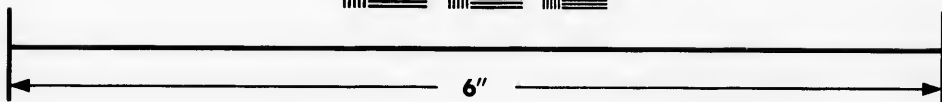
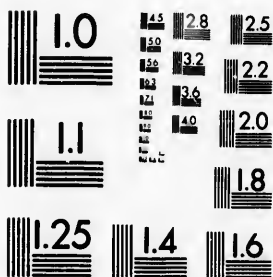


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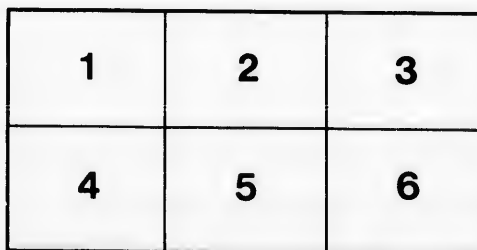
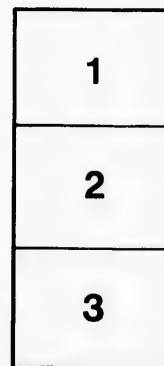
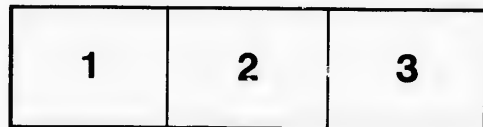
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For
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“The
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Tender Grass
AND
Waters of Quietness.

*For the Edification, Exhortation, and
Comfort of the Lambs and Sheep
of Christ's Flock.*

EDITED BY BENJ. C. GREENMAN.

*"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He
maketh me to lie down in green pastures (pastures of tender
grass): He leadeth me beside the still waters (waters of
quietness). Ps. xxiii. 1-2.*

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"A LITTLE WHILE."

"Yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry."
HEB. x. 37.

Oh! for the *peace* which floweth as a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile!
Oh! for the *faith* to grasp heaven's bright "for ever,"
Amid the shadows of this "little while!"

"A little while" for patient vigil-keeping,
To face the storm, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.

"A little while" to wear the robe of sadness,
And toil with weary steps through miry ways;
Then to pour forth the fragrant oil of gladness,
And clasp the girdle round the robe of praise.

"A little while" midst shadow and illusion,
To strive, by faith, love's mysteries to spell;
Then read each dark enigma's bright solution,
And hail sight's verdict, "*He doth all things well.*"

"A little while" the earthen pitcher taking
To wayside brooks, from far-off fountains fed;
Then the cool lip its thirst for ever slaking,
Beside the fulness of the fountain-head.

"A little while" to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing,
To haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.

'Tis He who is Himself the *gift* and *giver*,
The future glory, and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "*for ever*,"
Can light the shadow of the "*little while.*"

THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

(MARK XVI. 12, 13; LUKE XXIV. 13-35.)

Slowly along the rugged pathway walked
 Two saddened wayfarers, bent on one quest;
 With them *Another*, who had asked to share
 Their travel, since they left the city's walls;
 Their converse too intent for speed; and oft,
 Where lingered on the rocks the sunset's tints,
 They checked their footsteps, careless of the hour
 And waning light, and heavy falling dews,
 For from the Stranger's lips came words that burned
 And lit the altar fuel in their hearts,
 Consuming fear and quickening faith at once.
 God's words grew luminous as he spoke;
 And all along the ages good from ill;
 And light from darkness sprang, as day from night.

Thus on their path they communed, till they reached
 The lowly wicket; and their urgent plea,
 "Day is far spent, abide with us," prevailed.
 The lamp is lighted o'er the simple board,
 And there is silence for a space; but, lo!
 The *Stranger* takes the bread and blesses it
 And breaks; and like a dream the veil is rent
 Which hid their Lord and Master from their gaze;
 It is *His* eye, *His* hand, *His* voice, *Himself*.
 Fain had they fallen at His feet, and fain
 Clung to Him as of old; it *may not be*;
 His place is empty, but *His love* is there,
 A calm, abiding Presence in their hearts.

O Jesus, Saviour, hear *our* cry. We, too,
 Are weary travellers on life's rough path,
 And Thou art still unchangeably the same.
 Come, Lord, to us, and let us walk with Thee;
 Come and unfold the words of heavenly life,
 Till our souls burn within us, and the day
 Breaks, and the Day-star rises in our hearts.
 Yea, Lord, abide with us, rending the veil
 Which hides Thee from the loving eye of faith;
 Dwell with us to the world's end evermore;
 Until thou callest us to dwell with Thee.—E. H. B.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION.

“How can we be *quite sure* that we are saved?”

Beloved reader, as we are exhorted in God's word to “be ready always to give an *answer* to every man that asketh you a *reason* of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear,” (1 Pet. iii. 15), let us each enquire *what* answer does that blessed Word provide us with, that so, dependent upon God's Holy Spirit, we may do as He has bidden us.

“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what HE will say unto me, and what I shall *answer* when I am reproved (argued with),” was the language of God's prophet of old, and how soon could he say, “And the Lord *answered* me, etc.” Hab. ii. 1, 2. Surely if we too but seek it in earnest, to us it will be granted also.

First, let us note, in a few passages in God's word, that salvation can be had by us, known and enjoyed in present certainty to our souls, and then enquire *how* is this rich possession reached—this blessed knowledge attained unto.

- “We ARE *saved*, etc.” Rom. viii. 24.
- “Unto us which ARE *saved*, etc.” 1 Cor. i. 18.
- “By which also ye ARE *saved*, etc.” 1 Cor. xv. 2.
- “In them that ARE *saved*, etc.” 2 Cor. ii. 15.
- “By grace ye ARE *saved*, etc.” Eph. ii. 5, 8.
- “Who HATH *saved* us, etc.” 2 Tim. i. 9.
- “He *saved* us, etc.” Titus iii. 5.

Here, plainly enough, the *fact* of God's salvation is set before us, and that, too, not merely as a thing *to be* had in the future, but reached *already*—the *present*, assured, *certain* and *happy* possession of it.

Now then may we see *how* this blessedness is reached :

“I am not ashamed of THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST :
for it is the power of God unto *salvation*
to *every one* that *believeth*,” Rom i. 16.

“The fulness of the *blessing* of THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, xv 29.

“It pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save *them that believe*.” 1 Cor. ii. 2.

“I declare unto you THE GOSPEL

“which I *preached* unto you,
“which also ye have *received*,
“and wherein ye *stand*,
“by which also ye are *saved*,

“if ye *keep in memory* what I preached unto you,

“UNLESS ye have *believed in vain*.

For I *delivered* unto you, that which I also *received*,

How that CHRIST died for our sins }
 { and that HE was buried
 and that HE rose again, } according to the Scriptures

and that HE was seen of { Cephas, } James,
 { the twelve, } all the Apostles
 { 500 Brethren, } Paul.

The Son of God, Jesus Christ, preached among you was not yea and nay, but in Him was YEA." 2 Cor. i. 19.

"The NEW TESTAMENT, not of the letter, but of the spirit,

{ the spirit giveth life,
 ministration of righteousness,
 where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," iii. 6-17.

"MINISTRY, and WORD OF RECONCILIATION, as though God did beseech by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. v., 18-20.

"Ministered the Spirit, by the hearing of faith." Gal. iii. 5.

THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION." Eph. i., 15.

THE WORD OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, since the day ye { heard of it.

{ knew the grace of God in truth." Col. i. 5.

"Have not I written unto thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee

know the certainty of the WORDS OF TRUTH
 and that thou mightest answer the WORDS OF TRUTH
 to them that send unto thee." Prov xxii., 17.

"That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." Luke i., 1-4.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the

WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

and we believe and are SURE that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John vi., 68-69.

With all this testimony as to this wondrous possession and its certainty to the soul, surely to be without it, is to be robbed of the blessing which is our birthright, as "born of God." If we have but truly taken our place as sinners before Him in hearty repentance and confession of our sins, then it is our privilege, through grace, to hear Him say to us,

"Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace."

"Thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Then be it so—take the place of lost—own Him as the Saviour of the lost—trust His finished work—rest upon His Word, and realize this happy portion—"them that honor me, I will honor," "Blessed are ALL they that put their trust in Him."

B. C. G.

ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS—I.

SIMON PETER.

(John xxi ; 1 Peter ii. 25.)

The subject-matter of our chapter we have in the last verse read : "Ye were as sheep *going astray* ; but are now *returned* unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." We shall consider, first, what it is for the beloved people of God to *stray* ; next, what *causes* us to stray ; then, how *far* we may go astray ; further, what is *needed* to bring us back from straying ; and, finally, what *lessons* we are to learn from straying. In John xxi. 14 we read, "This is now the *third* time that Jesus shewed Himself to His disciples after that He was risen from the dead." I think we may assume that if the disciples long ago needed Jesus to come three times to set their hearts fully at rest, that so it is now. The Lord Jesus, after redemption had been wrought out—after the whole question of sin had been settled on the cross—came thrice to *establish* the hearts of His beloved people in the knowledge of what He had done for them. His two previous appearances to the disciples after His resurrection are recorded in John xx., the first in the nineteenth verse, and the second in the twenty-sixth and following verses. First of all, after the Saviour had died for us on the cross, He comes Himself to announce the *fruits* for *Him* and for *us* of that wonderful fact of redemption. He does not leave us to infer what belongs to us. He wants our hearts to know what *God* sees in it, and us to see it with Him. First of all, He announces Himself to the weeping Mary ; her heart of love was rewarded well : she got the first sight of the risen Saviour—the first declaration of what *Christianity* really is, because her heart loved Him most. He said to her, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father ; and to my God, and your God." John xx. 17. What is that but taking them by the hand and leading them to the ground on which He stood in resurrection ? Where His holy feet stood, where the new song was first in His mouth, as risen from the dead, *there* He brings all His beloved people. The disciples were then shut up in an upper chamber at Jerusalem, their hearts sad and despondent ; searching the sepulchre they could find only His grave-clothes. How many disciples are occupied at that business still ! Jesus stands in their midst and shows them, in His wounded hands and feet, and pierced side, what it

cost Him to work out that wonderful redemption which was theirs. It cost Him the "pouring out of His soul unto death." "His strength was dried up like a potsherd, etc." He wants to tell them also *what they have* at this wondrous cost. First, *peace* is theirs—two fold peace, peace in relation to their *place* before God : peace as to their *path* amongst men. Look at it. "Peace be unto you," saith the Saviour. Then they could say what they never could before, "*Abba, Father,*"—and all this was the fruits of redemption! "What God has *joined* together let us not put asunder." He has wedded Jesus' *place* of wondrous grace and blessing, and Jesus' *path* with its tears of sorrow and self-denial,—the will given up to God wholly and entirely—and let us not sever them. How much have we learned it so? Dear brethren, I appeal to you, how much has the Lord taught us *thus*? Let us hear Him again. "Peace be unto you," "As my Father hath sent me, even so *send* I you." John xx. 21. This points to the narrow path in which He had walked. The language of Jesus' heart was this, "Lo, I come to do *Thy will*, O God." Heb. x. 9. So we have put together for us, Jesus' *place* in the presence of the Father, and His *path* in the world that cast Him out. See a picture of this in the case of Joseph and his brethren. His father calls him, and he says, "Here am I, my father." His father says, I want to send you to enquire after the welfare of your brethren; thus, the one distinguished by the "coat of many colors"—badge and token of his father's *love*—became the doer of his father's *will*,—carried with him the very thing that would call out the enmity of his brethren; so are we sent out with the marks of a Father's love bestowed upon us—"accepted in the Beloved"—our coat of many colors; and the more we wear this coat—walk in the enjoyment of "our calling of God on high"—the more shall we find that the world hates the Son of God. The second thing, then, is, that the Lord Jesus Christ having thus sought to establish the hearts of His people as to their *place*, breathes on them and says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" as one risen from the dead, as the Head of the new creation, He empowers them to take every step that He sets before them in the *path* He calls them to walk in. Thomas is missing—the one distinguished above the other Apostles for his unbelieving spirit. He must thrust his hand into the Lord's side before he will believe. But stouter citadels than Thomas' heart have been won for Christ. Does the Saviour say that He will pass him by, and leave him to his misery? No.

