B. Because it is the expression of the power of the ascended Man.

S. H. All that supposes that we keep in view the position. If we do not work in regard to the position we resort to other methods. I suppose "with a view to the work of the ministry" is taking up the thing in detail.

T. H. R. Yes.

H. D'A. C. What is the gain of the fitting together of the saints?

T. H. R. I do not think you can take it in that way. Every saint is to be fully fitted out. The great thing is I want him as an articulation of the body, as an articulation of Christ, not merely as a saved sinner.

S. H. There was an expression used here last year, that the thought in the body is a vitality, there is the flow of life and every one is fitted into his place. Therefore there is the proper articulation of every member. That comes in in connection with the edifying of the body of Christ.

QUES. Is the ministry of the Epistle to the Corinthians an illustration of this perfecting, "our desire is your perfecting"?

ANSWER. Yes, it is the same thought.

E. H. C. Why are pastors and teachers put together?

T. H. R. I do not know. The apostles, prophets and evangelists are put alone, and then it says, "some, pastors and teachers." They seem to go together. The Lord has put them together. They are the ones that come after the evangelists.

S. H. The first thing is "for the perfecting of the saints"; then when it goes on to take it up in detail, it is "with a view to the *work* of the ministry." That is, each one taking it up in detail.

T. H. R. I think your thought is dwelling upon the word "*work*."

H. D'A. C. Does the perfecting of the saints lead to all that, or are the gifts given to that end?

T. H. R. Oh, the gifts are given for that.

A. E. P. The question is always rising whether it is functional ministry, or the ministry of certain persons?

T. H. R. It has been remarked, and I think it is true, that the gifts are not said to be given from the Head, but from the exalted Man. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men," or in the Man. It is a most important thing (what Mr. Stoney has often said in this room) that God does not send angels to help us, but He sends men, and He conducts men through the path of tribulation. No one really knows how to minister till he knows something of the tribulations of Christ, and partakes of the afflictions of the gospel. We may minister truth but not effectually till God takes us in hand, like Moses, and puts us through sufferings so that we may know what it all means because we have been through it, and we are able to help others because we have been helped ourselves.

S. H. There is another thing Mr. Stoney used to say in connection with that; no man ought to speak of anything unless he has proved it. There is great danger in speaking about things we have not proved. There is no unction or power with what we say unless we have proved its reality ourselves.

T. H. R. I think we all learn the things to

begin with. I mean, God teaches us them ; then He puts us through the proving afterwards.

S. H. That is when we become useful to others.

T. H. R. I do not think anybody arrives at a point without exercise, like a boy learning to swim, he flounders about and by-and-by he says, I have got it ; so God brings me to a point where I get an impression of Christ, I may not know how to use it then, but when I have got it God puts me through circumstances where I learn to use it.

G. R. I should like to ask why, after the fact is stated in verse 8 that having ascended up on high He has led captivity captive and He gives gifts to men, then, before He speaks of the gifts, these two verses (9 and 10) come in between?

T. H. R. I think that is important because the power of Satan has to be met, then He gives the gifts.

G. R. Yes ; my point is you have these two verses before the gifts are named.

A. E. P. The hindrance is removed.

T. H. R. Verse 8 is a quotation, and He is shewing in the next two verses that the same Person that ascended, descended first, and then the object of His going on high. The great thought is that He might fill all things.

W. J. The key to the position is Psalm lxviii.

T. H. R. That He has gone up on high.

W. J. God has been pleased to put the pearl of Psalm lxviii. here and give it a new setting. He has put it in the middle of Ephesians. It is the key to the psalm, and we have the key to Ephesians in the quotation.

A. E. P. Mr. Rochester's point is why do these two verses come in there; why did He descend first into the lower parts of the earth? The point was to clear the road.

S. H. I think that is the point where our affections are drawn out. He does not give them in an arbitrary way, but He gives them on the ground of the redemption which He has effected.

G. R. Does not that keep the Person before us? You have got to the source. We have not got the gifts before us but the Person and the place.

W. J. What is the force of the unity of the faith?

T. H. R. My own impression is that faith and knowledge go together. The unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, I think, have one governing thought, that is, the Son of God. The faith of the church is that Christ is the Son of God; it is not only that He is the Christ, He is that, but the great point is that He is the Son of God.

S. H. I think a great deal hangs on that. In Matthew xvi. the great point is that the church is built upon the Son of the living God rather than the Son of man. All that is in connection with Him as Son of man is in abeyance for the moment, and refers more to the earth. The great point now is the Son of God, but if we come to the knowledge of the Son of God we apprehend that He has come into view, and there is a new order of things entirely depending upon Him. Everybody believes Jesus is the Son of God as a matter of christian knowledge, but what lies behind is that He is the Centre of a living system in which we have to live and get the victory over the world.

T. H. R. The proof of His being the Son of God is that He could handle death. No mere man could touch death and turn it into life.

S. H. There is another point in connection with the parenthesis, "He that descended is the *same* also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." His Person is unchanged, though He died, He is suitable in every way for the new position as the ascended Man.

T. H. R. In 1 John v. it speaks of His coming by water and blood; nobody can come by water and blood but the Son of God.

F. H. B. That is why we get so much in

the Apostle Paul of the Son of God ; he spoke so much of Him in that way. He, began with that, " it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me." When he began to preach, he preached that Jesus was the Son of God. It is really the foundation on which the church is built up.

T. H. R. If you take one of the old types : a man could bring his sacrifice, and he could touch death in this way that he could kill the sacrifice, but he could do nothing with it after that ; the priest must do it. He could not sprinkle the blood or put the victim on the altar ; the priest must come in to deal with death, and turn death into acceptance, life and blessing. Christ could do that, and therefore He is going to fill the world with redemption glory. Who could do that but the Son of God ?

S. H. That is how it comes out in connection with the resurrection of Lazarus. The Lord says, " I am the resurrection and the life." What is inherent in Him is resurrection and life. Death only came in with Him incidentally in connection with redemption, thus He could deal with death because He was the resurrection and the life.

W. J. So the descending and ascending bring out clearly that He is the Son of God.

The gates of hell could not prevail against Him.

S. H. If we are in the light of that, the gates of hell will not prevail against us. The gates represent the strength of a place, so the gifts are commensurate with the position the ascended Man has taken. Nothing can stand against a gift.

A. E. P. Now what is the unity?

T. H. R. I think if we go through scripture, the moment we come to the Son's relationship to the Father it lies outside of all that fallen man can conceive. They could in a way understand Messiah's relationship with God, but even the disciples could not understand His relationship with the Father. When the Lord said, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world," they answered, "we believe that thou camest forth from God." They did not understand His relationship with the Father at all. The moment you come to the revelation of the Father you come to a scene which is now plainly opened out by the Son, and is entirely outside the whole order of things here. It is in connection with that line of things you come to unity.

S. H. If we all had that one Person in another scene before us, what a wonderful unity would be produced then!

W. J. He dwells by the Spirit in the affec-

tions of His people that there may be an answer down here to what is there: that produces unity.

J. B—D. I suppose there is a similar thought where it says in the first Epistle of John, “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

T. H. R. That is the peculiar faith of the church, what you may call christian faith, and that is where Paul and John touch one another.

F. H. B. Nothing but what is of that is the faith, and the great object of ministry is to bring every one to that faith.

T. H. R. It is not merely to bring them to the faith of the Christ, but to the faith of the Son of God.

G. R. Is it not in contrast in the first Epistle of John to the antichrist denying the Father and the Son?

T. H. R. You get two things there, “Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son.” It is both the Jewish and the christian revelation, and the antichrist denies both.

S. H. You get this very beautifully illustrated in the way the Lord leads the man in John ix.: he is gradually led outside every circle down here until he finds himself in the company of the Son of God. He practically comes to the

unity of the faith ; he got his victory, liberty and salvation in the knowledge of the Son of God.

F. H. B. I think if each one came to the same point we should be in unity.

J. B—D. You get the same thought in John x. : "I know those that are mine, and am known of those that are mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father."

W. J. Chapter ix. is an example of chapter viii. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

T. H. R. If the Son makes you free He takes you into His own things.

E. C. Might this verse read, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, that is, the knowledge of the Son of God"? Is it the same thought?

