

JESUS ON THE CROSS AND ON THE THRONE.

"If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God), that thy land be not defiled."—Deut. xxi., 22, 23.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. iii., 13.

Worthy, O Lord, of death am I,
 The just award of sin;
 Unfit to live beneath Thy sky;
 'Tis right that I should hang, and die,
 Guilty, condemned, unclean:
 That cross of shame, that curséd tree,
 Is the just doom of one like me.

Thy sun might justly seek to hide
 His beams from eyes like mine,
 Who in my God-renouncing pride,
 His Maker day by day defied;
 Thy stars refuse to shine:
 Yea, all good creatures might complain
 Of one, like me, a loathsome stain,—

Unfit to live on Thy fair earth,
 Unfit to breathe its air;
 A tainted traitor from my birth,
 A discord to all holy mirth,
 A blight on all things fair;
 Worthy alone of death must be
 One that has sinned, O God, like me.

A hiding-place beneath its sod,
 For one too vile to live ;
 That died beneath the curse of God,
 Smitten by law's most righteous rod,
 Is all that earth could give,
 Till that tremendous judgment-day,
 When earth itself shall pass away.

Thy angels, who delight to praise
 And serve their glorious King,
 Whose will at once Thy will obeys,
 Look down with horror and amaze,
 On such a guilty thing ;
 And ready stand with flaming sword,
 To crush the scorners of their Lord.

Oh, wretched man ! where can I go ?
 What arm can help, or save ?
 I look behind, around, below—
 Naught see, or hear, but deep'ning woe :
 Before me yawns the grave ;
 Beyond the darkness of the tomb,
 The horrors of eternal doom !

"Look unto Me," the Saviour cries.
 Behold ! upon the tree,
 Between two thieves, Emmanuel dies,
 The Lamb of God, a sacrifice,
 He bears the curse for me ;
 Oh, love unsearchable, divine,
 His life He gives to ransom mine !

Oh, hour most solemn ! Hour alone,
 In solitary might,
 When God the Father's only Son,
 As man, for sinners to atone,
 Expires—amazing sight !
 The Lord of glory crucified !
 The Lord of life has bled and died.

Oh, mystery of mysteries !
 Of life and death the tree ;
 Centre of two eternities,
 Which look with rapt, adoring eyes,
 Onward and back to Thee !
 Oh, Cross of Christ, where all His pain
 And death—is my eternal gain !

Oh, how my inmost heart doth move,
 While gazing on that tree ;
 The death of the Incarnate Love !
 What shame, what grief, what joy I prove,
 That He should die for me !
 My heart is broken by that cry,
 "Eli, lama sabachthani ?"

Worthy of death, O Lord, I am ;
 That vengeance was my due :
 Thy grace upon Thy spotless Lamb,
 Laid all my sins, and guilt and shame ;
 Justice my Surety slew ;
With Him my Surety I have Jied,
With Him I there was crucified.

When Thou didst make Him "sin" for me,
 Thy Son Thou didst not spare ;
 Oh, what exceeding agony,
 All needed, Lord, to set me free,
 Blest Jesus, Thou didst bear !
 Now peace and righteousness can meet,
 And kiss Thy wounded hands and feet.

They bury, ere the setting sun,
 In the new rock-hewn cave,
 The body of Thy Holy One ;
 They set the watch ; they seal the stone,
 To keep Him in the grave :
Buried with Him myself I see,
 So low He chose to lie for me.

But lo! His grave is empty now,
 He sits at Thy right hand:
 Honour and glory crown His brow,
 Before Him all the angels bow,
 And wait His high command:
 The Lamb of God for sinners slain,
 Lives as the Lord of all to reign.

Thy righteousness the sentence spoke,
 That sent Thy Son to die:
 Thy righteousness from death awoke,
 And all the powers of darkness broke,
 And raised Him up on high;
 His spotless righteousness to own,
 Thou hast exalted to Thy throne.

And now Thy mercy finds delight,
 Right royally to prove
 How precious He is in Thy sight;
 And all the wondrous depth and height
 Of Thy surpassing love:
 With Him, who bore our sins alone,
 Thy grace has made His ransomed *one*.