WHEREVER WE MAY BE, THERE GOD WILL MEET US. Sweetest truth in Scripture! We may be trying to disentangle a mass of threads in the tangled web of life, we had better give it up to a hand that can pick out the knots and make all smooth and plain for us. If we want more than the knowledge of redemption as to *place* and *path*, then the blessed Lord Jesus will come and appear on purpose to meet *this*, because He lives to set His people's hearts at peace. Are any of us like Thomas? *What shall we do?* Let the Saviour take the matter in hand. "*Do Thou* for me, O God the Lord, for Thy name's sake: because Thy mercy is good, deliver *Thou* me." Psalm cix. 21. He will come and offer joy to us *our own* way, and then will we be constrained to say, "Lord, we would rather have it *Thy* way," and He will give it to us to the full. "*Satisfied* with favor, full with the blessing of the Lord."

The *gospel* of John ends with the twentieth chapter. But just as we put a postscript at the bottom of a letter, God has put a postscript here. There are twenty chapters for poor sinners, and one following in case His children might need it. Twenty chapters to make us acquainted with the blessed "*Saviour* of the lost." We might think that we did not need anything else, but we do—we need the "*Shepherd* and Bishop of our souls." We need Him to restore us if we go astray, and we need Him to pick us up if we fall. Such is our Lord Jesus in John xxi. Chap. xx., 31, tells us the *Divine object* of the gospel of John. "These are written that ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have *life* through His name." Is there anyone that is not sure that he *knows* the Son of God? let him read these twenty chapters. Beloved friends, why should we be without this knowledge, when it is there for us? This gospel is, so to speak, God's *letter of introduction* to His Son. In 1 John v., 13, we read, "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*" Thus twenty chapters were written that I might *know* my Saviour, and five (1 John) that I *may know* what I have in Him. Like the servant who introduces you after you have rung the door-bell, leaves you to the master of the house, so this gospel ushers you into the presence of our Lord, and leaves you with Him, to enjoy *Himself*." "*After these things*," (John xxi., 1.)—after *peace*, after *power*, after *assurance*.—one more look at Christ, one more sight of "our Lord and Saviour." What is this,—"*after these things* Jesus shewed

Himself again?" There were *seven* of the disciples together, Simon Peter, always in the front, endlessly in trouble, ardent, impetuous, generous to a fault, yet a man that Jesus loved, and who loved Him. Next, Thomas, the very antipodes of Simon Peter, cool, calculating, and reasoning, he weighs well every step he takes. But *he* gets off the track too. So sometimes with many a steady-going exemplary christian, his heart gets cold and nobody knows it. He slips along from day to day and cannot tell that he is away from the Lord, and yet all the while he is *sick* and *declining*, "gray hairs here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not." Are there any like Thomas among us? Next, Nathaniel. Surely *he* never strays,—“an Israelite indeed in whom is no *guile*.” But *he* gets off the track too. He is like a christian who trusts his *amiability* and mistakes the honey of nature for the sweets of divine grace. Thus he slips away, often imperceptibly, but none the less sorrowfully, from the Lord. He thinks he can get along without so much *praying* as other people. Amiable, gracious people,—they wander from Christ too, and they wander when they and we least know it. Then we have the two sons of Zebedee,—“sons of thunder,”—true as steel, standing back to back for the vindication of their Saviour, ready to “call fire from heaven as Elias,” but *they* wander too. Some one may say, “I am not like Peter, nor Thomas, nor Nathaniel, nor these sons of Zebedee.” But among them are two *unnamed* disciples,—perhaps you come in there. There were *seven* disciples present on this occasion, and this in Scripture is a perfect number, so we each are represented among them somewhere. They were all together, and alas! were all together to go away from Christ! What a happy time they might have had, if instead of Peter’s proposal, he had said to Thomas, “The Lord has not sent the Spirit yet, let us *wait* for Him.” Then they would not have needed Christ to come and look them up, and call them back from the Sea of Tiberias. It is not easy to *wait*—it is much easier to *do*. They had but to wait the “*forty* days in which Christ shewed Himself alive after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments” as to their path, (Acts i., 2-3). Significant number! There was much in them to be tested by these forty days, and much that was “found wanting.” So with ourselves. We often like to go and tell our neighbors of things,—troubles that it would have been much better to have left with God. I have found myself in preaching the gospel,—I have often been anxious to see if

anybody had got anything,—just like the little girl who has sowed seed, going out every morning to see if it is growing and thus preventing it. Then we are sometimes troubled by something that some one has done, about which we would like to see them more troubled. We have prayed about it, confessed it as our own sin, but the evil, apparently, has not been remedied. The Lord does not do things fast enough for us. How the forty days *test* us! Here they tested the *fidelity* of the disciples to Christ. What does Peter say? “*I go a fishing.*” Was there anything morally *wrong* in that? No. But Christ had called him from fishing, commanded him to “*leave his nets and follow me.*” Him and He would make him a *fisher of men.*” Peter going back to his fishing then is a picture of you and me going back to what God has saved us out of—something of the *world* which “*Christ gave Himself to deliver us from.*” Do not we “*go a fishing?*” In what way *you* do, I leave to yourselves and the Spirit of God working in your souls to decide, and seek for myself the same. How unlike was Peter at this time to the dear servant, Paul, who had “*suffered the loss of ALL things*” for Christ, and said of them, “*I have counted, and do count them, but dung that I may win Christ!*” He had stepped into the counting-house, and he never stepped out.

Now what? What have we ever *gained* by our failure? Let the Bible tell us. “*They went forth, . . . and that night they caught NOTHING.*” Sometimes when a Christian is following his own way, everything seems to go on swimmingly for a time. “*When the south wind blew softly, supposing they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence . . . not long after, there arose a tempest,*” Acts xxvii. Do we not take *pleasing* circumstances sometimes as an indication that God is with us? But mark! When Moses had all the glories of Pharaoh’s court around him, he stepped out of these pleasing circumstances to the brick kilns of Egypt and “*to suffer affliction with the people of God.*” Daniel also was holding an important office in the court of a king. What does he do? “*He purposed* in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king’s meat or wine. Next, he *prays.* There is no way to hold to his purpose but to pray, and he stood to this “*purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord,*” even to the “*den of lions.*” Every thing has seemed sometimes to open up most auspiciously when we have been following our own way, but, as well we know, “*girding on our harness*” is not “*putting it off*” in victory.

We may have a veritable tempest, and God *with us*, saying to our hearts, "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed;" and again everything fair as noonday, and God *not with us*, leaving us to what we have chosen for ourselves. Thus they *started* well, but "that night they caught *nothing*." Has it not often been so with us, when we have been following our own way? All we have gotten has been *night, toil, and nothing*—darkness and weariness and no recompense. How often I have been on that road myself! This is the dark background of the picture. "But when the *morning* was now come, JESUS stood on the shore," (verse 4.) *Who* is that on the shore, straining His eyes through the darkness? The Lord that loved them. They were all night going away from Him, and He was all night going after them. His whole heart was interested in getting them back. Surely He had heard them bemoaning themselves as Ephraim, saying, "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I shall be turned," (Jer. xxxi. 18), and He cannot rest until they are with Him again.

I have heard a touching incident of a mother recovering her lost daughter. The daughter had lost her situation, lost her character—her name changed, and her virtue gone. The mother's only resource was in God. There was no use writing—she could only pray, and she did pray. At last she could bear it no longer, and started for the distant city, and searched hither and thither in vain. As a last resource she had her photograph taken, and wrote at the foot of the cards these words of a mother's love, "*Mary, I love thee still.*" She asked permission, which was granted, to put them up in houses of ill-fame. Her daughter strayed into one of them, and God turned her eyes to the photograph. She looked at it until she saw the words I have mentioned, and exclaimed, "My God, does my mother love me *yet*? then I will go back to her again." And back she went; and need I say she was received by a love that thus sought her, and not in vain? And is it not thus that Jesus does to us? Does He not say to us, "I do earnestly *remember thee still.*" I will surely have *mercy.*" *This* is what awaits the wanderer. He has only to say one word, and he will be in the arms of Jesus. But we will have to own up—to make a clean breast of it, as people say. "Take with us *words* and He will receive us graciously, and so shall we render Him the calves of our lips" (*praise*).

"Children, have ye any meat?" (verse 5). Is not this like the Lord asking us, "What did you get by wandering from me? did you '*prosper* in the way?'" *No, Lord*, we reply, and that word puts us back into the enjoyment of His favor. ANY meat? No. A vestige of blessing or real joy at all? Sum it all up and say, No, Lord. The disciples say only "No," and He says all the rest. Own up that you did not find your own way a good way, and He will soon find you a better one. This fishing of theirs was no easy work—they *toiled* at it. How different to Christ's yoke, of which He says "it is *easy*, and my burden *light*." They did not want to cast the net again—they had only *one*—but Jesus tells them the very spot to cast it. Now it is filled with a multitude of fishes, and yet it does not break. Not a thread is ever broken in His service, when we put out every thread for Him—invest our ALL in devotedness to Him. Happy thing for us when we fish along with Christ!

Let us now leave the rest of the disciples, and look at one of them specially—Simon Peter. The 11th, 15th, 16th and 17th verses, and nearly all the remainder of the chapter, are occupied with him. Let us look back a little, and see what brought him where he is. He had "gone a fishing," not only in a physical way, but also in a *moral* one. The Lord had said to him long before, I have something to tell you, Satan wants to get you into his sieve. But Peter was not at all afraid "Happy is the man that *feareth* ALWAYS!" Peter thinks he can fight "the world, the flesh and the devil" all single-handed. The Lord's heart yearned over him, and said Oh, that Peter knew his own heart! Peter does not know that if he will not learn "leaning on the bosom of Jesus," he must be riddled in Satan's sieve until all is gone except the little that Christ has put there—the *pure wheat*. He is shaken about until he hardly knows that he is Christ's at all, but not "the least grain of the pure wheat shall fall to the ground" Do not fear the result, Christian, if you do get into Satan's sieve, though fear surely as to getting into it. If you go in, you will come out, and you will come out with all that was ever in you of *pure wheat*. The chaff only will be winnowed out. When the needed discipline is accomplished, Satan cannot shake another stroke. The Lord will take you out, and restore you by His grace.

"Soon as sorrow's work is done,
'Tis He who sends relief."

Peter did not believe that he would fail. He told the Lord that "he would follow Him to prison and to death." The Lord had said to him and the two sons of Zebedee, "I am sorrowful, even unto death," but I will trust you, I will let you come and watch and weep with me. What did they do? They went to sleep three times. At last He says to Peter, "What! could ye *not* watch with me *one hour*?" He says the *best* He can of them—they would like to have kept awake, but they could not—He says to them, "You have *continued* with me in my temptations," you never left me altogether, you did not altogether turn back.

