

as a sad place of death. They stood on its shores without hope; but the Lord came down, entered the depths, divided the place and power of death, and they passed over in triumph. In the same way at the Jordan, when the ark stood in its waters, as in the place of death, and divided them, it did not leave them until all the ransomed of the Lord had passed over. These were foreshadows of death and the triumph of Christ over death at Calvary. He received death in its own place, bared His breast to its sting, paid the penalty, endured the shame, and then (for it was finished) hurled the monster from Him harmless for ever. Ah! thus the Red Sea is divided! Jordan is an "emptied river!" Jesus has laid His hand on "the hole of the asp," and all our hands may now be laid with safety there, for death has to us no sting beside that which penetrated the Blessed one who being identified with us, "*died for our sins.*" *To be continued.*

THE LORD'S TREASURY, AND HOW TO FILL IT.

THE OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTIANS TO SUPPORT GOSPEL ORDINANCES.

"The obligation to support gospel ordinances springs from the Christian's relations to God and to man, being at once the proof and expression of his devout allegiance to God, and of his cordial identity and sympathy with man.

1. *This obligation is due to God* as the first and paramount claim; before man's own needs and enjoyments, and in his own personal responsibility, unbiassed by the example of others, or by the prevalent standards of local custom or general habit.

1. *As an act of solemn worship and fealty to God.* Approach to a sovereign was formerly made by an offering proportioned to his rank, and to the means of the offerer. Jacob sent a present by his sons to the lord of Egypt: "Bring an offering and come into his courts." It is an act of homage rendered to God as Lord and King. Are the obligations of the Christian inferior to those of the Jew? Are his offerings less needed? Are they to be applied to inferior objects? God has himself provided the infinitely meritorious offering which allows of man's approach to his throne. *Can any true believer refuse his tribute to advance the divine glory?*

2. *As an expression of grateful and adoring love to God.* Man's obligation for being, preservation, enjoyment, and the blessings of salvation, what heart can conceive? Where is there ground for gratitude, if not here?—

Gratitude will find expression. Thankful adoration to God is an unavoidable obligation, which it is as personally injurious as it is base and ungrateful for man to withhold. Ought not love to God to secure substantial offerings, seeing that they advance his glory? How much more, seeing that they are expressly enjoined? "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase," (Prov. iii. 9); "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," (1 Cor. ix. 14).

2 This obligation also arises out of the Christian's relations to his fellowmen.

1. *It is a duty of justice to the ministry of his choice.* The relation of minister and flock is of the most elevated character, referring not to estate, or health, or family, or reputation, but to the very man himself and his eternal interests. Ministerial services are the most valuable performed by man—embracing continual research into truth, a yearning solicitude of heart, prayerful vigilance and exhausting labours for the spiritual edification, consistency, and salvation of men. The benefits derived from a gospel ministry immensely excel those of all other ministries. Instruction and renewed impression in divine truth; consolation, and refreshment of heart under guilt and sorrow, and cordial sympathy and friendship in all the interests of life. Should not the Christian's offerings for a minister's services bear some proportion to the benefits derived from them?—Can these offerings be justly depressed to a stinted minimum? Was it for his own sake, or from sympathy with his impoverished ministers, that God said, "Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation!" (Mal. iii. 9).

The apostle Paul puts the subject of ministerial support in the light of justice, when he asks, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. ix. 11). He further argues the subject in the instance of his own right, even as of Peter and other apostles; proceeding thence to establish the sacred obligation of maintenance of ministry beyond dispute; as a fundamental institution of the kingdom of Christ; in analogy with the soldier's right to subsistence from his sovereign; the servant's claim on his employer; the husbandman on the produce which he cultivates; the toiling oxen for needful food, and the Jewish priesthood to support from the offerings of the nation. (1 Cor. ix. 7-14).

The Pauline epistles contrast parsimonious with generous churches. The Corinthian churches were large, well-conditioned, and emulous of showy gifts, yet deficient of liberality. The Macedonian churches were poor but bountiful. To the former he wrote, "I robbed other churches to do you service," (2 Cor. xi. 8). To the latter he wrote, "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the begin-