T. H. R. No, not exactly.

E. C. Are they different things?

T. H. R. I think they are really different. Knowledge there is the full recognition of Him. The faith of the church does not exactly centre in Christ as the Jew would know Him, but in the Son of God, which lies outside the whole scene here. Then I come to the full recognition of Christ as the Son of God. There you come to a full-grown man.

A. E. P. "At the full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

What does that involve? Is it the individual or the whole assembly?

T. H. R. I think it is individual, but we *all* come.

A. E. P. Is it something you reach now?

T. H. R. I do not suppose it will ever come out fully till glory, still it is the object of ministry down here.

S. H. You anticipate what Mr. Darby so beautifully describes as the "unveiled mystery." It is unveiled to us down here.

T. H. R. You get the "faith" and "the knowledge of the *Son of God*," but "the measure of the stature of the fulness of the *Christ*." You never could come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Son of God, but of the fulness of the Christ, because Christ is the anointed Man, and the gifts will be continued until that moment. The gifts here are in connection with *the counsel of God*, Christ, the Man of His counsel, being at God's right hand, and therefore they go right on to the end. When you come to the responsibility of the church down here, as in Corinthians, a number of the gifts have lapsed because the church was not competent to maintain them: she had failed. Here the gifts are viewed in connection with God's purpose, where all centres in Christ, and the responsibility of the church does not come in.

S. H. It is very interesting to see the object for which all this divine teaching is necessary, leading us on to the knowledge of divine Persons as they are presented to us, so that we might be able to discriminate between error and truth. I find we have to go a certain course before we can distinguish between error and truth; we have to be brought to the knowledge of the Son of God, and we have to grow up to wise discretion to be able to distinguish between error and truth.

W. J. There would be no standard otherwise.

T. H. R. I think there is another thing. The Apostle John gives us a test that the simplest soul can take up. I may find a very elaborate putting out of a thing, but I miss Christ in it, there is not the confession of Christ. If Christ is not prominent, I say that will not do; I do not find the Christ I know there.

A. E. P. He has a value for Christ to enable him to do that.

T. H. R. The youngest soul has got a test.

S. H. That would be spiritual instinct. He has got the unction. Here it is rather more than that. This is spiritual intelligence, we are grown up and able to discriminate.

J. B—D. In the Epistle of John we have also to hear the apostles; we always have

scripture, but a person may not be able to handle scripture.

S. H. There is spiritual instinct in every simple, true soul having the unction, but what we are looking at now is what will stand us in good stead at the present moment. It supposes that we will not rest satisfied with spiritual instincts only, but that we want to get our senses exercised to discern good and evil. The babe has an unction from the Holy One and knows all things, but should not remain a babe.

F. H. B. The ability to handle scripture is really the knowledge of the Son of God: "in order that we may be no longer babes."

QUES. How are we to understand the word "babes" there?

T. H. R. I do not think the word "babe" there is the same as "little children" in John's Epistle.

F. H. B. No, it is in contrast to a full-grown man.

T. H. R. I think you have to remember one thing and that is that Christianity is a full-grown system (if I may use the word system), because it starts from Christ in glory, therefore it must be all perfection.

S. H. Christianity stands in contrast to all the systems of men. It has started with sufficient to carry it right through to the end. It meets every exigency which comes along. The

principles upon which it has started are sufficient to carry it right through.

T. H. R. They come from heaven. What we had yesterday is very important as to *life*. I do not like the word system. We have left system and all that is systematic, and have come into the power of *life*.

QUES. Do you get the definition of the system in 1 John iv., "we have known and believed the love that God hath to us"?

REMARKED. You get a divine harmony in Christianity, that is what I mean by system.

T. H. R. I might talk of the vegetable system and say, I see the systematic growth of a tree: I may cut it into certain shapes, but that is not the power of life.

J. B—D. Take the old order, there must be a system of relationships.

T. H. R. Well, I do not like the word system in connection with what is living. The thing to come out down here is the expression of Christ in His body; you could not put that down as a system.

QUES. Would the word order do?

T. H. R. That might be better. He brings us to what was mentioned before, that there might be something down here which answers to what there is in Christ in heaven.

W. J. The body is all in function now; it edifies itself.

F. H. B. The body is the vessel in which Christ lives, and therefore it is that which is here for the display of Christ.

H. D'A. C. Why does it say "He gave," not He gives, in connection with the gifts?

J. B—D. Has He not given them once for all?

REMARKED. Some one said that these gifts continue.

T. H. R. "Till we all come." I think we have to remember that scripture never supposes things going on beyond the present generation. The virgins that went to sleep were the virgins that awoke. It does not contemplate going beyond the life of a man. God knew things would be lengthened out.

S. H. It is important to see that the present time is hardly a dispensation but an interval.

REMARKED. The gifts are given for the day God has in view.

W. J. Is not that most important, "the edifying of itself in love"?

S. H. I think that is the point. If we are established in love we shall know what it is to yield to one another, and bear all things.

W. J. In a kind of way the point is reached where ministry is no longer needed; the body edifies itself.

T. H. R. That is another idea from ministry: there everything comes from the Head;

in ministry everything is from the anointed Man.

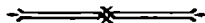
S. H. Even the person who has a gift has a place in the body.

T. H. R. It gives you this idea, there is everything in the body by which it can build itself up. After all this is the real secret of unity.

S. H. It is built up in the divine nature. If we love one another we shall be in unity. If we do not love one another there is an evil principle at work as in Galatians, and then there will be biting and devouring one another.

F. H. B. I have no doubt that is the real thing; loving one another is where we are short. "Holding the truth in love."

T. H. R. It is being truthful in love, hardly holding the truth.



THE SUPPLY OF THE SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST.

(LUKE IV. 16-19; X. 21-42; XI. 1-13; PHIL. I. 8-21.)

I DESIRE that nothing may fall from my lips that would in any way lessen the power of what we have had already before us in these meetings. My thought is to take up one or two things practically, and a little in detail in regard to the place the Lord Jesus Christ has taken, and the position He occupies at the right hand of God, and to refer to the abundance and sufficiency of the supply for all those who love His name and who desire to go on with Him.

In Luke iv. that blessed One comes forth; He is the sent One. The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Him because He has sent Him, sent Him to reach man where man was, and to do away with all the ruin and the misery; "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Everything that was requisite for man was there; and we must remember the character of the people to whom He comes. The blessed Son of the

Father's love, the Vessel of the divine good-pleasure has been saluted from heaven; heaven has been opened upon Him, and the Holy Ghost abides on Him. It is all in view of God's pleasure and what God will have. The people who were to be drawn to Him at that moment were a people characterised by sins in the sight of God, and by oppression and the domination of the evil one as regards themselves, and it needed that He should come if they were to be set free.

All this is true; but it is of the utmost importance for us to see what the Lord Jesus had before Him. It was not only to save the sinful man, heal the brokenhearted, &c., but also to "preach the acceptable year of the Lord." We have been hearing about that wonderful position which He holds as the exalted Man; and it is not only that He holds the position for us, but (far above that) He holds it for God; He was here to bring in everything for God—"The restitution of all things"—that which will come to pass in the fulness of times through and in the Christ. The need of man is pressing, our need is pressing; but beyond all this and yet linked up with all this the blessed Lord Jesus Christ has come to bring to pass everything that shall be for the pleasure of God. The Father has in view the glory of His Son, His exalta-

tion, and that He should have a company suitable to the place He has taken and suited to His own heart of love. The beloved Son has come to bring to pass the Father's glory in the time when the whole universe will be filled with God.