What next? Peter draws a sword and begins to *fight*. The Lord is being "led as a lamb to the slaughter," going forward to "witness a good confession" before Pilate, and "answered not a word, insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly." Peter goes in and denies Him with oaths and curses. It was a slippery road that Peter was travelling on. If we do not take our first steps in the path in fear—"fear of the Lord which is clean, departing from evil"—we will soon have cause to fear. Peter *s'leeps* when he should have watched, *fights* when he should have suffered, *denies* Christ when he should have confessed Him, followed Jesus *afar off* when he should have been close beside Him. The Lord turned and looked on Peter. This look does not need explanation. It meant, "trust ME, Peter, when you have learned that you cannot trust yourself."

Next in order we have the angel's message by the women, "Go . . . tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you, etc.," and further, our Lord appearing first to him. "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." "He was seen of Cephas," Mark xvi. 7, Luke xxiv. 37, 1 Cor. xv. 5. Then, the various interviews we have noticed already, in company with others—what grace is seen throughout! Christ's *warning* — *prayer* — *look* — *message* — *interview* — *confirmation* — and final *restoration* of Peter's soul.

Now after this fishing scene on the Sea of Tiberias, the Lord says to Peter, I must settle this matter now. He says, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than *these*?" Peter replies, You know I have *affection* for you. The Lord used a strong word for love, but Peter uses a weaker one. In the end, the Lord says, Very well, can you say *even that*? At last, when probed three times over, Peter says in effect, Nobody would think that I loved you; but down underneath all this, you know that I love you still. Is not that all that we can say for ourselves? Yes, brethren, we

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have had enough to convince us that we do not love the Lord
much; we can only appeal to Him that we love him *some*,
which perhaps few but He can see. "The fire of coals" on
the shore reminded Peter how recently he had warmed him-
self at the wrong fire—the enemy's camp. He was probed
by the Saviour to show him that He loved him yet. Let
us go by the fire of *restoring love*. Then we will hear Jesus
say, "Come and dine." Then He may say, "My people, I
cannot have this or that" in our ways,—and the remedy will
be applied. As far as we may go in wandering from Him,
so far will He go in restoring grace after us, to bring us back.

Just one thing more, if you would like to know how you
can walk *without falling*. The Lord says to Peter, "Verily,
verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young thou girdest
thyself and walkest whither thou wouldest, (verse 18).
When you had vigor of your own you expended it, but
always on the wrong road. Now, when thou shalt be *old*,
thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and another shalt gird
thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." Paul said,
"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my *infirmities*
that the power of Christ may rest upon me." "When I am
weak then I am strong" (2 Cor. xii., 9, 10). If we would
have the power of Christ to rest upon us, let us take the
place of old people rather than of young ones—of realized
and confessed weakness—thankful to lean upon another.
Let us not try to go on our own way and in our own
strength, like Simon Peter, but let us give ourselves up to
the Lord Jesus, saying, "My foot *slippeth*, Lord, *keep it*."
We need not wait for hoary hairs for that, but *now* and
where we are, it may be realized, if only we cast ourselves in
helplessness on Him, our prayer,—"*Hold thou me up*, and
I shall be safe."

Now Peter's restoration is almost completed, but he is
nearly off the track again. What is this? When Satan
cannot get hold of anything in a man's *self*, he tempts him
with some *other* man. Peter says, "What shall *this man*
do? (verse 21). It does not matter *who* that man is,—if
he is even the brother in whom you put the most confidence
—the one used in your conversion perhaps—if you get your
eyes on *this man*, down you will go. Peter sees John com-
ing, and he is almost switched off the track. Fancy the
beloved John, who leaned upon the Lord's bosom, setting a
man wrong! Yes, even the beloved John, if in the wrong
place before us, may set us wrong. Christ rebukes Peter.
He says, leave John to Me, your business is to follow Me,

"*Follow thou Me,*" (verse 22). How this is brought home to Peter *individually*, as though there were not another Christian in the wide world. "*Follow thou Me.*" I may let John remain until I return again, but you follow Me until you stretch yourself out in death on that cross. What a wonderful scope there is in this chapter! From accomplished *redemption* to eternal *glory!* Let us follow Jesus, and we shall at last hear Him say to us—"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The Lord keep us until that day—keep us from going a-fishing—keep us from being turned away from Him. And may we see *no man* but "*Jesus only*" Following Him "*whithersoever He goeth*" until we "*see Him face to face,*" fully satisfied "*when we awake in His likeness.*"

B.C G.

"For this we're pressing onward still,
And in this hope would be
More subject to the Father's will;
E'en now much more like Thee."

JESUS IS OUR SHEPHERD.

Jesus is our Shepherd, wiping every tear,
Folded in His bosom, what have we to fear?
Only let us follow whither He doth lead,
To the thirsty desert, or the dewy mead.

Jesus is our Shepherd, may we know His voice;
How its gentle whisper makes our heart rejoice!
Even when He chideth, tender is His tone;
None but He shall guide us: we are His alone.

Jesus is our Shepherd; for the sheep He bled,
Every lamb is sprinkled with the blood He shed.
Then on each He setteth His own secret sign,
They that have my Spirit—these, saith He, are mine.

Jesus is our Shepherd: guarded by His arm,
Though the wolves may raven, none can do us harm;
If we tread death's valley, dark with fearful gloom,
We will fear no evil, victors o'er the tomb.

"THE COMPASS AT HIGH MAST."

Crossing the ocean you have noticed, perhaps, three compasses, one "fore," another "aft," and a third "at high mast."

Speaking to the quarter-master as to the need for all these, he replied "the two lower ones, while serving a purpose, are not to be *wholly* relied on, because of their being surrounded by iron and other metals which diverted the needle from its true action of turning to the pole. The third, however, '*aloft*,' is always true; this is the one we always depend upon and by it regulate the two lower ones—it being far above the range of counter influences."

For the people of God, how significant the lesson—much we have that will serve to help us on our heavenward journey in the *ministry* of those who amongst us may answer to the "fore" compass, and much also in the *fellowship* of others who may come in as the "aft" one, but to steer an even, steady course, such as God would have His people, we must turn our eyes "*aloft*" to the compass at high mast. Let us apply it further: How dear to us often are those whom God has used in His service for our blessing, and while He would have us value them "highly in love for their *work's* sake," yet His words are: "Whose FAITH follow, considering the *end* of their conversation: *Jesus Christ*, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" or in the words of our "compass" lesson, be turned by the lower ones to look aloft. Again, while it may be truly part of the confession of our faith "I believe in the *communion* of saints," yet dear as it may also be to us, it will not serve to steer our course by, for even a Peter may lead his brother Barnabas astray, or a John Mark turn him from the heavenward course to sail to Cyprus—the place of nature's ties and home attachments.

"Looking off unto *Jesus*," can be the only true unfailing regulator of our pathway here; and like the compass at the mast-head, so is He for us at the right hand of God "As we have *received* Christ Jesus the Lord," so are we to "*walk in Him*"—regulate all by Him—set Him alway before our faces, and thus shall we "find Him at our right hands" that we "may not be *moved*" Whoever then we may be right in "receiving with all gladness," or "to hold in reputation," there is but *One* to rejoice in,—the Lord Himself; and even where "fellowship with saints" may be interrupted and broken, our fellowship with Him may still abide. B.C.G.

HAVE YOU NOTHING TO GIVE ?

There was once a heathen philosopher of much human wisdom and benevolence. He had not the light of revelation. He knew nothing of a Saviour's love, and though many came to hear him he could only teach his followers those truths which the light of nature can discover, and which cannot give dying sinners any solid hope for eternity. Yet he was loved and all but worshipped by his disciples. It was their practice, from time to time, to present him with some token of their affection, and, doubtless, their love prompted them to give to the very best of their ability.

It is recorded that on one occasion the disciples of this philosopher were presenting him with various offerings, but one among the rest held back; and when he could no longer remain silent, his eyes filled with tears, and throwing himself at the feet of his master, he exclaimed, "I am so poor and destitute, I have but *one* thing to give: *it is myself, to serve you the remainder of my days.*"

Christian, I ask you to consider the words of this poor heathen youth. Have *you* a Master who demands and has a right to your service? You have; though you may but poorly remember or love Him. He infinitely surpasses any earthly teacher. So *mighty*, that His greatness, the heaven of heavens cannot contain; so *loving* that "He is love" itself; so full of *wisdom* that He cannot err; so *gracious* that He is the Friend as well as Master of His disciples.

Now hear His words long ago to His people, written for our sakes and still appealing to us, my reader.

"If I then be a *Father*, where is mine *honor*, and if I be a *Master*, where is my *fear*." Have you ever given anything to this heavenly friend as the token of your love? Have you ever said, as the heathen lad, "I have *one* thing I can give you: it is *myself*, to serve you the remainder of my days." May it be indeed true of us, as of those long ago who "offered *themselves* willingly, and first gave *themselves* unto the Lord." Judges v. 2, 9; 2 Cor. viii 5; (*Adapted*).

"The Lamb was slain! let us *adore*,

And all His gracious mercy *own* :

And prostrate now and evermore

Before His pierced feet *fall down* ;

Serve without dread, with reverence *love*

The Lord whose boundless grace we prove."

GOD'S SALVATION.

Exodus xii. xvii

There are three different classes of Christians seen here.

1. Those saved from God's judgment. 2. Those delivered from Egypt. 3. Those crossing the desert.

You have not yet started toward heaven if you have not owned yourself a poor lost sinner, for that is the very *first* point we have here. "The Blood of the Lamb" or the "judgment of God" was the tale told in Egypt.

Many, thank God, know the truth of this, and are able to say, "Being *now justified* by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him," Rom. v. 9. But another point, CROSSING THE RED SEA. After being saved by the Blood of the slain lamb from judgment, now they are in danger of the *foe* who is pursuing them. Here they are completely delivered.

1. *Trusting in the Blood*; 2. *Seeing the salvation of God*.

Are there not some of you here that really trusted in Christ some time ago, yet you have been troubled since with doubts and fears. A whole host of things—lusts and passions—"the hosts of the Egyptians," following upon our heels, as it were. Well, thank God, just as the Red Sea covered all the Egyptians, so we learn that Christ's death has covered over not only all our *sins*, but *ourselves* as well—all we find within us. Just here they failed, and it is where we do too. Don't we often feel ashamed of ourselves because we find that a little trying circumstance sets us fretting and murmuring as though God did not love us at all. He wants us to trust Him for *our circumstances*, as well as for our sins. He wants us to learn *our own hearts* and *His heart* too, and gives us the privilege of witnessing for Him into the bargain. Next in order comes

MARAH and ELIM.

When a Christian that is passing through bitter circumstances learns to find Christ in them to sweeten them, then he is led to Elim, *i. e.*, pleasant circumstances, but not to stop there. They learn next to get their *food* from God. Christian, have you learned to get your food from God yet? that there is nothing in this world to satisfy your soul—plenty to satisfy the flesh—then that God has something for us, *Manna*; but it has to be *picked up*. So we have to pick up Christ, and the place we find Him is the *Word of God*; and then we need reminding that the time of gathering was "*early* in the morning." "Suffer the word" exhortation." You may be saved—delivered—not in bitter circumstances,

but pleasant; and yet you are *unhappy*. Why, you do not know. The chief reason of your being wrong is, you do not get up in the morning and pick up the manna. You will find if you don't make it the first thing of the day, you are sure to make it the last, and that often means not at all. Before the sun gets up and the business of the day commences, see that you get "*alone with the Lord*" and read His Word, hearing His voice in it. A thing further,

REPHIDIM, or, IS THE LORD AMONG US?