Quickened with Him with life divine,
 Raised with Him from the dead,
 His own—and all His own are Thine!—
 Shall with Him in His glories shine,
 His Church's living Head:
 We who were worthy but to die,
 Now with Him, "Abba Father," cry.



"Unto HIM that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to HIM be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i. 5, 6.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

If we come to the cross, we must come by our wants and sins. No one comes truly unless he comes as a sinner, whose sins brought him there. But when we pass through the rent veil into the presence of God in perfect peace through the efficacy of the work He accomplished, and look back at the cross by which we came, in contemplating it in a divine way, we find that the cross then has in it a glory and excellency all its own, of which everything in God's ways is the result, even the new heavens and the new earth. God was perfectly glorified in it. It was the climax of good and evil. All was met there. We must come to the cross as sinners to find the good of it; but if we have found peace by it, coming into God's presence reconciled, it is everything we shall see for ever. We never shall forget the Lamb that was slain. But still we can contemplate it in a divine way. I get in the cross the perfectness of man's sins, positive enmity against God present in goodness. Nothing would do for man but to get rid of Him. "Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin," then they would have been justified in rejecting Him; "but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (Acts ii. 23; John xv. 22). There I get the extreme of man's wickedness. When

God was presented in goodness, it only drew out his hatred. The power was present in Christ to meet all the effects of sin by His word. The manifestation of it drew out the enmity of man's heart against Him, and they crucified Him. There you get all that man is brought out in the presence of God. He had broken the law before, and now God had come in in perfect goodness and power (power that could remove all their distresses); but it was God's power, and they would not have it, they crucified Him. On the other hand, we see there all the power of Satan; therefore He says, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John xii. 31). They were all led by him against Christ. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke xxii. 53). He had overcome him in the temptation in the wilderness. It is said in Luke iv. 13, "he departed from Him for a season." Now He says, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me" (John xiv. 30). He who had power over the earth (for Satan was really the prince of this world) had come back, and succeeded in moving up the hatred of man's heart against Him.

But now see the absolute perfectness of the Second Man: "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do" (John xiv. 31). I get in man (more than man) perfect love to the Father, and perfect obedience; and when He had the dreadful cup to drink (mark the absolute need

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there was of it) that perfect obedience and love to the Father made good in the very place where He stood as sin. On the other hand, in the cross I find God's infinite love and grace abounding over sin; perfect love, giving His Son for us; and then at the same time perfect righteousness judging against sin, and God's majesty vindicated. "It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. ii. 10). I see thus perfect evil in man and Satan; perfect good in man (but He was God), and perfect love in God, and righteousness in God against sin when it was met as such, all brought out in the cross; evil and good meeting there. And it is what has laid the immutable foundation in righteousness for all that will come in in goodness and blessing in the new heavens and new earth, resting not upon responsibility, but upon the accomplishment of the work, the value of which never can be known.

The more we think of the cross (we have come as sinners needing it; but as Christians reconciled to God we can sit down and contemplate it) we see it stands totally alone in the history of eternity. Divine glory, man's sin, man's perfectness, Satan's evil, God's power and love and righteousness, all were brought out and met there. Accordingly it is the immutable foundation of man's blessing, and of everything that is good in heaven and earth. Then, when our souls are reconciled, we look at

Him and learn of Him : "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest " (Matt. xi. 29). He sees that the world had given Him up, there was no rest upon earth. He searched with wonderful patience for a place of rest, but there was no such thing to be found. He knew it, and had tried it ; the Son of man had not where to lay (not merely outwardly) His head, but to rest His heart ; no more than Noah's dove found rest for the sole of her foot. "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none " (Ps. lxxix. 20). Yet feeling this, it is just there He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

I desire then, that while we rest in the blessed efficacy of the sacrifice, our thoughts should be formed by the Blessed One—that is the practical secret of going through this world : "He that eateth Me, he shall live by Me " (John vi. 57). No doubt the taste ought to grow continually in us. There are the two sides of christian life. If it is to give courage, victory over the world, I look at His glory as in Phil. iii. There it is the energy that runs after to win Christ at the end, counting all else loss and dung. In the second chapter it is the other side, not the object, but His lowliness in coming down is set before us.

RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS.

(Continued from page 74.)

But there is more than this. The idea of simple pardon is at the best negative—blessed indeed, even in that view, that iniquity, although committed, is not imputed. Speaking humanly, we have the idea of a free pardon emanating from the grace of the Sovereign; we have the idea also of an amnesty; but we cannot get the idea of justification. It is the idea which God alone can present, because He alone can justify the ungodly; and this is the new and blessed idea here presented. David describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works, saying, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.” Now in these words we have not the actual statement of the imputation of righteousness. It could not be clearly and fully announced (although it was the only principle on which God had acted from the beginning), because the great groundwork, The Cross, was not an accomplished fact. However it may have been anticipated by faith, still there was all the difference as to perception, between a promise made and a promise accomplished. Everything was suspended on the death and resurrection of Christ. “We,” says the apostle, speaking to the natural heirs of promise and natural children of the Kingdom, “declare unto

you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus" (Acts xiii.). The proper person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His death and resurrection, is the key by which we are able to unlock all Scripture. The Holy Ghost, Himself the Inditer of all Scripture, the Spirit which moved the prophets, is especially known to us as "the Spirit of truth," and Glorifier of Jesus. His great testimony is to the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. And as soon as the death and resurrection of Jesus became a matter of fact, the Holy Ghost brought it to bear on His own precious Scriptures; and in this light we clearly discern, that iniquity not imputed, is righteousness imputed. "God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v.). There is nothing simply negative in the Gospel. It is not a prohibitory system. It is a gracious system of conferring positive blessing. To forgive sin may be negative; but to give righteousness is a positive and inalienable blessing. This marks the genius of the Gospel. "Whosoever believeth in Him [Jesus] shall not perish;" it stops not here, "but have everlasting life" (John iii.). "That they may receive forgiveness of sins,"—but it goes on, "and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Acts xxvi.). If we are "delivered from the power of darkness," it is by translation into

the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. i.). Alas, our narrow minds and dull hearts deprive the Gospel of its glory. It is "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" (1 Tim. i.): it represents God in the gracious place of the Giver, and sets man in his only place of possible blessing, that of a simple recipient. Receiving Christ, *i. e.*, "believing on His name," we receive from Him "power (authority) to become the sons of God" (John i.). We receive forgiveness of sins, abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness. We receive eternal life. Christian action follows on this reception of Christ. The teaching of the Holy Ghost unfolds to us what we have received in having received Christ. It is well to keep this principle constantly before the soul: it is not that which we *renounce*, any more than that which we *do*, which makes us Christians, but that which we *receive*. And this principle runs through the Christian life: it is a life which has its affections, sensibilities, energies and activities. Our Christian life is not a system of negation any more than is our natural life. This marks it so forcibly from the common notion of religion. It is said, "Abhor that which is evil"—it is added, "Cleave to that which is good." "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace

to the hearers (Rom. xii.; Ephes. v.). Hence arises the danger to Christians from misusing even the good, holy and righteous law of God. It is not for the righteous (1 Tim. i.). Their need is to have the life already received nurtured by the ministry of Christ, the true and living Head; in order that the energies of that life may be called forth in its varied and appropriate activities. We have Christ Himself for our standard, and the righteousness which we have in Him, as our standing before God, presented to us as our highest but certain final attainment. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after; if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Hence it is that the one hope of our calling, which is so certain, because according to the purpose of God, becomes so formative of the Christian character. To be conformed to the image of God's Son, as the First-born among many brethren, is the blessed destiny of those whom God has already justified. It is upon the certainty of this, that the Holy Ghost acts in our conscience and affections, not making what we shall be to depend on what we practically are, I mean as Christians; but, taking the divine certainty of what we *shall be*, as the mighty moral lever, now to elevate our affections; and even now beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; and every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John iii.).