Surely it is wise to look at things from that point of view. The spring of Christianity is that Christ has come forth from the Father; part of the good pleasure is that you and I should be brought to Him; but the great object of the heart of Christ was to do His will, to establish all that is suitable to God. "I come to do thy will, O God." We come into the blessing in our place; but the greater result is the doing of the will of God. There is not only the reversal of the terrible curse and ruin brought in by sin, but the bringing to pass of a universe according to God, which is to be filled by Christ, every bit of it characterised by Christ and acceptable to God. Jesus came "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

I go on for a moment to Luke x. to refer, if the Lord enables me, to the One who became neighbour. He became neighbour to the man who fell among thieves. We are apt to think a good deal of ourselves, but there was not a single thing about us in God's sight but sin and death and misery, not one good thing for God. Jesus had to come down to the cross

that He might touch us where we were, and we were morally in the condition of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. It was not merely that he had turned his back upon God, but he was helpless and ruined. The priest and the Levite passed him by, but the Samaritan came near to him. "He came where he was"—a perfect stranger. The man had not a claim on him, not a right thought about him; all he might have thought of was his own utter ruin, but "He came where he was." What does that mean? It means that He had to come down to the cross before you and I could be healed, before our wounds could be bound up and the oil and wine poured in. To me it is intensely affecting that when the Lord Jesus Christ came to save us He came to the place where we were, and found us as we were. It involved all that suffering, darkness, death for Him because of the state of sin and ruin man was in. He became neighbour—not to the good man, but to the man who fell among the thieves. He expressed the whole heart of God. The One who knows the number of the stars and calls them all by their names, He it is who binds up the brokenhearted and heals all their wounds. He had to go down into those awful depths to find us there, to touch us there. He came that He might lift us out of it all and bring us back to God.

All may not agree, but my impression is that this man found and brought by the Neighbour is a pattern of the great company that Christ has now. The acceptable year of the Lord has not come yet (He is it, for that matter, but "the times of restitution of all things" have not come yet, the heavens have received Him); but in the meantime He has a company, the first-fruits of redemption, whose names are written in heaven, who are characterised by the revelation of the Father, and by having the Spirit. And that company thus in touch with the exalted Man are to minister and to express now, in the power of the Spirit, the mind of heaven down here upon this earth. If any one of us has been accustomed to mark the movements of his own heart in the light of the word of God, he knows the innate selfishness that clings to and characterises us naturally. We are apt to take all christian blessings and wrap them round ourselves, and there is very little Christianity in that. The effect of Christianity is that there is to be a company of first-fruits, whose names are written in heaven, who take their character from One that became neighbour to him that fell among thieves, those to whom He reveals the Father, those who are to be marked down here by the love of God, those who cleave to Him in His absence and own Him Lord.

I would like to dwell a little more upon the early part of the passage in chapter x. "Jesus rejoiced in spirit." As to all His mighty works on earth He had gone about doing good, doing the will of God. He was not at all short of what He was sent to do. There was never a brokenhearted one that was not relieved by Him, never a blind man who came in contact with Jesus who did not get his sight, never a captive that was not set free. The poor "daughter of Abraham" that was bound eighteen years, face downward instead of upward, was set free. But all the mighty works were of no effect in turning the heart of man to God. They repented not. Redemption must be accomplished. Jesus must endure the cross. Yet with that in view He rejoiced in spirit, blessed be His name ! What could sustain Him in view of the cross ? One fears to speak of these things lightly in relation to Him. He was a divine Person, but He had all the feelings of a man, all true human perfection was found in Him. What sustained Him in view of that cross ? The will of His Father, the joy that was set before Him, the thought of the company whose names are written in heaven ; a company suitable to God, suitable to the Father's love. He accepts the rejection, rejoicing in spirit, and looking up to His Father He says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of

heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." That is the point where you and I come in morally, I suppose. If we become babes we get by the spirit of revelation intelligence and insight into the things of God, if we are simple and unquestioning and have no antecedents of our own to go upon.

"Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see." The things they saw were the things of God. "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." He is there at that very moment as revealer of the Father, and there comes a woman and sits at His feet, and she gets the revelation. How simple, yet how wonderful that is! How has she prepared herself for the revelation? She has placed herself in nearness to Him, she sits at His feet and she hears His word. Sitting at His feet and hearing His word is the first great characteristic of this heavenly company of which He has spoken. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." How did it come to pass that He should have brethren? Because God will have Him as Man surrounded by those who are suitable to Him--a company that

appreciate His Father. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Says some one, What a wonderful blessing for me! Oh, but go a little further, "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." That is what the Father has in view for Christ. He is to have His great company, His companions, who appreciate the revelation of the Father in the Son.

"Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." I doubt if she will ever give it up, but at any rate it shall never be taken from her. It is exactly the part that suits Him. You cannot give Him greater pleasure than to sit at His feet and listen to His word giving the revelation of the Father. He does not shout it from a distance. He brings you near to Him. There was discord in that house; Martha was very active, she wanted to serve, and complained of her sister; but there was one that suited Jesus, and she sat at His feet and heard His word. Mary had placed herself in the spot where she could receive the revelation, and it was a divine revelation of the Father by the Lord Jesus Himself.

The next thing is prayer, and thus we come to what I have specially before me, the available supply. The disciples said to Jesus, "Lord,

teach us to pray," and He gives them that wonderful form of prayer, the disciples' prayer. Have you ever remarked that the Father's name comes first? Our necessities do not come first. "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come." That was the prayer He gave them, a prayer suited to the followers of Jesus: all for God first, afterwards for their necessity. "Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." It is very important to notice this order. It is the order now of the Holy Ghost. God first in our minds, and we second. If we pray in the Holy Ghost we shall pray in that way, even we, feeble though we are, but in touch with Him in glory where He is.

The Lord enlarges it. He gives not only the form and order, but the great principles on which one may approach the Father in prayer. "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves?" For whom does he ask? For himself? No. For his household? No. "*A friend of mine* in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." There is great simplicity in that prayer, it is not a long story. It is a definite request for a

definite need in relation to a definite person. I have often been touched by it. In John's epistle you get, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." The Lord is bringing out the efficacy of prayer, and He gives you an illustration of it. "For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." What have we got who seek to help one another? In ourselves nothing. We cannot help one another a bit except by the supply. We may talk and talk, and give and give, and it is no good at all unless we are in touch with the One who is the perfect Giver and receive of Him. If you are in touch with the Giver, the One who came here to give Himself, you are in touch with God. He came to set forth in this world the God who is the giving God.

"He came, whose errand was to give,
His hand was opened wide;
Yea, at our need, that we might live,
He gave *Himself* and died!"

Is there anything of value in us? It is only as we are in touch in the power of the Spirit with Him, in whom there is life, so that there is that in us. The Spirit is life in view of righteousness.

Now mark—the prayer is heard because of his importunity. A friend has come on his

journey, and he has nothing to give him. It is the darkest hour, midnight, and there is the empty table. The friend he seeks has gone to bed. Things are looking as unpromising as ever they can be, everything is unpropitious; but the Lord says, Press your claim and you will get it. "I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him *as many as he needeth*." You only ask for three, but you get as many as you need. It is very precious and very touching that we should be encouraged in that way, not to go to God with a sort of perfunctory request, but to lay before Him the need that presses, in the Name of the glorious One who has all things delivered into His hand by His Father, all the resources of life. I pray on behalf of my brother, and I get as much as I want. If we did that more, should we not be useful to one another? We should be found praying for one another that we might be healed: blessing would be given, and the name of the Lord would be glorified. Now He says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Vers. 9, 10.)

Well, we were hearing yesterday that it is

not wise to attempt to build doctrine only on the gospels, because the word of the Lord is so great and we are not equal to it. Let us turn now to the epistle for a moment. I read those verses in Philippians because there you get, not exactly doctrinally, but practically, an illustration of the efficacy of prayer. In the gospel the Lord says in effect, You would not give a bad gift to your child; your heavenly Father is not worse than you are. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" I think here it is "Holy Spirit" characteristically, not exactly *the* Holy Spirit as a Person. Well, here in Philippians I find a man who is no better in himself than I am, and he is in for "no surrender." Paul is not going to be disappointed. His heart has gone out to the Philippians "in the bowels of Jesus Christ." Often it is mere natural liking with us—I like you, and you like me, and that is little worth, but "the bowels of Jesus Christ" have a wonderfully cementing influence. Well, what is the result? He prays for them, and what does he pray? "That your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent"—that there may be discriminating and discerning love as taught by the Spirit

of God ; not that the volume of love was to increase, but it was to increase in quality and character, to take account of things as they really are. Indiscriminating love may very soon merge into what is natural, but divine love approves things that are excellent. It is "that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."