They actually doubted this. They did not doubt they were forgiven, saved out of Egypt, but whether God was among them or not. "Then came *Amalek* and fought with Israel." When Christians doubt that the Lord is going along with them in their path, the lusts of the flesh will get up. Directly the eyes get off the Lord (typified by Israel saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"), and we lose the sense of the Lord's presence and care for us, then as *Amalek* coming, it will bring you down so low that you will be sure to do or say something that will dishonor the Lord, and bring shame on Him and your brethren. The only thing, then, is to turn away to the Lord at once, who is for us like Moses up on the mountain top, and through this and the power of His Spirit in you, like Joshua, you will overcome. A Christian cannot *live* in sin, but may *fall* into it, and can get into the very lowest sins if he does not walk *humbly* with God. The flesh is sure to get the better of the fight if you try and put it down; but if you look up to Him who is pleading for you, you will find power over the flesh, and be an *overcomer*.

In the 16th Psalm we get a man who always had his eye on God—the Lord Jesus, our *pattern*. The way to walk and keep down the flesh—keep down murmurings and all that rises up within us, is found here in this lesson of Moses and Joshua. The Lord help us, dear Christians, not to be murmurers or complainers "Lo, I am with you *always*." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He will give us what we need. The best sermon we can preach is by our *lives*—to be happy in the Lord. People round us will then believe we have something. Oh what an honour it will be when before the judgment-seat, to see some one there that was converted through seeing our Christian lives. "I got here because I used to watch you when I lived near you; I could not help seeing you had some one to help you that I had not." It won't be long before we get home, I believe; if He does not come before morning, let us get the little bit of manna *early*, for the journey of the day.

J. D.

THE HARVEST HOME.

"That both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

From the far-off fields of earthly toil,
A goodly host they come,
And sounds of music are on the air,
'Tis the song of the Harvest Home
The weariness and the weeping,
The darkness has all passed by,
And a glorious sun has risen—
The sun of eternity.

We've seen those faces in days of yore,
When the dust was on their brow,
And the scalding tear upon their cheek—
Let us look at the laborers now!
We think of the life-long sorrow
And the wilderness days of care,
We try to trace the tear-drops,
But no scars of grief are there.

There's a mystery of soul-chasten'd joy
Lit up with sunlight hues,
Like morning flowers most beautiful,
When wet with midnight dews:
There are depths of earnest meaning
In each true and trustful gaze,
Telling of wondrous lessons
Learnt in their pilgrim days.

And a conscious confidence of bliss
That shall never again remove—
All the faith and hope of journeying years
Gather'd up in that look of love.
The long waiting days are over;
They've received their wages now;
For they've gazed upon their Master,
And His name is on their brow.

They've seen the safely garner'd sheaves,
And the song has been passing sweet
Which welcomed the last in-coming one
Laid down at their Saviour's feet.
Oh! well does His heart remember,
As those notes of praise sweep by,
The yearning plaintive music
Of earth's sadder minstrelsy.

And well does He know each chequer'd tale,
As He looks on the joyous band,
All the lights and shadows that crossed their path
In the distant pilgrim land.
The heart's unbroken anguish,
The bitter sighs and tears,
The long long hours of watching,
The changeful hopes and fears.

One had climb'd the rugged mountain-side—
'Twas a bleak and wintry day,
The tempest had scatter'd his precious seed,
And he wept as he turn'd away.
But a stranger-hand had watered
That seed on a distant shore,
And the labourers now are meeting
Who had never met before.

And *one*—he had toiled amid burning sands
When the scorching sun was high,
He had grasp'd the plough with a fever'd hand,
And then laid him down to die.
But another, and yet another,
Had filled that deserted field,
Nor vainly the seed they scattered
Where a brother's care had till'd.

Some with eager step went boldly forth,
Broad casting o'er the land,
Some water'd the scarcely budding blade
With a tender, gentle hand.
There's *one*, her young life was blighted
By the withering touch of woe,
Her days were sad and weary,
And she never went forth to sow.

But there rose from her lonely couch of pain
The fervent pleading prayer ;
She looks on many a radiant brow,
And she reads the answer there :
Yea! sowers and reapers are meeting—
A rejoicing host they come !
Will you join that echoing chorus ?
'Tis the song of the Harvest Home !

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A JEWISH RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN BESSARABIA.

The author of this South Russian movement is a lawyer named Joseph Rabinowitz, a man who is respected far and wide by his compatriots, and who has for a long time been endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of, and to raise the culture of his people. During the time of that persecution in South Russia in 1882 which the *Times* newspaper so forcibly brought before the British public, he was zealously advocating the re-population of the Holy Land. In order to discover ways and means for this, he set out himself for Palestine, and, from the time of his return, there commenced a complete revolution of his religious convictions.

These convictions are based on a belief that the historical Jesus of Bethlehem was, after all, the true Messiah spoken of by Abraham, Moses and David; for the crucifixion of whom the Jews have ever since been wanderers, and their land made desolate. This deep impression on the mind of Rabinowitz was not produced by any influence of Christian missionaries, but entirely by the force of circumstances; and it carried along with it a very strong feeling that the only hope for the people's return to their land would be by their acknowledgment of such facts. In this way, without for a moment thinking of joining the Christian Church by baptism, a plan of forming congregations of Jewish nationality, founded upon the historical and doctrinal works of the New Testament, slowly ripened in his soul. He returned from Palestine with this watchword—"The key to the *holy land* lies in the hands of our brother Jesus." It may be said, indeed, that the centre of gravity in his creed lies hidden in the cry—"Jesus, our brother." These thrilling words have proved, as a matter of fact, to possess such powers of attraction among his persecuted brethren that they have not only awakened the hearts of all in Kischinew—his own place of residence—but of many also in other parts of Bessarabia. More than 200 families have now joined in one communion under the title of "The National Jewish New Testament Congregation," and by some of them the last Passover was celebrated according to a liturgy expressly drawn up by Rabinowitz.

In order to illustrate more completely the nature of this singular movement of the Jewish mind, resulting from the painful massacres of 1882, I subjoin from their "Articles of Faith," which Dr. Delitsch now gives to the world, a translation of the 10th Article. It is worded as follows :—

"According to the decree of the inscrutable wisdom of God, our fathers were filled with hardness of heart, and the Lord punished them with the spirit of deep sleep, so that they opposed Jesus Christ and sinned against Him until the present day. But by their unbelief they led other nations to greater zeal, and they have thus contributed to the propitiation of mankind, who have believed in Jesus Christ, the Son of David, our King, when they heard the good tidings through His peace-promising messengers (Is. lii. 7), who had been disgracefully expelled from communion with Israel. In consequence of this our sin against the Christ of God, the world has grown rich by its faith in Christ; and the nations in fulness have entered the Kingdom of God. Now, too, the time of our fulness has also come. And we, the seed of Abraham, are to be blessed by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and the God of our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, will take pity upon us, and replant the branches which have been torn out into our own *holy root*—Jesus. And thus all Israel shall share the eternal salvation, and Jerusalem, our holy city, shall be rebuilt, and the throne of David be re-established forever and evermore."

I give you this statement as a record of actual facts, which cannot but be deeply interesting to your readers, and which, if not already known to you, appears to me to be worthy of a place in the leading journal of the day.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

J. H. TITCOMB,

*Bishop Coadjutor for Eng. Ch. in Northern
Homburg, Aug. 20, 1884. and Central Europe.*

REBINOWITSCH THE JEW.

M. Rebinowitsch, a lawyer of some prominence in the city of Kichenev, the capital of Bessarabia, in Russia, was recently found dead. Investigation showed that he had been murdered. No clue could at the time be discovered leading to the identity of the assassins. M. Rebinowitsch was a very religious man and had been raised an orthodox Jew. But some years ago he became convinced of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. This conversion, however, did not extend to the belief that Christ had come to abolish Judaism and substitute for it the new religion of christianity. M. Rebinowitsch simply believed that Christ's mission was only to reform the religion of the Jews and give it a new lease of life for the control of mankind. After preaching the doctrine for some time with considerable success he founded a new sect among his Hebrew brethren and called his reformed belief the "Religion of New Israel." It is now declared by the christian authorities of Kichenev that M. Rebinowitsch was murdered by the orthodox Jews.

THE SERVANT'S PATH

IN A DAY OF REJECTION.

Servant of Christ, stand fast amid the scorn
 Of men who little know or love thy Lord ;
 Turn not aside from toil ; cease not to warn,
 Comfort, and teach. Trust Him for thy reward :
 A few more moments' suffering, and then
 Cometh sweet rest from all thy heart's deep pain.

For grace pray much, for much thou needest grace ;
 If men thy work deride,—what can they more ?
 Christ's weary foot thy path on earth doth trace ;
 If thorns wound thee, they pierced him before ;
 Press on, look up, though clouds may gather round ;
 Thy place of service He makes hallowed ground.

Have friends forsaken thee, and cast thy name
 Out as a worthless thing? Take courage then :
 Go, TELL THY MASTER ; for they did the same
 To Him, who once in patience toiled for them :
 Yet he was perfect in all service here ;
 Thou oft has failed : this maketh Him more dear.

Self-vindication shun ; if in the right,
 What gainest thou by taking from God's hand
 Thy cause? If wrong, what dost thou but invite
 Satan himself thy friend in need to stand?
 Leave all with God. If right, He'll prove thee so ;
 If not, He'll pardon ; therefore to Him go.

Be not men's servant : think what costly price
 Was paid that thou mayest His own bondsman be,
 Whose service perfect freedom is. Let this
 Hold fast thy heart. His claim is great to thee :
 None should thy soul enthrall, to whom 'tis given
 To serve on earth, with liberty of heaven.

ALL HIS are thine to serve ; Christ's brethren here
 Are needing aid ; in them thou servest Him.
 The least of all is still His member dear ;
 The weakest cost His life-blood to redeem.
 Yield to no " Party " what He rightly claims,
 Who on His heart bears all His people's names.

Be wise, be watchful. Wily men surround
 Thy path. BE CAREFUL, FOR THEY SEEK WITH CARE
 TO TRIP THEE UP. See that no plea be found
 In thee thy Master to reproach. The snare
 They set for thee will then themselves enclose,
 And God his righteous judgment thus disclose.

Cleave to the poor, Christ's image in them is ;
 Count it great honor, if THEY love thee well ;
 Naught can repay thee after losing this.
 Though with the wise and wealthy thou shouldst
 dwell,

Thy Master oftentimes would pass thy door,
 To hold communion with his much-loved poor.

" The time is short ; " seek little here below :
 Earth's goods would cumber thee, and drag thee down ;
 Let daily food suffice ; care not to know
 Thought for to-morrow ; it may never come.
 Thou canst not perish, for thy Lord is nigh,
 And His own care will all thy need supply.

J. J. P., STANFORD-IN-THE-VALE, BERKS.

" FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH."

"The Word which Jesus had spoken."—(Read John iv. 46-51.)

How many souls are found in the circumstances here described. They are in need and realize it, and betake themselves to Jesus, for well they know by repeated experiences of themselves, that "*none* but Jesus can do *helpless* sinners good." And yet withal they have not *peace*, for, though in the presence of the Saviour that they need, their faith is to much more in what He *will do* for them, than in what He *is* or *has done*, that they wait, unblest, simply because they have not learned that to *present* our need to Him is to have it *met*; to "*confess* our sins," to be forgiven; to own that we are *lost*, to possess Him for our own. Thus they wait on the very threshold of divine blessing—within reach of it, and yet realize it not as theirs.