This hope, grounded on Christ, is the great power of present purification. “Desiring to be teachers of the law” (1 Tim. i.), was, in the apostle’s judgment, the result of ignorance in those who undoubtedly thought to promote holiness thereby. And so there is even a way of pressing conduct and service, which, instead of strengthening the life of Christ in the saint, turns him back on the question of his own salvation. Such is not the way in which the Spirit leads. He glorifies Christ, and takes great care to establish the soul in Him, when leading it on into practical holiness. Such is the order of instruction for the most part in the Epistles. And I believe the wondrous truth of “righteousness without works” to be the very ground-work of righteousness and true holiness. It is the positive blessing received, recognized and enjoyed—“God delivered Christ for our sins and raised Him for our justification,” which calls the Christian life into activity.

Secondly, “And in whose spirit there is no guile.” It is written of Jesus, “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Pet. ii.). Of all others the description is but too true—“With their tongues they have used deceit” (Rom. iii.). This

is indeed a humbling condition of being—to dissemble what we are, to pretend to be what we are not—to use the tongue, or to put on an outward demeanour, to conceal the thoughts of the heart—and at the same time, on every moment of serious reflection, to be conscious that we are not before God what we seem to be, or profess to be before others. This is a condition which makes the thought of God insupportable. It is too much of restraint for man always to be acting a character, and “the idle” off-hand word betrays the condition of the heart, which perhaps more studied speech had concealed. It was by the idle word—“This man casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils”—that He, “who knew what was in man,” made manifest from His very words what was in their hearts. Whence then the remedy for so evil a condition? Whence the blessedness of having no guile in the spirit? It is alone the result, the first and blessed result, of the great truth of “righteousness without works.” This doctrine at once cuts off all effort at concealment, and all pretensions to be what we are not. The very ground-work of the doctrine is that the very God, before whom all things are naked and open, who knows us thoroughly (Heb. iv. 12, 13; cf. Ps. cxxxix. 1-12), and has taught us to see ourselves in measure as He sees us, is the One who has covered up our sin—yea, He has covered up all the sin which His omniscience knoweth to be in us; for He has not acted toward us on our

estimate of sin, but on His own. None can condemn—since God Himself justifieth (Rom. viii. 33, 34). God has not put us in the place of justifying ourselves; He does that Himself. And He takes our part much more effectually than we could take our own. Hence there is no guile in the spirit. So to speak, it is not needed. All anxiety about making out a case for ourselves is removed, since God Himself declares His righteousness in covering our sin, and making us righteous (Rom. iii. 24-26). If we search ever so deeply (and it is well to do so), as to what sin is, God knows it more deeply, and has dealt with it in judgment on the Cross of Christ according to His own estimate of it. There is no guile in the spirit, where there truly is faith; because the truthfulness of our own character, and the truthfulness of the character of God are alike maintained by the marvellous mode of God's dealing with us in and through Christ.

There is no guile in the spirit of him who at one and the same time takes his place as the chief of sinners, and yet also as perfectly righteous in Christ. There is no guile in the spirit of him whose object is to glorify Christ and not himself. Hence it follows that when self-vindication becomes needful for a saint, which is but rarely, he is placed in the most humiliating position; because he has to speak of himself instead of Christ. The apostle was thus compelled to speak "as a fool" (2 Cor. xi.). But as a general rule confession and not self-vindication is the path of a saint. An over-

sensitiveness about our own character argues a state of soul little occupied with Christ. If our care be His glory, He will in due time vindicate us. And what is not cleared up now will be in that day (1 Cor. iv.). And I do admire the grace of Christ in the apostle, which could make him turn all the aspersions cast on his own character to establish the faithfulness of God (2 Cor. i.); and thus turn the thoughts of the Corinthians away from himself to a better object.

Thirdly, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long ; for day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me ; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer."