I was struck yesterday in reading the Epistle to the Romans how the whole course of the Christian is taken up in one chapter (chap. viii.), so that he may be perfectly free for the counsels and purposes of God, free for the assembly. "The Spirit is life in view of righteousness." The Christian is not only free from himself, delivered from the condemnation of sin and the curse, but he is associated with Christ in life now by the Spirit, and will be so in resurrection presently. The next thing is relationship. The precious relationship of sonship is established by the Spirit, and we cry, "Abba, Father" (ver. 15) ; we turn to the One we know as Father. At the moment when he is in the depths of pressure the Christian appreciates the Father. He is in the power of the Spirit of sonship. If you will follow the chapter up you will find there is absolute sufficiency of supply for every circumstance, and the Christian triumphs. "*In all these things* we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

We wait for the glory, but we have God now. If I am in the good of that gospel, I am not troubled about adversity, death does not trouble me. "I am persuaded," says the apostle, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Surely I am free; I am delivered, not only from myself, but I am delivered from everything that can hinder me on the journey; and what is the practical outcome of this deliverance? You present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. The believer who is brought to that point is suitable to God; he can go on to the assembly, to the true purpose of God; he will need constant supply in relation to the will of God on that line also, and he will ask and receive.

Now here in Philippians I find a man that will in no wise surrender the position. He prays for the Philippians that they may be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." We say we ought to be righteous, we ought to do this or that. It is very true, there is no mistake about it; but the apostle prays that they may be filled with the *fruits*

of righteousness. Then he goes on to say, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places." He does not talk of himself, the gospel is in view, the gospel of Christ. "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel." Christ is preached, whether of envy or strife, or whatever it may be. It certainly is not good to preach of envy and strife, but Christ is preached, and I "therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." That man is founded upon a rock; he is never going to surrender the Christ he knows in the highest place in heaven; he is going to press on to Him there.

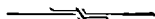
I have been long coming to the point before me. He goes on to say, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." The saints were to pray, and Paul was to be saved by the prayers

of the saints and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Every one in Cæsar's palace was to know that Paul's bonds were not the bonds of a malefactor, but of a Christian. "I know that this shall turn to my salvation." Now I am very much interested to know what was Paul's salvation. It was not to get out of jail, not to be taken to heaven, but that he might not break down in the testimony of Christ..

It is very encouraging. Our resources are very great; the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ will reach you in answer to prayer, that you may be here, it may be in a very small way and in great isolation, for Christ, confessing His name. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." It is very wonderful. Who would not long for it? Have everything that this world can give, and what is it in comparison with this, that you should be here on this earth, and that, in the very body in which you have served the devil, Christ should be magnified, whether it be by life or by death. If you go in for "no surrender" you will find the sufficiency of supply, and if you get the supply it will be by being in touch with the Supplier. You go to Him at midnight and you will get a reply, and

the reply will not be uncertain or negative. I believe one may be very useful in the church of God if one knows how to be with the Lord in the position in which He is now established by God. All the resources of God are in His hands. He holds that position not only for us, but for God and for the glory of God. The sent One from the Father, He could not hold it in any other way, and it is our wisdom to take account of Him and cleave to Him there with purpose of heart, that we may prove His sufficiency and thus be found experimentally in the good of the gospel and free for the purpose of God.

A. E. P.



THE WORD IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH

(LUKE I. 30-33, 38; JOHN I. 1, 2, 14.)

HE has been upon this earth, and our hearts have been filled because of it. He was the depositary of the whole mind and counsel of God, and He was to bring that amongst men. In that way He could come here to reveal the Father. There was nothing apart from Him. All the mind and thoughts and purposes of God found their dwelling-place in the Word, and these are to be brought amongst men in such a way (because of Him who was the Word presenting the truth) that men should be turned to acknowledge that the truth was in the One who brought it. God would work. The "holy thing" was to be found here. There was to be the preaching of the gospel amongst the poor, the deliverance of the captives. What a word there was laid up in store for man, to bring in that which had been shut up—but it was in Christ. It was there long before He came to open out the thoughts and mind of God. But it had been set forth in the psalms of David; in Psalm xxii. it had been declared what should be, and if the Word

is made flesh and comes here it must be that through His dying that Word becomes available for the man who had turned away from God. It is to be brought here to man by a lowly Man, but the Son of God, the Word, the eternal Word, who was in the beginning with God, without whom nothing that was made could be or was. He was to bring it into order. That which was made had failed to answer to the purpose of its creation here, and it was a state of chaos. If the heavenly bodies answered to the purpose of their being made, man did not answer to the purpose of his creation. God had a right to claim that man should. For a long time, while His patience lasted, the Word was in heaven. He had made these things ; but we also, the work of His hands, had failed. The Word was made flesh to bring in another order of things, and therefore He must answer to the full mind of God, of which He was the holy depositary Himself. That is the beginning of the new order of things. He answered and does answer to the full mind of God, therefore it is He was made flesh and found here in fashion as a Man.

We read in Psalm xxii., if you turn to it for a moment (vers. 9 and 10): " But thou art he that took me out of the womb : thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's

breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb : thou art my God from my mother's belly." Now you see that God is gracious because He gives in scripture what we could not have understood otherwise, and we believe the scriptures. From the moment that " holy thing " was here, the Son of God, He (God) must have a perfect walk and a perfect life before Him before redemption could come in. That He might give life, eternal life, He must have for Himself that which is perfect. The Word made flesh dwelt here and sent forth nothing but the mind and will and word and work of the Father. I dread sometimes, in thinking of my Lord as Man, lest I should forget the difference there is between that Man and myself. God was there. He was the One who was in the beginning with God, the depositary of the thoughts and mind of God ; but if we understand it we can see how really, how truly, how actually all Christ did down here was the expression of the will of Him that sent Him. It was His precious task thus to bring into creation that which was a perfect delight to God. But one might say—How could a child, an infant, be such a delight to God? There we touch the glory of His Person. Is not God to have a full measure of delight from the moment this " holy thing " was brought into this scene in time? Surely

He is; could He not have One, who was all that He was, cast upon Him from His birth, having a hope in Him who sent Him from His mother's breasts? Mark, from the moment this great and holy One is here He is never less than who He is, divine in intelligence, in knowledge, in apprehension, yet taking His place as Man; also, to the eye of man, when He was taken down into Egypt, giving Himself up to the care of another—but always cast upon God. One's heart can enter into it but little, but is filled with a sense of the greatness and the majesty of the One who allows us to call Him Saviour. God must have His perfect delight in Him from the beginning, before that blessed One could take His place before the awful tribunal of God, to bear all the consequences of the departure of man from Him.

How beautifully when the time came, the mind, the thoughts, the wisdom of God come out in the temple among the doctors of the law. All Jesus' mind was always cast upon God, His hope was in God; it was a perfect life up to the fulness of manhood, speaking reverently of that manhood. Now God has One before Him who can die. A perfect efficacious offering is the offering of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, untouched, unsullied, wholly for God from His birth. God could

provide His own Lamb. What a difference between Him as Man and myself!

I turn to the greatness and immensity of that which took place. God was that Man, He was God. He was the depositary of all the counsels of the Father. He died. He is entitled to die, to offer Himself in His own perfection by the eternal Spirit without spot to God. Marvel of marvels! He has a right to bestow that which He is to God to bring back man in a new way to God.

Well, you see how He passes on. In Psalm xxii. He is seen in His perfectness. If His walk here was wonderful, so upon the cross He is even more wonderful. He can say, "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death." "I am poured out like water," &c. He endures. He had set His face like flint, and there is no wavering. The precious cake of fine flour is baken in the pan. There is no source of refreshment. He is in the power and wondrousness of His own being and Person. From without nothing is ministered. There was all that there was there. It was Christ.

In verse 21 the awful time is past. If at first He can say, "Thou hearest not," now He can say, "Thou hast heard me." Mark the prayer of the righteous Man, there might seem no answer to it, but when He has gone through

everything to the lowest point there comes in the precious answer from the God whom He loved as Man. "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns," and the immediate effect is, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." Notice the blessed devotedness of Christ to God and to man, the answer having come from the place of power, the horns of the unicorns. All the past is gone and He can say in words of undying power, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." The Word has brought down the name of the Father that the name of the Father may carry all the weight of the great Word into our souls. Thus speaking one does it almost with trembling, but desiring to keep within the limits of Scripture, we have to receive the mind and thoughts of the Word concerning Him who was so true to it, who was indeed the truth in His own Person, and who delights to let the fulness of it fill each and abide upon all who belong to Himself.