What here was the *answer* of our Lord? "Except ye *see* signs and wonders, ye will *not believe*." This is the first symptom of the disease to be treated. *Their faith is wrong*. What! can it be that any who come to Jesus have *wrong faith*? Yes, truly, and so our Lord rebukes it. They want to *see* or *feel*, to have something done, *specially* for them—they hold in reserve their faith to rest it in a work done *in*, instead of *for* them. Hence, their faith is *wrong*, *i. e.*, placed in a wrong position, centred in a wrong object. Now this, in its very nature, is contrary to all that God describes of the faith by which we are "*accounted just*." This, in all Scripture's pages, is shewn as finding its all in God—"Jesus, *His work and word*." How many have to be wrung to their depths ere they are ready to say, "Lord, do it for me *ANY* way it pleaseth *Thee*, even if not the way I have looked and longed for." Happy place to reach! almost the dawn of day! One thing more, and "*all is well*" with them, and thus we find it, "*Take MY WORD*, and *rest* upon it, pillow your soul upon it, honor me by accrediting what I *say*." Then the morning breaks! one by one the doubts and fears, thoughts and perplexities vanish as shades of darkness before the rising sun, and Jesus has risen before the soul, its supreme blesser—its *Lord* and *Saviour* blended in the grace that *saves*, then *claims* us for Himself. Thus is the spell of unbelief broken, the longed-for blessing received, the haven of our hopes reached; and *how*, one asks, when nothing has been done that we expected? Simply *thus*, as in this sweet picture. The man could say, "I have not seen him take a step toward my son, no "*signs* or *wonders*" has He shewn

me to assure that His blessing is bestowed ; but *He says* it is for *me*, and, knowing I *need* it, I just take Him at *His word*, and go home in the assurance that it is, simply *because He says it.*" Thrice happy man! no angel in heaven could do more, or better, and yet it is within reach of us *all* equally with him—ah! would it were, methinks I hear one say, if Jesus would only say *so much* to my poor heart, and let me know that He had spoken even to *me*, I am sure I would be content, and ask no more ; but oh, I cannot *feel* it is so! No, beloved one, fearing in the very presence of the "perfect love that casts out fear"—overlooking the precious balm that heals, in thy very anxiety to feel thy wounds are cured—thus it cannot be. He speaks in words like these, "My *work* is done, heaven's treasury is stocked thereby for *all*, and *you* may draw ; I know thy *need*, thy *sins*, deep, crimson-dyed and aggravated—thy cold indifference—thy proud and rebel heart—all *this* mine eye surveys, and yet 'tis mine to say "FORGIVEN"—*I SAY it*; and this must be enough—*more* I cannot give, else the glory that is mine I have given to another. Then rest, believe, trust now my *lips* as once you did my *blood*, and own it true in the face of *all*—thy distress, thy *sins*, thy unbelief. *It is so*; He has *said* it, I rest in that, and believe Him against all my heart can say, and Satan too. "The *lost*," He says, He *saves*, and I am *that*. The *saved* are but the *lost* with Christ for theirs ; *I* by my *sins*, *He* by His grace, have met ; and now I praise Him. *Within* the blessing flows, for *without* the eye is turned ; and all heaven is engaged to bless the confessed but believing pauper at its door. We *take* because He *gives*—He gives because we take. He can delight His heart, and we, too, ours. One interest we share—His love has found its outlet in us, and our hearts have found their rest in Him. But is all now reached? Blessed truth, it *is not*, and it *is*. No more demands on us ; faith has enthroned *Him* now, and He will *reign* alone, and reign to bless. We take Him at *His word* and He will give us *more*. We looked off *unto* Him, and He will reward by pouring His blessing *into* us. We believe what He has *said*, and now we know its truth in what He *does*. His love makes haste to give us what we have not asked, since we have given Him His own, the glory that is His—we take His *word* as all, and then His *Spirit* witnesses *in* as well as *to* our souls. Thus happy are the ones who take home the *word* that Jesus speaks, and rest upon it, believing Him, and thus He returns His answer in the *confirmation* given. B.C.G.

"TELL THE LORD SO."

In a cheerless-looking, dark, small house in one of the streets of Salford a handful of people were gathered together. It was a cold winter's night, and a fog penetrated through the crevices of doors and windows. There was little or no fire in the grate. The room was almost bare of furniture; a small table, a few chairs, and a little straw in the corner, that was all. The mills were stopped, and famine was beginning to toll on the faces of these people.

Abel Barker and his wife had invited a few friends to come for a hour to their cottage. Among their privations these poor folks could keep one blessing. They could treasure up on Sunday night some "*comfortable words*" for the "weary and heavy laden," gleaned from the day's sermon; and, as Abel Barker knew that many of his neighbors had not heard preaching because their poverty compelled them to part with their decent clothing, it occurred to him that if he could tell them on Monday, while his memory was fresh some of the Sunday's sermon, he might still, though useless in the mill, be working at home. In his homely way, therefore, he told his neighbors these words of comfort, and then this little group of people knelt in prayer. One after another found he had some petition to make, or some blessing for which to thank God; when at last one poor fellow, whose face betrayed his deep interest in all the proceedings, knelt down also to pray. The sound of his own voice took away his courage, and bending across to Abel Barker, he whispered, "Abel, man, what must I say? I cannot speak; have got no words."

And Abel Barker whispered back, "*Tell the Lord so.*"

The tongue so stammering, the voice so faltering, found courage to pour out his simple petitions, and ready utterance came in response to that simple appeal. Straight from that Christian's heart flowed the expression of his wants in words not perhaps well chosen. The rough, unpolished accent did not grow courtly; but there was *real, living* prayer. He prayed for courage to pray, for pardon of the sins of any present, for help and comfort for their souls, and for relief in their distress.

My friend, what *sort* of prayers are yours? In public prayer does your heart ever go along with the petitions your lips make? In presenting your thanksgiving, do you truly give thanks for the blessings which you know God has given you? And in private do you kneel down night and morn-

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 B.C.G.

ing, saying your prayers, having been taught to do so? Or do you really *pray* at all?

Have you no blessings for which you specially have to thank God? Perhaps you have escaped some threatening danger which lay hidden in your path, till a seeming chance drew you away. You have received unmerited mercies. "*Tell the Lord so.*"

Have you temptations lying around you which you dread the want of strength to resist manfully? "*Tell the Lord so.*"

Do anxieties sicken your heart, while your attention must be given to every day's business? You have, perhaps, an absent son, or husband, or brother, or friend, about whose welfare you are ignorant or fearful. Whatever your burden, "*tell the Lord.*"

Have you some secret besetting sin which you cannot hide from God, and which you find often conquers all your good resolutions? "*Tell the Lord so.*"

Tell him as you would confide in your wisest counselor, as you would whisper to your best friend, the griefs that trouble you, all the secrets of your heart, your little as well as your greater troubles. You gain courage by confiding in him. You will love Him more when you can trust Him more. You will serve Him more truly when you know the unspeakable comfort there is in prayer.

"Through *Him*"—that is, through Christ, our Mediator and Advocate—"we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph. ii, 18. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore *come boldly* unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain *mercy*, and find *grace* to help in time of need." Heb. iv, 14-16. "Praying always with all *prayer* and *supplication* in the Spirit." Eph. vi, 18. "Praying in the Holy Ghost." Jude 20. "Continue in *prayer*, and *watch* in the same with *thanksgiving*." Col. iv, 2.

"In everything by *prayer* and *supplication* with *thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv, 6.

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we *ask* anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we *ask*, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him," 1 Jno. v. 14, 15.

MUCH IN A LITTLE.

Three words gave him settled peace with God—chased away his doubts and fears—gave him a new object for his heart—turned him “to serve the living and true God”—set him “waiting for His Son from heaven”—unlocked the vast treasures of His precious Word, and filled his heart with desire to “order his conversation aright” in the light of that Word. How *little*, and to what *great* results! Do you say, “Would to God that I could hear them too, and possess all this as well, for deeply do I need it—yea, *these very things?*” You may, my unknown reader, for these words were spoken by “Him who spake as never man spake,” and with the very purpose of yielding to us all these blessed results, and withal they were for *sinner*s such as we are, “lost, ruined and undone.”

What, and when, and how? do you further ask, and now the answer: “IT IS FINISHED” are the *words*; the *speaker*, the Saviour, Son of God; the *time*, the hour of His agony upon the cross; the *object*, that we might know His work was done—redemption wrought out—peace made—God glorified—salvation free. Beloved weary one, believe now these “gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth,” rest upon Him who spake them, mark the import of the hour in which they were uttered, meditate upon the object for which they were given, as He has elsewhere spoken—“these things I say that YE might be saved.”

My friend, to whom I have referred, had long passed muster among the so-called religious—held office in the church, was nominally a Christian, but still unsaved, and a stranger to peace with God, but deeply desiring to possess it. It may be so with you; and if so, may the issue be the same.

On hearing the “gospel of peace” preached in his neighborhood, and those precious soul-assuring words dwelt upon by the writer, he came up after the meeting to confess the Saviour as his, and say, “I never knew before to-night that the Saviour meant any more than that He was dying, when He said ‘*It is finished*,’ but now I see that it was that His work that saves was done for us to rest upon.” May your heart, dear reader, learn the blessed truth of this as well! In the best of ways, I would desire *Fare thee well*; and how fully will it be so if to you not only “is the word of this salvation *sent*,” but heard in your soul as from God, *received* with a welcome from your heart.

B. C. G.

WHY SHE WOULD NOT PROFESS.

Calling at her door upon a stormy day, I was invited to go in, and doing so, after a few remarks in other lines, ventured the question, "Did she know the Saviour to be hers?" Sharply, alas! came her reply, betokening that in her heart He yet had but little place: "I expect I am as well off as those that *profess*, and so many do, that I don't want to be in with them." Your name is Mrs. B.? Yes. You are not ashamed to *profess* to be Mr. B.'s wife, although there are many wives in this world who are untrue to their husbands, and while even you may in some respects not be all that you should in this relationship. Why do you not say, "Seeing this is so, I will not profess to be Mrs. B. any longer," as you do with reference to Christianity? Both matters stand exactly alike, and yet how differently you treat them: would it not be just if God said, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee?" Strange fatality! and yet how common in this day of much profession and little reality—of much light and little conscience; on the one hand, "the *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof"—"a *name* to live while dead;" and, upon the other, "the *fearful*, those who, having convictions, will not *act* upon them; the *unbelieving*—those who have the Word of God before them and will not *rest* upon it—who know well of Christ, and it may be would fain trust Him, and yet will not confess Him. My reader, I press it upon you. Are you "convicted in your conscience" as those who sought to entrap the Lord (John viii.), or Pilate who washed his hands of His blood whom he declared innocent, and yet dared not to *stand upon His side*? Beware of company like this, for, as surely as they withdrew from the clear shining of the light upon their consciences to escape its exposure, and "went about to *establish* their own righteousness," but could not even to themselves, much less to God, so surely will their doom be yours also. Are you *convicted* of your sins? Then unbreast them to a God who, upon thy first utterance of confession, will greet thee with forgiveness. Does the *weakness* of thy heart deter thee from an open confession of Him before others, as well as to Him of all thy sins? Tell Him *all*, and by His grace speak well of Him who loves even such as thou art—a sinner in thy sins, and thus will His strength be thine. Does the *burden* of the way depress thee? Then hear His voice saying, "Surely I will be with thee; thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy *days* so shall thy strength be."