Where can a guilty conscience find relief? The very effort at concealment only aggravates the burthen. How many broken hearts are there, and how many heavy spirits, who dare not tell their sorrow to another. How many who have found bitter disappointments in everything, and in themselves also, who are ignorant of the real cause, because they are ignorant of their real condition as lost, and think their own case peculiar. They know not that God has thought upon their case and considered it ; and provided the remedy. They think not of telling their case to God any more than to their fellows. God, they think, would spurn them for their unworthiness, and man ridicule them for their singularity. They keep their case to themselves. They keep silence, although it be only to aggravate the raging fever within, by

being thus thrown on themselves. They know not that they are only realising what the constitution of man as a moral creature is. He is insufficient for his own happiness ; and the creature too is insufficient to make him happy. This may not in the ordinary acceptation be felt as though it were sin ; yet, it is the deepest principle of sin, because it is in fact " worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever Amen." How many aching hearts are there, how many sensible of a void which refuses to be filled, where there is no conviction, properly speaking, of sin ; nothing which makes manifest the need of an all-sufficient atonement. They think not of the Gospel as the remedy for them. They know not that Jesus, heart-sick in a weary world and rejected by it, in the conscious possession of everything man needed either as a creature or a sinner, turned to such and said, " Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How has the Gospel been degraded in being regarded merely as a remedy for sin, which it assuredly is : but it is far more ; it is the manifestation of God Himself in such a way to man as a sinner, as to make him happy in God, whilst God is glorified in thus making him supremely happy. The state above described is that which knows not God as the blessed One ; and knows not the blessedness announced by the Oracle of God, " Blessed is he," etc. And herein is the crying evil of the professed Christianity of

the world—a mere system of ordinances, nullifying the necessity of the Gospel. These broken-hearted ones are hindered from seeing that there is a remedy of God's own providing for their misery. They want the Gospel in its simplest form; but they hear it not. They attempt to act out Christian duties, or even to assume Christian privileges, without knowing its first principles—free intercourse with God on the ground of the propitiation of Christ.

There is no relief till the soul can tell out its sorrow to God. Even the very hand of God may be felt and acknowledged, and yet God Himself is regarded as inaccessible. The soul goes on bearing its own burden because it dare not cast it upon God. The whole spirit is gone, just as the natural moisture is dried up under a raging fever. In such a case it is sometimes found that the hand of God (acknowledged and felt, because it has touched some idol or other in which the soul was seeking rest or at least diversion from its misery, instead of graciously subduing the soul) produces fretfulness against God. God is regarded as an enemy, as having gone forth against the sufferer, at the very time He may only be removing the obstacles in the way of the desired relief. He "waits that He may be gracious."—He "will be exalted that He may have mercy" (Is. xxx. 18). Here is much of the controversy between God and man—whether the remedy for man's misery is to be found in man or in God. The first thing under all circumstances

of misery is the acknowledgment of God. Man finds out many ways of accounting for his misery, and applies his various remedies ; but until he acknowledges God, he always accounts for it on wrong ground, and never discovers the real remedy for it.

There are certain principles which apply with equal truth to man as a sinner, and to one born of God. And this is one—"When I kept silence," etc. It is a condition of exquisite misery to the sinner, because he is ignorant of the revealed character of God, and knows not the relief it would be to tell everything to God ; and to the saint, because knowing God in grace, he does not use the truth aright to deepen himself in self knowledge. He has so far forgotten his standing, as to have guile in his spirit, by not being open with God. The statements of the apostle are generally applicable : "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John i.). When God is really known as the One who imputeth righteousness without works, any concealment from Him must necessarily produce heaviness of spirit. We cannot come near Him by reason of the concealment ; and then comes on coldness. And how often in such a state of uneasiness of soul do we find the fault laid anywhere,

even on God Himself, rather than on ourselves for keeping silence. When we have been restless in spirit, downcast and unhappy, have we not often been unable to solve the difficulty? Frequently it arises from mortified pride. Our self-esteem has been lowered on discovering some unsuspected sin; as if our blessedness consisted in our *character*, instead of our having righteousness imputed to us without works. God will not allow us to have confidence in our character, or in our faithfulness to Him, but in His own revealed character and His faithfulness to us. This tendency in the saint to self-righteousness, accounts in very great measure for the misery found in Christians; when in any degree entertaining it in ever so subtle a form, they have departed from the real and only ground of their blessedness. But if there be sin unconfessed, or made light of in confession, or only generally, and not specially confessed, it must induce misery; if God has told out to us all His grace in forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, it is that in the knowledge of this, we may have no concealments, or rather attempts at concealment, from Him. He would have us look at ourselves as we really are, and justify Him in so dealing with us as He has done in the Gospel of His Son.

(To be continued, D. V.)