J. A.



“THE WORD OF THE CROSS” AND “THE WORD OF THE CHRIST.”

I WOULD like to add one word. 'There are two expressions known to most of us: one is “the word of the cross,” and the other we have in Colossians, “the word of the Christ.” I think, beloved friends, we have had them both brought before us in these meetings. We have had the word of the cross, and certainly we have had the testimony of Christ. We could not have one without the other. I feel these two thoughts need to be pressed upon us. In the cross man had to go out. Not only is the “world crucified unto me,” said the apostle, but “I unto the world,” and more than that, he says, “*I have been crucified.*” Man has been put to shame. In Christ you have the **Man** that would do for God, that was all His pleasure. It is wonderful to see how God kept Christ before man from the very beginning. Abraham had Christ in a way, for he rejoiced to see Christ's day. David had Christ. The psalms are full of Christ. Isaiah had Christ; he came to Hezekiah in the name of David's God to tell him he was to recover and that he should go up into the house of the Lord on the

third day. The first time, when Isaiah was sent to tell him he should die and not live, David is not mentioned; but the second time Isaiah comes in the name of David's God, the God of revival, the God of resurrection. When you get the light of David, that is, of Him whom he prefigures, then another day dawns. Everything was changed when David arose and slew the giant. Israel was dying out, they were not likely to have a place among the nations. So in the songs of degrees, which describe the steps of Israel from the lowest depths into eternal blessing, David comes to light (see Psa. cxxxi.) and God's anointed. Then you get eternal life (Psa. cxxxiii.) and lifting up the hands in the sanctuary to bless the Lord. (Psa. cxxxiv.) Everything is changed with the introduction of David. David brings before us God's resources.

Isaiah, too, had Christ as his testimony, and so all the prophets. What had they if they had not Christ? Jeremiah had Christ: he says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.” Dear man! he was despised in his day, few people suffered more, but he had the word of Jehovah and the name of Jehovah. How could he have Jehovah's word without having Jehovah's

Christ? These two great things supported him. It is marvellous to see how he could go through everything. When everybody was against him the Lord came to him and encouraged him in the dungeon. It was really a miry pit, but the Lord said to him, "Fear not." All these prophets had Christ. Ezekiel had Christ. When God shews him in the vision of dry bones the revival of Israel as an exceeding great army, in the same passage we get the raising up of God's servant, David. Then to go back to Isaiah, he says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." The resurrection of Christ brought about the reappearance of Israel. They had the light of another day that was coming in. They could see the break up of things, and beyond it they could see the coming in of another day. What sustained those prophets was the testimony of Christ. They had not Christ as you and I have, Christ having come and the Spirit of Christ being given to us, but they had Christ. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad." The testimony increased more and more till Christ came. When did He come? Just when Israel was dying out. The ruler said, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death." The Pharisees said, "What do we? for this man doeth many

miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.” When the Jews talked about their place and nation it shewed they did not care about Jehovah. They thought a good deal more about themselves and the outward thing—we are the people—instead of the blessed God. They were found in a dying state, though there were a few faithful and godly ones to whom Christ could come. And when Christ came, what a tremendous change! Everything was altered then; the testimony of the prophets got its fulfilment. The Person came who was their hope, and there was no disappointment to those who had waited for Christ.

Then He went into *death*. We cannot do without the word of the cross. There is no reviving of the nation of Israel after the flesh, and no reviving of the mind of sinful man, and man as he is must go in judgment. All would have been closed in actual death and judgment if it had not been for the cross, and there all is closed in the death of Christ. On the day of Pentecost there was not very much preaching of the cross, but do you not think the Spirit of God wrote it on those people? Do you not think He made them feel they deserved utter judgment? their fingers were stained with the blood of their Messiah. They say, “Men and brethren,

what shall we do?" Though the preaching of Christ made them feel how they deserved death, in the death of Christ they had, as it were, gone out in judgment, so that instead of being utterly without resource Christ was their resource. Every race was judged and put out of sight in the cross, all differences of Jew and Gentile were ended there. But what happened at Pentecost? Revival had come in and they lived in the risen Christ. All were of one mind and of one heart. There was no jealousy, no envy. It was a little picture of the revival of Israel. As a nation they had rejected their Messiah. Now the revival spread far and wide. The nations who were in darkness saw a great light, and men who were under the power of evil rose up and stood here for God.

What I see in the cross of Christ is that the man who ought to disappear for ever from the eye of God is gone. But in Christ risen, I see man risen and revived, and before God for ever. I see the appearance of man in a new way. There there is unity, love, fellowship, so that with the Christian there is no thought of surrender, but the blessed sense of Christ triumphant, and of complete revival in Him.

There are those who would like to alter the fellowship, its principles and so on. You cannot alter the fellowship. God has settled

what the fellowship is, and it is God who has settled the principles of it. It is in Christ those principles are seen. There is no desire to surrender or change them when the heart is filled with the word of Christ. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” That is what we want—these two things. I am thankful that in the cross God had His way of putting man out, that is yourself. It is not only that you should be put outside the world, but God has devised a way of putting you out in judgment and yet of bringing you in again and in a Man that brings in another world, in Christ, the true David, the anointed of God.

I find people who say how difficult it is to get on; they speak of the poverty of things and that it is no good to go any longer to the meetings. What then are we to do? Shall we look out for another Christ? Shall we ask God to send some one else? The other day I was told that brethren had departed from the simplicity of Christ. Well then, I said, at all events *you* need not. Christ has shewn Himself equal to a complete and entire revival. A complete change of things altogether came in with Christ. What is the encouragement for the last days? It is “that which was from the beginning.” The encouragement for the first days was certainly Christ, and do we want another name? It has become a sort of formula

that we are gathered to His name, but I am not sure that people know what it means, the name of the Son of the living God. In Matthew xvi. He tells them He was going to "suffer many things of the elders, chief priests and scribes, and be killed and raised again the third day." Then He opens out to them another day and speaks of His exaltation and the coming of the Son of man in the glory of His Father with His angels, and three of them are taken up into the mountain and they hear the Father's voice, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Do you mean that that is the name to which you are gathered, that it is in the light of that blessed One who is rejected on earth and exalted in heaven, that it is in the sense of that name you meet? Then you would not seek a big place for the meeting if you had the sense that this world has put that One out, and you would be thankful for any little spot where you can be with Him. God has exalted Him and we are on the very eve of His return in all the glory of the Father.

That is where I find revival—where do you find it? Every one here who knows anything of revival at all knows that we owe it to the coming in of Christ. Look at the rapture, is not that revival? What will bring about the coming of Christ? Surely there will be at the

rapture the revival of Christ in every heart, and when He comes back into the scene there will be the restitution of everything. The world will not be recognised, so great will be the change, because no nation will bear the character it bears to-day. He will create a tremendous revival. You cannot get it up; it is not done by a religious movement. The Jews turned away from Christ; they lost their place and nation because they thought more of it than of Jehovah's Christ. Look at Jeremiah, he was in the greatest sorrow, “Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?” What was his sorrow? It was because he was identified with Jehovah's people and Jehovah's glory was in abeyance; yet he was not without heart or encouragement even in the dungeon, he had Jehovah's *word*, and he was characterised as called by Jehovah's *name*. He would have made a splendid Philadelphian if he had lived in our day, for he had kept His word and had not denied His name.

That is where revival comes in. Nothing but the introduction of Christ will bring in revival. The work of God is gauged in that way, is it Christ? If not, it is not the work of God. If we are to be found together it must be in the life of Christ. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” I want to be

imbued with Him, to be filled with Him, to have a greater sense of what God has wrought by Christ. That is why David so often comes to the front, a thousand times and more in the Old Testament; the two greatest names to Israel were Abraham and David, they expressed the promised blessing and the One who exercises it. God delights to bring before us what His chief interest is. Christ is the One by whom Israel will be revived. "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name." There is no surrender, no giving in on those lines. The Lord quickens and there is Israel; again the Lord quickens and there is the church. We cannot do without the power of the Spirit of God. We need the supply of the Spirit of Christ. All we want is more of Christ, not another Christ, but to be thoroughly under the influence of Christ, the word of Christ dwelling in you richly, Christ expressing Himself richly in your soul. Then "speaking to one another" is sure to come. Ephesians goes beyond this when it speaks of Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, "that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." May the Lord give us this great revival for His name's sake.