B. C. G.

PLAIN PAPERS ON SCRIPTURE SUBJECTS---1

PROPHECY is a subject to which, after more than fifteen centuries of neglect, the Spirit of God is again directing the minds of many of His people. For another long age is drawing to its close, the time to set seal to vision and prophet is at hand, and the Lord will not hide from His own what he is about to do.

Still, however, there lingers in the minds of many Christians a strong objection to prophetic study, though surely a little honest consideration would convince them of their error. For more than a *fourth* part of the Bible is *prophetic*: and if God chooses to say so much, dare we refuse to listen? If He has bidden us attend to these truths, shall we turn away almost contemptuously, and say, "*It profiteth not*"? Certainly, if this be our course, we are setting up our own will in opposition to His, and would do well to inquire whether we really be in the faith or not. For "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. viii. 9. If, then, the Spirit loves to dwell on the future purposes of God, will not also the mind of every one that has that Spirit exhibit a similar desire? Must there not be identity of feeling? If the Spirit of God be really influencing us, should He not be accompanied in His testimony by our spirit?

In the commencement of the last of the sacred books we find a *special* blessing promised to him that readeth, and to them that hear the words of the prophecy. (Rev. i. 3). This promise is not merely for him that readeth and is able to explain, nor only for them that hear and fully understand; but for all who read or hear with earnest attention, whether they be able to penetrate into the depths of the meaning or not. Nor is it difficult to see some of the channels through which the blessing flows. We will mention three of them.

First, then, the study of prophecy is *commanded*, (2 Peter i. 19), and we know generally that the grace of God follows every act of direct obedience on our part. If we search out even the most minute commands of His law, and do them; if we show that we would not have a word uttered by Him fall to the ground, we testify both to ourselves and to others that we do in very deed, and not in word only, recognise Him as our God and our King, the Rightful Disposer of our every thought, word, and action.

Nor will He on His part be slow in acknowledging us as His subjects, as those who have a claim upon His aid and protection. He will give us grace to help in every time of need ; His covering shield will be quickly interposed when the black air begins to hurtle with the darts of the enemy ; His strength, by which the worlds are sustained, will uphold us when our flesh and our heart are failing ; His almighty hand will clasp and guide us when the last impenetrable gloom begins to thicken around us, and a darkness that can indeed be felt veils the place on which we must next set our foot. Nor will His grasp slacken till He has drawn us through the night, and our eyes are dazzled as we behold that for which He has caused us to hope, the golden gates of the Paradise of God.

Secondly ; if a man read and believe prophecy, though he may not altogether understand it, he cannot at least avoid a strong conviction of the *transitoriness* of the present order of things, and is thus mightily helped in his efforts to look beyond it. We are all by nature inclined to Positivism, and for the most part act practically, if we do not theoretically, upon the hypothesis that things always have been and always will be as they are ; that no changes will ever take place, except such as may be brought about in an ordinary way by agencies already at work.

And the fact that prophecy instantly dispels this false security is the secret reason why, when God draws back the curtain of the future, men either shudder and turn sullenly away, or else explain what they see as no literal picture of that which must shortly come to pass, but as a figurative foreshadowing of something which they are careful to show is by no means alarming, and indeed nothing more than a natural result of existing influences. For they find it difficult to conceive a violent change such as they themselves have never experienced. They are quite willing to talk of development : they love to speak of the time when preachers will be more successful, and somehow contrive to persuade the whole human race of its pride, its selfishness, and general ungodliness : they delight to increase the influence of their own particular sect—though in doing this they frequently confuse political power with the power of the Spirit, and are apt to forget who is the reigning Prince of this World and present dispenser of its brief glory.

Or, perhaps, they are cosmopolitan in their views and affect to despise the narrow-minded restrictions of sect ; while they altogether ignore the fact that they hold sufficiently

defined opinions of their own, and are unyieldingly tenacious of them. And so, floating with the stream of a torrent which is now daily increasing in volume and impetuosity, they preach peace and good will towards all men from a beneficent God who has no idea of ever troubling us about sin, and predict a golden age of liberty, equality, and fraternity. And yet if you test in their own case the first absolutely indispensable condition of their Millennium, they will probably fail, in worse fashion than did the young lawyer, to prove that they love their neighbours as themselves, by going away not merely in sorrow but in wrath.

Such ideas, then, man will readily adopt: for they are all consistent with a continuance of the present order of things: they can all come to their perfection—so he imagines—without a violent shock, without any supernatural interference.

But he who with earnestness and faith looks down the great vista of futurity which God has opened is quickly penetrated by very different thoughts. He beholds the conflict between good and evil intensifying, until that which is good seems overcome and well nigh annihilated: then he feels the firm ground shaking and giving way beneath him: he looks, and, lo, all the cities of the nations are tottering in ruins upon the trembling earth: the sun is withdrawing its wonted light, the moon becomes as blood: the once solid objects around him wave and reel in confusion. Like the breaking up and evanescence of a vivid dream. A sudden flash speeds through the gloom, and he sees the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven: he starts in affright as the red lightnings strike the earth: he gazes with awe upon the many slain of the Lord. And then at length a change passes over the scene: the thunders cease to roll, the flashing of the lightning is stayed; and forth from smoke and ruin comes the earth, purified and fair as the garden of Eden; the towers and pinnacles of a noble city appear at the foot of Mount Zion, and from the summit of the mountain rises majestically the wondrous temple described by Ezekiel, before which all flesh shall come to worship the Lord.

For by the outstretched hand and by the strong arm of the Almighty, and not by preaching, will the world be taught to acknowledge her Creator, and at last find rest from her feverish toil. The preaching of the Gospel in this present time is but for the calling out of an election according to the purpose of God, and for a witness to the rest of man-

kind. It is only, as Isaiah tells us, when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. xxvi. 9.)

These outlines, at least, the devout reader of prophecy will be able to trace: and so, when the close of this present age comes like a snare upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth, (Luke xxi. 35), it will find him prepared and undismayed.

Lastly; the study of prophecy reveals to us the *mind* and *will* of God. Seems this a light thing? Do we indeed despise the confidence of our Almighty Creator? Let us fear lest we so insult Him; lest, like swine, we trample on the pearls offered to us. And regarding them in this light, how great is the practical value of the prophetic Scriptures! For if we are already justified by Christ, we still have need of daily progress in sanctification, we should be ever becoming more and more transformed to the image of God. And to that end what greater help could we have than a revelation of His mind and purposes in regard to ourselves, our fellow-creatures, and the earth in which we dwell; an estimate by Him of all temporal things, of those visible surroundings by which we are continually affected, and His declaration of their speedy judgment and destruction?

Is it not a duty to become minutely acquainted with all this; to meditate on it continually; to shape our wishes, hopes, and aspirations, from it; to bring our whole mind into accordance with it; to use our every endeavour to spread the knowledge of it among men; and so prepare ourselves and others for that new order of things, into which we either must enter individually at the unknown time of death, or may enter simultaneously at any moment by the long-expected return of our Lord and Saviour?

—*Earth's Earliest Ages.*

“We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the *power* and *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . We have also a more sure word of prophecy; (confirmed, made surer) whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a *light* that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Pet. ii. 16-21.

NOTES OF BIBLE READINGS—I.

THE LORD'S COMING.

MATT. XVI. 28, XVII.

Peter learned the "blessed hope" of the Lord's coming on the "holy mount." We may learn it there too. In the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of his second epistle he says that "he must shortly put off his tabernacle," and yet assured his brethren that the Lord was coming, and they were to "look for Him." There were only two Christians that were *sure* that they would die—Paul and Peter. Peter had a special revelation to that effect. John xxi. The Lord Jesus had shewn it to him. In 2 Tim. iv. 6 Paul tells us the same thing as to himself

The second coming of our Lord is not a "cunningly-devised fable." What people differ about as to it is *when*. He will come, *how*, to *whom*, and to what *end*. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is the pole star by which the Christian has to steer his course in this world. We cannot live a proper Christian life, if we do not "look for the Saviour,"—"wait for God's Son from heaven." Heb. ix. 24, 26, 28, shews the Lord Jesus in *three* different positions. First in order, the twenty-sixth verse shews Him on the *cross*. sins put away by His one sacrifice never to be repeated. As to this, in Hebrews x. we have the expression "*no more*" four times in connection with the cross of Christ. "*No more conscience of sins*," (verse 2), not no more *consciousness* of sin. This is entirely at variance with the thought of many, that the value of the sacrifice has to be applied over and over again. We are putting a slight, though perhaps unconsciously, on the finished work of Christ, if we regard ourselves as miserable sinners when He has been trusted and His work avails for us. That is *our* side of it. What is *God's*? No more *remembrance* of sins—He will never remember our sins again. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," verse 17. When He says that He will remember them "*no more*," who dare say that He will remember them *any* more? It is perfectly true that "every hidden thing will be brought to light," but our sins will never be remembered against us in judgment.

A young man once asked for some distinct passage on which to rest his soul in peace. He was pointed to the text, "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Think of the sea of God's forgetfulness rolling over them!

Then he began to think of the sea giving up its dead, and what if it should give up his sins; and again he was in trouble. Next he was reminded of the passage which says, "Thou hast cast all my sins *behind thy back*." About to take its comfort, he thought what if God should turn round! At last he was referred to this passage, "Their sins and iniquities will I *remember no more*," and he found peace.

Further, "Where remission of these is, there is 'no more' *offering* for sin," (Heb. x. 18.) Lastly, "if we sin wilfully, etc., there remaineth 'no more' *sacrifice* for sins," (verse 26). This does not apply to a person sinning *any* wilful sin, but to the wilful sin of this particular Scripture, that of an *apostate*. What, then, is the "wilful sin" of Christendom? The twenty-ninth verse tells us. "Treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing."

Returning, there is no use in studying the Lord's *second* coming if we do not know for our own souls somewhat of the value of His *first* coming.

But what about the believer's sins of every day? In view of them he needs another work, not the work on the *cross*, but the work on the *throne*. This is referred to in Hebrews ix. 24, and is the second position in which Christ is presented to us in this chapter. Four times in this epistle we have Christ on the throne and in these relations.

1. "The purger of our sins," i. 3.
2. "An High Priest," viii. 1.
3. The offerer of one ever-availing sacrifice, x. 12.
4. "The faithful witness"—"suffering unto death," xii. 2.

Thus exalted, He ever liveth as the great High Priest. That meets the Christian in his weakness. Suppose I refuse my Saviour's help, what then? I fail in my path—I sin. 1 John ii. 1 tells me then that I "have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." For the *sinner*, there is the Saviour, Christ on the cross; for the *saint*, the priesthood of Christ on the throne. As a weak and failing Christian, I have the *priesthood* and *advocacy* of Christ.

The *third* position in which the Lord Jesus is presented to us is "coming again" "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.) No one is a Christian in the Bible sense of the word, unless he rests *all* on Christ for salvation. Then he finds his power in the world is Christ on the throne. Then the blessed hope by which we steer our course—His

coming again. We are not *Bible Christians* if we are not thus. Every blessing in the New Testament is connected with the second *coming* of Christ. Having the cross behind us, and the glory before us, we only need to be sustained by grace along the way. The two great dates of Christianity are the *cross* and the *coming*; the interval, our journey home.