H. D'A. C.



READING.

(EPH. II.)

OUR brother Mr. R. was drawing attention to the beginning of this chapter yesterday. The point he referred to is very important; that is, we are in a scene where all is moral death.

S. H. God has wrought to bring to pass what one might speak of as a new being that is able to apprehend His purposes and thoughts presented to us in Christ Jesus, which lie outside of the flesh entirely and cannot be taken account of by it, for the chapter opens with, "you being dead in trespasses and sins." There is no movement Godward in that condition, but He begins to work when we were in that condition. In Romans man is viewed as alive in sins. Of course in one sense they are both the same state, because if a man is alive in sins he is dead towards God. Here there is no movement—"dead in trespasses and sins."

The first point was drawn attention to yesterday—God begins to quicken—He has brought to light a new being built up in certain moral or spiritual qualities who can take account of what is divine. You get the same idea in 1 Corinthians i. 30, 31, which gives the thought of a moral being in the verses, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-

ness, and sanctification and redemption," &c. You have a new order of man, one entirely built up in these qualities and so is able to take account of what is divine; it is a spiritual man in contrast to a natural man.

You get the constituent parts in this chapter—the progress that is made by God in the building up of those He quickens. You get a little idea of it in connection with the creation of Eve, "He builded the woman," but she was formed out of what was taken from Adam, and although we are built up, our constituent parts are of Him; as being in Christ we are formed out of what is in Him as Man. It is all "in him" first, but He is not spoken of as a new Man because He never was of Adam, He is "the beginning." We are created in Him.

QUES. Does the "and" of verse 1 link us with verse 20 of the previous chapter in connection with your thought of the new being?

S. H. Yes; I think you must get hold of that idea. We are prone to think that man naturally can take account of divine things, but when we begin to see that God has to form a new being, then it is we see that the flesh is utterly incapable of understanding anything divine, no matter how highly God may have endowed a man intellectually.

REMARKED. Individually we are affected by our apprehension of this new being?

S. H. Yes; before the apostle goes any

further he has to bring into the forefront the persons who can take account of what it is he is going to unfold relative to God's counsels, and until we get light in regard to this, and in some measure it is power in us, we make no progress in divine things. Every one of us starts from the point of being dead in trespasses and sins, and the heart has to take it in. It is easy to say it, but it is a deeper thing to realise it. The way in which we really get affected by it in our spirits is when we come to the widening out of the thought in our understanding of the expression, "He descended first." Then we begin to understand a little of what is meant by the expression, "dead in trespasses and sins." We do not measure it by our apprehension of what our state is, but we measure it by the place which a divine Person had to take in order to meet it.

We have to get the sense of things in our souls and then it is surprising how quickly we become intelligent in regard to what is presented to us in Christianity, because man becomes nothing and God becomes everything. The new man is created after God, but we put him on.

QUES. How?

S. H. In the appreciation of Christ as the power and wisdom of God and in the power of the divine nature. We put Him on and come out in character like Him.

QUES. You suppose that God's inward work leads to outward conformity?

S. H. Yes.

REMARKED. The putting on comes from within.

S. H. The Spirit helps us on both lines, non-appreciation of ourselves and the appreciation of Christ. A true recognition of what we are speaking of is of vital importance. All bad teaching is the working of the natural mind. It is the recognition of the man after the flesh in some way.

There is a very prevalent idea at the present moment, it is that we are more troubled by other people than by ourselves; I find I have more trouble with myself than with other people. The apostle had to say, "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus," &c.

QUES. The new man is created after God. Is not the new man the answer to the revelation?

S. H. The whole point is the thing has come out in Christ, but what has come out in Christ is the revelation of God. The scriptures give us the limitations to our thoughts, but it is the revelation that is to affect us, of which the scriptures speak. Therefore we grow by the knowledge of God, the new man is the moral answer to the revelation, and the whole conflict is to hold to the revelation that God has made of Himself.

REMARKED. All of us are quickened, but then that is because the verdict lies upon us, each one, that in God's sight we are dead in trespasses and sins.

S. H. When the thought of "dead in trespasses and sins" lays hold upon us we get the thought that we are placed here in a system (the world) where there is no movement Godward whatever, nothing in it as such can help us in regard of God and nothing of it can be for God. When I get the apprehension of quickening it is not that *I* am quickened, but that *I* am quickened together with Christ, and if I am quickened with Him, it is that I might live with Him, in the condition into which He has risen. Of course quickening in His case is only spoken of with regard to His body; He never needed to be quickened into new conditions morally. He was ever "the resurrection and the life."

REMARKED. Here He is only spoken of as risen.

S. H. He has not been into our moral condition of dead in trespasses and sins. He has been in flesh, took part in human life in grace, and sinless was made sin and died unto it on our account. He was put to death in the flesh and made alive in the Spirit. Quickened together with Him means that we live with Him in His risen associations. When I get to the apprehension of that it comes as power, and deliverance is enjoyed. Then I

cease to live in this world as a moral system ; there is nothing in this world that is life for me Godward. What is the glory of this world to us the moment we get the apprehension of quickening in our souls ? We are quickened together with Christ to live in entirely new conditions and associations, associations in which Christ is living. That is what frees us from everything that is contrary to Him. It is no use to tell people that this thing is wrong and the other thing is wrong, it will only put them in bondage ; we need to minister that which will deliver them from what is not of God. If we see God at work in quickening power to quicken us together with Christ, it is that we might live with Christ in the associations into which He is risen, and then we see how unsuitable it is for us to be marked by anything which was characteristic of us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. Quickenings involves resurrection.

M. G. Is every believer quickened with Christ ? What is the difference between that and what is practical ?

S. H. Well, this is presented in an abstract way so as to apply to every one, yet it is to be practical. If I were really living in regard to the system in which Christ is living I should put on the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Do you think I should be bruising people ? No ; I should be marked by the gentleness and

forbearance of Christ. These things do not belong to the world in which I used to live as dead in trespasses and sins; they are all consequent on being quickened together with Christ. The Spirit is given to us as power that we may be able to take it up. The fact is there in Christ; we can only take it up in the power of the Spirit. That is all expressed in the verse, "being renewed in the spirit of your minds." I do not think we lay sufficient stress on that point, which is very necessary, and that is, our apprehensions should be constantly growing and increasing in respect of these things.

F. H. B. It is not an actual state yet, and therefore can only be taken up abstractedly in the spirit of our minds.

M. G. It is true of every believer in Christ; it has to be made morally so in our souls now, and will be actually so by-and-by.

S. H. I am sure people are inclined to forget that they have souls and get too much occupied with their bodies.

E. C. How far does the Epistle to the Romans carry us on this line?

S. H. There is the germ of everything in the Epistle to the Romans, but not the unfolding of it. It brings you to the point—"them which are in Christ Jesus" (chap. viii. 1), but it does not develop it. You must have the germ of everything in the gospel, that is what

makes the gospel so great. The gospel is the foundation of everything, and that is why it is so important we should be grounded in the gospel, because if the foundation is not stable what will the superstructure be like? Great will be the fall thereof.

H. H. H. Does not what you were saying as to association⁴ being in view of quickening together in Christ run along with what the Lord speaks of in John vi. 57?

S. H. Yes. When you come to the exhortations they are all founded upon what is presented in the doctrine. The test of how far the doctrine has laid hold of us lies not in having it in the mind, but how do we answer to the exhortations. The vitality is evidenced in practice, not in knowing the doctrine only. Paul speaks of his manner of life, &c.

H. D'A. C. You are necessary to the doctrine.

REMARKED. You could not present your body a living sacrifice unless you were in the gospel.

S. H. As one understands the Epistle to the Ephesians one begins to appreciate the gospel. Romans and Ephesians are put in touch by the postscript in the former. (Rom. xvi. 25, 26.)

W. J. Mr. Stoney used to liken it to a tree, the higher it went the larger it grew at the base.

S. H. You have the whole work of God presented in chapter ii.—not merely quickening but raising and sitting together in heavenly places in Christ.

W. J. What is “raised up”?

S. H. The first point is quickened together with Christ, and then Jew and Gentile raised up together, and made to sit down together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That is how we get the apprehension in our souls that our position is not on earth, it is in heaven. The church does not belong to earth. At the present moment we are seated in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*; we are not actually there yet, but we take account of ourselves in this way. The next point is that we are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” It is not that we are left to delight in the fact that there is a new sphere opened up to us, but if we are quickened and raised up the next point in our constitution is that we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. That is the practical effect upon us down here. We are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” I have no doubt that when God created Adam His thought was that he should walk in good works, but he failed. Now we belong to the One who has been tested and never failed, and

He never will fail. We are called to live in relation to Him, and we are created after God for good works. If that was His fore-ordination we may be sure it will be given effect to.

F. H. B. And it is by the good works that God is really set forth.

S. H. It is in relation to that scene where Christ is risen and ascended that good works are possible. In the spirit of the mind I have come to live in a new scene entirely; it is true I am here, but I live in regard of another scene.

F. H. B. A good work is really that which sets forth something of God.

S. H. Yes; you set forth something of God, you are no longer dead in trespasses and sins. "Created in Christ Jesus for good works" follows "By grace ye are saved, not on the principle of works," yet created by Him for good works.

F. H. B. A man must preach what he really knows.

S. H. He will very soon find that in some measure he is defective, therefore he will want to know more in order that he may be effective.

REMARKED. It would be better for him to become better acquainted with and enter into what he knows before he speaks much about it.

S. H. Paul began but he did not go on at once; he said enough to shew he was identified with the christian company, then he went aside to learn. Every man is entitled to

present the gospel from his own knowledge of God. You can only preach it according to your apprehension, but we must all keep ourselves open for more light which will cause a corresponding advance and if necessary readjustment.

A. E. P. The servant has got to be in touch with his Master.

E. H. C. That was the secret of Paul's testimony; he got in touch with the very highest Person "in the way," and he struck a very high note.

W. A. W. "To present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

W. J. If you take forgiveness, it is God who has forgiven me, and He has forgiven me that I might know Him.

REMARKED. Every part of the gospel must be great if you connect God with it.

S. H. The gospel brings to souls the love of God. It is not that people are going to get so much blessing for believing, but they are brought into contact with God.

F. H. B. Can we get on a little to the latter part of the chapter?

S. H. The next point is that he has to deal with the question of the Jew; that has to be settled. It is the same thing in the Epistle to the Romans; he has to take up the question of the Jew because God, who had put a distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, had been

dealing with the Jew. (See chaps. ix.-xi.) So here also arises the question, What about the Jew? How is that distinction to be broken down?

W. J. By levelling down, and they are to be brought on to one platform.

S. H. He has set aside in the cross the Jew and the Gentile, and He has created in Himself (Christ) one new man. That is the way peace is presented in this epistle, the alienation is removed and peace has come in. The conflict is in view of maintaining that, "your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." For any to preach this gospel they have to know the alienation removed and be in the enjoyment of reconciliation.

A. E. P. Is not that a very practical way of peace among Christians?

E. R. There is nothing left of either.

REMARKED. It is often said that it takes two to make a quarrel. There is only one man left. If we were clearly in the truth of that there could be nothing but peace.

S. H. I am sure of this, if there is divergence, although we may know a good deal about the doctrine of the one new man, we have revived the old. There could be no quarrel otherwise. The secret of all the dissension between the saints is the revival of the man after the flesh, and that man can only be legal. Hence we have in Galatians that they

were biting and devouring one another. If disunion comes in we have to look to ourselves, not to others, as to how far we have been reviving the old man.

W. A. W. The importance of that verse comes in, "We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works." We are God's creation that we might have good works.

S. H. Then you must have the man who can work. It is not the Jew, it is not the Gentile. The legal man might say, I am going in for that, but he is far astray from it.

REMARKED. "To make *in himself* of twain one new man."

S. H. It is all effected in Himself. It is not effected in us except morally in the power of the Spirit of God. It is made good in me if I am attending to unity; it is not made good in me if I am a source of dissension amongst my brethren.

A. E. P. Very often this chapter is presented as the gospel, peace between the soul and God.

S. H. It is not so much that. It is the way in which God has got rid of the alienation by removing both Jew and Gentile, and Christ has made in Himself of twain one new man. The conflict is to maintain the heavenly position in the truth of the gospel of peace amongst the saints and towards all, and we shall only do that as we have got the situation before us. Christ ascended far above

all heavens. The blessed part is, that Man maintains all intact for God. Do we answer to it down here and maintain it also?

QUES. It says, "He is our peace," and He "came and preached peace to you," what is the difference?

S. H. He is the first One to announce it as the risen Man. We know Him no longer after the flesh. The Apostle Paul could say, "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." He is our peace, that is, it must start from Him; "having annulled the enmity in his flesh . . . that he might form the two in *himself* into one new man, making peace." (Eph. ii. 14, 15, N.T.)

QUES. Would the thought of peace with God come in in connection with being quickened with Christ?

ANSWER. Quickening is in connection with state.

S. H. He came to preach peace. He announced it; if He had not announced it how could it be announced? Peace was made in His cross, and He could say to His disciples, "Peace unto you." All the elements of disturbance had gone in His cross, and now He is outside of it all, and they can be in new relationships with Him—"I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God"—and in new relations with one another.

F. H. B. It is not peace with God really, nor peace among themselves, but everything that could disturb the peace was gone in the cross and assured in resurrection.

J. A. If there is an element of disturbance I am not answering to His workmanship, the works are no longer good. The heart loses the sense of "He is our peace." It tests one in acting; where I am a cause of unrest then I am false to the work of His hand in me.

H. D'A. C. You can hardly limit the thought of peace.

A. E. P. Primarily it is peace between Jew and Gentile. Practically now the great disturber of the peace between us is the legal man.

GEO. C. When the enemy preaches peace in the end he puts everything under one man, Antichrist, and he says, Peace, peace. Now everything is under one Head, and it is peace He preaches.

M. G. So in Hebrews xiii., "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus." Every disturbing element is gone.

S. H. It is in that state that He can form in Himself of twain one new man. He is in a position to work to that end.

A. J. P. Legality is the revival of the Jew, and worldliness is the revival of the Gentile.

G. W. W. Is this on the line of the peace-offering? The judgment of the man who caused the disturbance.

S. H. Yes. The next point is, that "he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross." It is one body. We might get the thought of one new man and think that we can do without one another; but the point we have to get to is that we have to go on with one another as one body.

A. S. L. We are very defective in the truth of the one body.

S. H. I do not know what we are not defective in. The more I look round the more I see that we are very defective. We have thought as brethren that we have had certain things committed to us, but the more you look at it you see how it has been rather in the hands of a few faithful men who have maintained the truth, even in spite of opposition from their brethren. God has always raised up servants in difficult moments. The principle comes out in Timothy where Paul says, "the same commit thou to faithful men;" it is not committed to any company as such. It is to faithful men; there might be more faithful men than there are. We are reconciled to God in one body, it is not so many units. People often talk about going on individually and ignore what is corporate. We have got to walk in the light of the one body, and it says here very distinctly it is "*one* body." It is for God if it is in regard to that scene in which Christ is risen, and it is to take its character from that place. It is the body in

which He is to be expressed. You are to be in the light of these things, and yet you have to walk as an individual; you love all saints. Every saint is necessary for this.

E. C. I suppose in one way it is never properly expressed here.

S. H. Never mind; are we going in for it? It is presented here in its abstract character and we must let it have its weight with us.

F. H. B. It would be a good thing if every one said, I am going in for it.

REMARKED. God is going in for it.

S. H. The next point is, that we have access to the Father. "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." The Jew has not priority over the Gentile, nor the Gentile over the Jew, because both have been set aside in the death of Christ. If we have access to Him we speak to Him.

REMARKED. That is the climax of our privilege.

S. H. That is, we are at liberty with Him. See the great change that has taken place from the beginning of the chapter. The various details of the truth are being unfolded and we have come to "access." I am sure we shall be glad to think that we can escape from the world where we were dead in trespasses and sins, we shall be glad to let it go if we see we have access to the Father; then we worship the Father. No one can come to the Father with-

out there being worship. We do not know much about having access to the Father; if this were enjoyed we should be reduced and the sense of our own nothingness would be realised.