Matt. xvii. is the fulfilment of the promise in chap. xvi. 28. Some suppose from it that the Lord must have come at the destruction of Jerusalem. I believe that is without warrant in Scripture. "The dead in Christ" did not rise then, nor were "the living" caught up to meet Him in the air:—plainly the Lord did not take them to His Father's house then. Peter says, we saw "the *power* and *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . on the holy mount." 2 Peter i. 16, 18. It is an infidel thought, though widely entertained, that we may believe as we like, and it is of no consequence. Many a Christian says there is no difference whether he is looking for death or the coming of the Lord. Suppose that Abraham, when God was making a revelation to him, had said, I do not want to know about that. Would not that have been a palpable slight to God? How fitting the circumstances our Lord chose in which to make known His mind to His own. He once led His disciples into the *desert* just after they had cast out devils, and had come home exhilarated by their success. Now He would cheer and raise their spirits in view of the trial of the way, so leads them just as here to the *mountain top*—high above the world's din and turmoil.

So God stops us at the door of Revelation to ask us two questions:—first, are we washed from our sins? second, are we, like John, sharing Christ's rejection, seeking "the fellowship of His sufferings?" If not, we may as well close with the first chapter. We must not have a question of our salvation if we are to understand this subject. Are *we* thus the people to understand it? God knows, and may He give us to. *Three* of the disciples go up into the holy mount with the Lord Jesus,—that is not only competent, but abundant witness. They go to "see the King in His beauty"—manifested in glory. The first thing before us then is *THE KING*. Many of the Latter Day sects are all wrong about the *King*—heretical about His person, while professing to know much about the *Kingdom*. What can we know aright about the Kingdom if we are heretical about the *King* who is to reign? We must be *saved* and seeking to follow Him ere He can thus take us by the hand. "An high mountain

apart," above human influences, "apart with Him." If rightly engaged with Him, we will not think of the glory we are to get, but of the place *He* will have. We will delight to see *His name* exalted. Soon we will see Him "transfigured in glory," and coming forth to reign. The three disciples saw Him that day as He will be when He comes again. "The King in His beauty" is here before us. Does not the Bible say that when He appears, we shall appear with Him? Yes, here we are in the picture,—Moses and Elias, representing the heavenly saints presented to Christ in glory. Moses died and was buried. Elijah went to heaven without dying. "The *dead* shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the *living*) shall be changed," 1 Cor. xv. 22. Moses represents the first class, and Elias the second. "So whether we *wake* or *sleep*, we shall live together with Him." "Comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. iv. 18. There is no more soul-sustaining truth in the blessed word of God than this: that our Saviour is coming back again "to receive us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also." Moses and Elias go right into the heavenly glory with Him—answering to the Father's house. They are quite *at home*, "talking with Him." Luke ix. 31 tells us what they were talking about "They spake of his *decease*." We will be eternally contemplating the marvels of the *cross*. "A bright cloud overshadowed them"—the Shechinah—God's glory. The three men looking up into heaven next represent the nation of Israel restored to their own land in the millennial kingdom. We have had first the *King*; second, the heavenly scene and its company; third, the earthly one with its; last, we see the power of the Evil One met and conquered. The Lord Jesus comes down from the mount and casts the demon out. This is God's own picture of the Lord Jesus in His second coming. If we do not appreciate it thus, it must be because we do not know much of the "high mountain apart" with Him. Now viewing it in a moral way, Peter made a mistake in his address, "Lord, it is good for *us* to be here," etc. He was not solely occupied with the King, as we surely shall be *then*. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then *face to face*." Now we know in part; then shall we know even as we are known." Peter was thinking about what "is good for us." So, often, people in their endeavors to be happy miss the happiness they seek. God's centre in that heavenly glory was *Jesus*—all revolved around Him. Peter's was "*us*." "Let us make three tabernacles: one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." God calls

back Moses and Elias, and they "see no man save Jesus only." Peter's thought was *three* tabernacles; God's, "*Jesus only*." So, often, with souls as to *peace*; they want to rest partly on what they can *do* (Moses), partly on their *convictions* (Elias), and the rest upon the Saviour's *grace*. But we are taught it must be "Jesus only" then, and that, too, for ever after. God took Moses out of sight—"all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" Elias too—our feelings are unstable as water. "Jesus only," then, is the grandest motto for the path. These lessons on the mount thus are moral ones as well. When Peter writes of being there, he speaks of but *One* whom he had seen. We would not know from his account that he had ever seen Moses and Elias there, (2 Peter i.), showing how well he has learned his lesson. Unless our religion is this—Jesus only—we are strangers to the blessing of faith in Christ as our *peace*, and as the *power* for our path. "Jesus only" is the blessed untiring monotony of heaven.

Next, the disciples came down from the top of the mountain to the bottom. What is the lesson for the bottom—for the stern realities of every-day life? *Prayer* and *fasting*. Prayer—expressing dependence upon God; fasting—keeping the body in subjection.

Next, they came to *Capernaum*, the place of Christ's most pronounced rejection, "exalted to heaven" (in privilege), "thrust down to hell" (in judgment) "They that received tribute money came to Peter and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute?" In other words, Is not your Master a good Jew? Peter wants his Lord to be on good terms with all, and replies, Yes. We have to learn this lesson, that we cannot amalgamate Christ rejected with the world that cast him out. The Lord stops Peter at the door and says, "What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute, of their own children, or of strangers?" But although the Saviour thus rebukes Peter, He says, "Lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them, for Me and *thee*." The Lord rebukes him, and then cheers his heart by saying, "*Me and thee*."

Returning to our subject, I think it is an insult to such a blessed truth as the Lord's coming to attempt to prove it. We do not try to prove to a man that the sun shines; we tell him to look at it and see.

The Lord's coming is not the *death* of the Christian. John xxi. 23 proves this. The Lord said to Peter concerning John, "If I will that he tarry till I come." Everybody tarries until he dies, so "till I come" could not mean "till he dies." The Lord Jesus expected His people to look for Him to come again *soon*. John, the one who wrote this Gospel, and the Thessalonians who "waited for God's Son from heaven," were *not* disappointed. They *looked, watched,* and *expected* till they got home; and there in heaven they are looking forward still for the Lord to come. They have not got their resurrection bodies yet. Once they waited "*absent* from the Lord," now they wait "*present* with the Lord." It is not *reward* to go to heaven, it is *gift*. Reward is for what I have done; gift for what Christ has done. In every twenty-fifth verse in the New Testament, one assures us, the coming of the Lord Jesus is mentioned. If we do not then enjoy this blessed truth, it is because we are not walking in the power of it, and "the word of His patience" has little place in our hearts.

B. C. G.

The day of glory bearing
 Its brightness far and near,
 The day of Christ's appearing
 We now no longer fear.

He once a spotless victim
 For us on Calv'ry bled;
 Jehovah did afflict Him,
 And bruised Him in our stead.

To Him by grace united,
 We joy in Him alone;
 And now by faith delighted,
 Behold Him on the throne.

Then let Him come in glory,
 Who comes His saints to raise!
 To perfect all the story
 Of wonder, love, and praise.

THE UNFAILING ONE.

Thou failest not! though everything be failing,
 The surge of evil ev'ry side assailing,—
 Thou art above it all, our faithful God—
 THOU failest not.

Thou failest not! above our failures, errors,
 The grace that silenced once our guilty terrors,
 Is still the same, through Jesus' precious blood,
 THAT faileth not.

Thou failest not! thou wilt forsake us never,
Christ Jesus, yesterday, to-day, for ever!
 Our everlasting portion and our lot,
 THOU failest not.

Thou failest not! our Sun is ever shining,
 Sends forth His rays, light, warmth and strength combining,
 Through clouds t'wards hearts that sigh to Thee, O God,
 THAT faileth not.

Thou failest not! above wants, cares, and sighing,
 A Father's love divine, all need supplying,
 Us guideth still upon our homeward road,
 THAT faileth not.

Thou failest not! 'bove havoc, wand'ring, straying,
 A Shepherd's eye, once closed in death, surveying,
 Restores, and comforts still, with staff and rod,
 THAT faileth not.

Thou failest not! 'bove ruin, shame, and weeping,
 The en'my watching, and Thy servants sleeping,
 Thy faithfulness, O God, can slumber not,
 THOU failest not.

Thou failest not! above man's puny lever,
 Thou art our help, Lord, God blessed for ever!
 Who under foot the serpent's head hath trod,
 THOU failest not.

Thou tarriest not! above world, sin, and Devil,
 Soon shall we rise, leaving behind all evil,
 With rapture shout, "For ever with the Lord!"
 THOU tarriest not!

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 B. C. G.

" THY WILL BE DONE ! "

Four little words, no more—
 Easy to say ;
 But thoughts that went before,
 Can words convey ?
 The struggle, only known
 To one proud soul,
 And Him whose eye alone
 Has marked the whole.

Before that stubborn will
 At length was broke,
 And a low "Peace be still!"
 One soft voice spoke ;
 The pang, when that sad heart
 Its dreams resigned,
 And strength was found, to part
 Those bonds long twined.

To yield that treasure up,
 So fondly clasped,
 To drain that bitter cup
 So sadly grasped!
 But all is calm at last,—
 "Thy will be done!"
 Enough, the storm is past,
 The field is won.

Now for the peaceful breast,
 The quiet sleep ;
 For soul and spirit rest,
 Tranquil and deep.
 Rest, whose full bliss and power
 They only know,
 Who knew the bitter hour
 Of restless woe.

The rebel will subdued—
 The fond heart free,—
 "Thy will be done!" ALL good
 That comes from Thee,
 All weary thought and care,
 Lord we resign ;
 OURS IS TO DO, TO BEAR,—
 TO CHOOSE IS THINK.

Four little words, no more,—
 Easy to say ;
 But what was felt before,
 Can words convey ?

A WORD ON OBEDIENCE.

It is "found perfectly in the blessed and perfect Saviour." Would you know His character, His style now that He is ushered in, in His own humble, but holy and perfect announcement. "Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of Me (His everlasting character) I delight to do Thy will, O God, yea Thy law is within my heart." This was His constant perfectness as man—so we read in the course of His life "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." This character was stamped on every circumstance, "He took upon Him the form of a servant," and as in life He did always such things as pleased His Father, for He sought not His own will but the will of Him that sent Him, so that was no limit to its extent any more than to its perfectness for "loving His own to the end" He "became obedient unto death, the death of the cross"; for though willingly doing it, "this commandment had He received of His Father." He had now ears dug for Him (Ps. xl. 6) : the Lord God had opened them and He was not rebellious, neither turned away back, but "gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," nor hid His face all that obedience brought Him into, power or no power, for "He was crucified in weakness though He liveth by the power of God" His power was the powerful service of God. His weakness the patience of all His will. So it was—obedience was the principle on which He acted in the temptation "It is written," was His reply ever to the tempter's suggestions, and when the tempter would thereupon have guilefully alleged a promise "It is written, He shall give, etc.," our Lord met Him with the answer "It is written again," an answer shewing the principle of obedience as contrasted with the principle of assumption, of assumption even of true privilege, a most important truth! Obedience can be swerved from in no instance without breaking this the first and only principle of accepted relationship to God, it is the only exercise, save praise, of life, to God.

Two great classes lose sight of and abuse this principle—those who plead obedience and those who plead liberty. Peter's answer, it seems to me, meets both. "We ought to obey God rather than men," Acts v. Dissenters, as a body, plead liberty, rights—the title to do, as regards men, what they please. The Churchmen claim obedience and frequently plead the principle: but it is still to men and not to God. We ought to obey, answers the one; we ought to obey God, the other.

J. N. D.

RICH IN GOD.