G. W. W. No wonder the enemy opposes the work in the soul when he sees that.

S. H. It is easy to see that the conflict is to divert us from the position. If we enjoyed having access to the Father do you think we should be a trouble to one another? We have access to the holiest and access to the Father. The word access signifies liberty of entrance. It is not a thing done once for all, it is characteristic. I think it is because we are walking so little in self-judgment that we have so little access to the Father.

A. E. P. Do you not think the unity is seen there?

S. H. Yes; if we have access by one Spirit, one Spirit is to mark us all. There is only one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and it is through Him, it is not in the energy of the flesh. If it is attempted in the energy of the flesh it would be presumption.

F. H. B. There could not be communion.

G. R. It really depends on the perfect revelation of God. Through *Him* by one *Spirit* to the *Father*.

S. H. Christ came out that He might reveal the Father; when we go in through Him we

find that we are in the same relationship with Him as man.

G. R. It is really the revelation becoming effective in us that produces that being.

REMARKED. The holiest is the stepping-stone to it.

QUES. What is the difference between entering the holiest and access to the Father?

S. H. What you find in the holiest is that it is all expressive of Christ. It answers in some measure to "the word of Christ," that is, the Spirit gives to you the significance or apprehension of what is presented in Christ. You understand the significance of the "word of Christ," what He would say to us from the Father. Then He has gone to the Father, and what I apprehend by that is that if He has gone to the Father then I have access to the Father. I learn really what my privilege is in the holiest, and that is to go in to the Father because Christ has gone in as Forerunner, this is set forth in Him.

A. E. P. Would you say the holiest is confined to the wilderness?

S. H. It is connected with it. Really here you have passed away from the wilderness to where you are seated in Christ.

REMARKED. Here it is more connected with the land, that is more the thought of access to the Father.

S. H. What you learn in the wilderness in

the apprehension of Christ is that you have nothing here. The whole effort of Satan is to get you to make possessions here, but as you apprehend the holiest you see that it is not the place to possess, because Christ has no possessions here. The effect of that is that I can pass over to another scene where everything I come into contact with I can put my foot on to possess, this involves conflict. Do you think that people who are amassing fortunes are passing out of the wilderness into the land? Never; Satan detains them in the wrong place.

REMARKED. In the holiest you have the light of another world and you have access into it.

REMARKED. So the word is to "the household of God."

S. H. "So then ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but ye are fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God." That is all connected with the fact of our having access to the Father. The next point is not only that there is one body, but we are the temple of God. It grows up to a *holy* temple in the Lord.

QUES. What is the difference between the temple and the house?

S. H. The thought of the temple is more the place of inquiry—that we may "inquire in his temple." We speak to Him and He

answers us. Those who compose the temple hear the oracles and in result testify as witnesses. The "house" is *fatness*, God dwells there.

QUES. Is the holiest the place of testimony?

S. H. No; it is not presented in that way at all. You find what the saints are corporately down here; they are the temple of God. The oracles are there and what is known of God is learned there.

H. D'A. C. The first time you hear of the temple in scripture is in connection with Samuel. In the early part of Samuel the word temple is referred to, and then there was no open vision, but "Samuel heard the word of the Lord."

S. H. The temple is the place of inquiry, where you get intelligence and instruction in what is of God, where the mind of God is ascertained.

QUES. Is there not the thought of worship connected with it as well as inquiry?

S. H. The thought of worship is more connected with access to the Father. "Through him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." I think we get a little thought of the temple in connection with the Corinthians, where one coming in among the saints recognises that God is in them of a truth. (1 Cor. xiv.) If we have the sense that God is there we do not look to find the mind of God ascertained

anywhere else. I would not go to the world to ascertain it ; I would expect to find the mind of the Lord expressed in the company, and in hearing Him get *light* and *grace* ; there should be no night there nor anything that defileth. I suppose we have come together here in that way, we have come with the spirit of inquiry, and expecting that we should get our questions answered by the Lord. I do not think we get them answered anywhere else.

REMARKED. You do not set aside the saints.

REMARKED. It is like David finding out the judgment of the wicked in the sanctuary.

S. H. Here you begin to learn something of the grandeur of the gospel. I often wish I could preach it ; I glory in those who can. When we come to think that the germ of all this is in the gospel, the forming of all this on earth for God's glory and pleasure, and for our comfort and blessing too, we begin to see God's end in the gospel. We read, "according to my glad tidings, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery." That postscript in Romans should be kept in mind because it is introductory to Ephesians, which normally follows Romans, though we have much to learn in between.

QUES. Do you distinguish between the temple and what he speaks of afterwards ?

S. H. Yes. There is an immense deal in-

volved in the fact that God dwells among His people. "In whom ye also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

QUES. Is this for all saints?

REMARKED. We must remember what was said at the beginning, that it is abstract, and so it is for all saints.

S. H. Although we have not got all saints walking in the light of this, it is possible for any number of saints to be doing so.

REMARKED. It is possible for one, and I want to go in for it.

S. H. "Groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." He is the administrator: everything is to be derived from Him. The administration of everything is in the hands of the Lord, and it is from Him we get communications. Then it is the "habitation of God in the Spirit," a most blessed thought. There is a place where the Spirit of God dwells. He has come to the earth, but He is not in the world; where He dwells is in the church. In Romans you get the individual side of it; here we come to the corporate aspect of it. He is dwelling here in the church. It is the habitation of God in the Spirit. We are builded together as the habitation of God because He dwells in every individual saint. It is the place of *refreshment* and *fatness*.

H. D'A. C. That brings God very near to man if man wants Him.

W. J. Is it not the end that God always has in view, to dwell with man?

S. H. If we are the habitation of God in the Spirit we ought to be able to bring God near to one another. The Epistle to the Romans where the Spirit is presented on individual lines would be the way in which we are able to bring God near to man, but here, I suppose, it is the way in which we are able to bring God near to one another.

F. H. B. It was the recognition of this great truth that really led the early brethren out of system and they got light from God, and if we enter into it we shall get light from God.

REMARKED. I suppose the exhortations of chapter iv. are founded upon this last verse. We are to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

S. H. The way in which we bring the good of this to one another is that we walk in the Spirit of Christ, helping to unity.

REMARKED. I a little dread too much pressing the place of the Spirit down here. The Spirit has come.

REMARKED. It destroys the link with heaven. When the Lord was here He would speak of Himself as the "Son of man which is in heaven."

S. H. The scriptural expression is, "the Spirit was not yet; because that Jesus was

not yet glorified," and "when he, the Spirit of truth is come." The same thing can be said of the Spirit as of Christ; He was the Son of man which is in heaven though He was here. Though the Spirit came down at Pentecost it does not say He left heaven. Christ as the ascended Man received the Spirit as the promise of the Father and hath shed forth this, &c. The link with heaven is maintained in the Spirit.

W. J. Do you not think that the idea of the house of God is that there should be an answer down here to what is at the top?

S. H. It can only be maintained in one built up in this way. You must have a being of this character. That is what we have to keep in mind in this chapter. You have the formation of a moral being who is able to apprehend the truth of God in connection with His purpose in Christ Jesus.

REMARKED. It is important to recognise the fact that God still has a hold on the earth.

S. H. He has His house here and dwells there Spirit-wise.

QUES. Is it not a great thought to see that God ever had a habitation down here? He was in Christ down here.

REMARKED. The thought of dwelling came in very early.

S. H. If we let the idea become too material as in Christendom we lose its beauty, because

what God has He has in the saints, and that is moral.

REMARKED. When he speaks of being in the assembly it is in Christ; when he speaks of our being the habitation of God it is here.

REMARKED. You have left out the two words "in whom." It is in that relationship, it is outside this scene altogether.

S. H. There was a wonderful link between earth and heaven when Christ came, and that link has never been given up, it is maintained now in the saints by the Spirit. In the millenium He will maintain that link again, He will have a habitation here. It is very important, as otherwise Satan would have defeated God. Satan sought to obtain absolute possession.

W. J. My point is the scripture our brother spoke from yesterday morning. It is quoted from Psalm lxxviii., and there the passage ends with "that the Lord God might dwell among them." That is the answer.

S. H. The importance of this chapter is that you must see that God has created after His own workmanship a vessel which is in character and keeping with Himself and which He can use to such an end. If we do not see this we often look upon ourselves and attach all these things to ourselves as men after the flesh here.