- RICHES of His GOODNESS, Rom. ii. 4.
- RICHES of His MERCY, Eph. ii. 4.
- RICHES of His GRACE, Eph. i. 2.
- RICHES of His GLORY, Eph. iii. 16.
- RICHES of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE, Rom. xi. 33.
- RICHES in FAITH, Jas. ii. 5.
- RICHES of CHRIST (unsearchable), Eph. iii. 8.

“For ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich.”

2 Cor. viii. 3.

UP THERE.

Oh! the glory and the joy,
Happiness without alloy,
Not a sorrow or a care,
Shall we ever know

Up there!

Joyfully the severed meet,
And with rapture loved ones greet;
Nought their gladness to impair,
Partings all unknown

Up there!

Not a trouble, or a sigh,
Not a tear bedims the eye;
Sweetest songs and music rare,
Echo through the realms

Up there!

No temptation and no pain,
Can we ever feel again,
Nought can with the rest compare
That the saints enjoy

Up there!

'Tis our Jesu's lovely face,
Beaming full of truth and grace,
Brightest, fairest of the fair,
Fount of joy to all

Up there!

Lamb of God, in glory come,
Call Thy loved ones to their home,
With the saints do Thou appear,
Take Thy blood-bought Bride

Up there!



THOU, NOW.

“Gracious Saviour Thou hast called me,
Called to trust Thee *now* ;
Who alone of trust art worthy,
Jesus, only *Thou*.

Strange this path of suffering to me,
Can I trust Thee *now* ?
Sad and weary, who can aid me ?
Jesus, only *Thou* ;

’Tis Thy voice my loving Saviour,
I will trust Thee *now* ;
I am trusting, clinging to Thee,
Jesus, only *Thou*.

Not my trusting, not my clinging,
Oh, sweet thought, that *now*,
Thou art holding, Thou art keeping,
Jesus, only *Thou*.

My weak hands may fail and falter,
Jesus, grasp them *now* ;
Not my hold, but Thine, my Saviour,
Jesus, only *Thou*.

Thinking not of future danger,
All my need is *now*.
Ever present, who can meet it ?
Jesus, only *Thou*.

All the failing past forgiven,
Fully trusting *now*.
Self renouncing, Thou wilt keep me,
Jesus, only *Thou*.

Hour by hour, in joy or sorrow,
My sweet refuge *now*.
His dear love who died to save me,
Jesus, only *Thou*.”

It was remarked at a gospel meeting, which was held in some part of England, that the whole of the Christian’s life might be summed up two words, “*Thou*”—“*now*,” instead of *I—myself*. Some one there embodied the sentiment in the foregoing words.

THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

I TRUST you have made sure work of the reality of your conversion to God. Have you truly and heartily taken Jesus to be your Saviour? Have you by faith laid hold of His atoning blood and Him as your righteousness, as the only ground of your acceptance in God's sight? Are you looking to Him also for the daily sanctification of the Spirit? Is your life a life of communion with Jesus? Is He all in all to you? Are you depending daily upon his infiniteness? Would you rather die than part with the Son of God?

Then you must be a child of God; for it is written, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 26. "As many as received HIM, to them gave he the privilege to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12, 13. If God, for Christ sake, hath forgiven you, your name is written in heaven, and of this blessed fact you may enjoy a *full assurance*.

Remember, that, if you have for yourself believed God's testimony to his own dear Son as the full and sufficient Saviour for sinners, it is a grievous sin to doubt the fulfilment of that testimony *in your own case*. Some good people seem to think that it is a sign of great humility to stand in doubt of the fulfilment of God's word *to themselves*. They can believe the absolute and inviolable truthfulness of the gospel message of salvation for any body rather than for themselves. They oscillate, like the pendulum of a clock, between the two extremes of despair and assurance, and are satisfied that it should be so. Indeed, they think it would be almost a state of presumption, to live in the habitual assurance that they are in very deed SAVED.

But surely, it is not a virtue, but a sin, to doubt the truth of God's word in its application *to ourselves*! For whom are we to believe, if not for ourselves? It is a sad form of unbelief when, having received the testimony, we question the fulfilment of its gracious promises in their application *to our own case*. The very spirit of vital godliness is faith, trust, confidence—not unbelief. This, I trust, you will realise. If the word of God be true for anybody, it must be true for you; and if you, renouncing every other

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refuge, have simply taken Jesus as all your salvation and all your desire, you are **SAVED**. Let this blessed hope cheer you at the outset of your career. Start upon your Christian course with the conviction that, though only a lamb, you do really belong to the flock of the Saviour, and that his precious words are true **FOR YOU**,—"I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." John x. 28. Believe the promise; believe it for *yourself*; and believe it *always*.

"But do not good men sometimes doubt the reality of their conversion and salvation?" Alas! yes. But, doubting is no part of their religion, and is no fruit of grace. When believers walk *unworthily* of their profession, doubt is necessarily cast upon the sincerity of their profession. It cannot be otherwise. Faith is victory over sin; but if sin overcome us, in that fact, sin is our master, not God. For "know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. vi. 16. But assuming that you are living in the habitual mortification of every known sin, and in the fulfilment of every known duty, what is to hinder you from walking in the enjoyment of an assurance of salvation? When God says to us, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice," (Phil. iv. 4,) he cannot be commanding us to attain to an impossible state. God never commands us to do impossibilities. It must therefore be possible for a Christian to live in an atmosphere of faith and hope; to walk all day in the light of God's countenance and in the assurance of personal acceptance in Christ. Amid the rushing and roaring of the waters of the deluge, Noah possessed his soul in peace. He did not run about the ark to look again at every bolt and plank, to see that all was well. He knew that ark was built according to God's directions, that it was the divinely appointed refuge from the flood, and that God had shut him up in that shelter. This satisfied him. And, you, my young friend, being a sincere believer in your precious Lord, are **IN CHRIST**, the all-sufficient Saviour from the wrath to come, and *are saved*. You have "passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation." See John v. 24. Surely, it is no part of Christian modesty to doubt what God has so clearly revealed!

(Selected.)

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD.

"AND He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him."

—John viii. 29.

They who fight the Lord's battles must be content to be in no respect accounted of; to be in no respect encouraged by the prospect of *human* praise.

If you make an exception, that the children of God will praise you, whatever the world may say; beware of this, for you may turn them into a world, and find in them a world, and may "sow to the flesh," in sowing to their approbation; and you will neither be benefited by them, nor they by you, so long as respect for them is your motive. All such motives are poison and a taking away from you the strength in which you are to give glory to God. It is *not* the fact that all that see the face of the Lord, do see each other. It is not the fact that the *misapprehension* of the world is the *only* misapprehension the Christian must be contented to labour under; he must expect even his brethren to see him through a mist, and to be disappointed of their sympathy and cheers of approbation.

The man of God must walk alone with God; he must be contented that the Lord knoweth—that God knows. It is such a relief to the natural man within us to fall back upon human countenances and human thoughts and sympathy, that we often deceive ourselves and think it "brotherly love," when we are just resting in the earthly sympathy of some fellow worm! You are to be followers of Him who was left alone, and you are like Him, to rejoice you are "not alone" because the Father is with you, that you may give glory to God. Oh! I cannot but speak of it, it is such a glory to God to see a soul that has been accessible to the praise of men, surrounded by thousands of his fellow creatures, every one of whom he knows how to please, and yet that he should be contented, yea pleased and happy in doing, with a single reference to God, that which he knows they will all

(Selected.)

misunderstand! Here was the victory of Jesus! There was not a single heart that beat in sympathy with His heart, or entered into His bitter sorrow, or bore His grief in the hour of His bitter grief; but His way was with the Lord—His judgment was with His God, His Father, who said, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

This was the perfect glory given to the Father by the Son, that in flesh and blood such a trust in God was manifested; and this is what you are called to, and you are not called to it as He was, but you are called to see God in Him. God has come near to you in Christ, and here you have a human heart—a perfect sympathy—the heart of God in your nature, and to this you are ever carried. And if there be any other sympathy with you in the wide universe, whether on the sea of glass, or still on earth, it is only as the pulsation of the blood that flows from Christ to His members that it is to you of any account. Feed upon it, and remember you are thus to walk in the world—not hanging upon one another.

Oh! Jesus, Master! take my fevered hands in Thine, and keep me with Thee, with Thee, walking above the worthless din of human praise or disapproval.

Then shall it be in my ear the empty sound which it is in Thine; and I shall walk in sweet unconsciousness,—too far for some—not far enough for others,—but with Thee; putting my whole weight into that which in Thine eyes is service; no longer offering Thee the blind, the lame, the maimed desires of a spirit dreaming of the great things which it would do, but my waking, rejoicing energies.

Lord! shine upon Thy poor plant,—say unto me with power,

"ARISE! FOLLOW ME."



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ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.—2.

GIDEON.

(JUDGES VI. VII., 2 COR. IV. 6.)

The subject for our consideration this evening is how light—"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"—gets *into* a man's soul, and blesses *him*, and how it gets *out* to bless others;—in other words, how a man is to get his soul saved, and how to be the means of saving others. In Jude 23 we read "*others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.*" There is such a thing then as being privileged to be the means of saving souls,—not to save them from hell,—that only One can do. Yet it is the happy privilege of the Lord's people, in the measure that they are near to Him, to be the instruments of saving others from the paths of evil—turning them from the error of their ways. The only way by which we ever can do this is by being morally *separated* to God.

We may consider the subject in another aspect, first, how we are made fit to dwell *with* Christ in heaven, second, how we are made fit to live *for* Him on earth.

In Colossians i. 3-5 the apostle thanks God for two things in the saints at Colosse,—their "*faith* in Christ Jesus," and their "*love* to all the saints," *pray'ng* always for them. I believe that if we tested our prayers by the light of God's word, we should find that many of them are not *Christian* prayers at all. He shows us what every Christian should be thanking God for (verses 12-14). "*Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,*" etc. Here are four blessed facts for which we ought to be thanking God,—meekness for heaven, deliverance from the power of darkness, translation into the Kingdom of Christ, and forgiveness of sins. These things do not belong to the more *advanced* Christian any more than to the feeblest babe. Then four things that Paul prayed for them, (verses 9-11). *What* did he pray for? That their souls might be saved? No. That they might be delivered from the power of Satan? That was already true of them,—the position of all God's people whether they enjoy it or not. Just as Israel looking over across

Jordan,—that is your possession. These were God's words to Israel. "Go in and possess the land." What should we pray for then? *Our state*. What about our *walk*? This should be the deep, real, earnest concern of our hearts. It is the *way*, dear saints, that puts us to the proof. It is there, as God says in Deuteronomy viii., that He tries us, proves us, and knows what is in our hearts. May God then give us to be like His servant long ago, thanking Him for what we *possess*, and praying for what we still *need*. Paul prays for the saints at Colosse that they may "*walk* worthy of the Lord unto *ALL* *pleasing*," "*increasing* in the knowledge of God": "*strengthened* with *ALL* *might*," "*unto* *ALL* *patience*,"—the neck bowed to the yoke of Jesus, fellowship with Him. We may learn valuable lessons in the darkest scenes of our wilderness journey. I desire to *illustrate* this to you.

In *Judges* we are in a book marked by dismal failure. If in *Joshua* we have Jehovah's triumph, in *Judges* we get the failure of His people to possess what belonged to them. This tribe did not turn out their enemies,—that one acted in the same way, and so on. "And the children of Israel did *evil* in the sight of the Lord." *Judges* vi. 1. We find in this book *seven* different captivities—different nations' oppression picturing different forms of Satan's power—a complete picture of Israel's failure. But a *dark* background is the best on which to shew *bright* things. Israel's complete failure brought out God's perfect grace. *Twelve* times He came in to deliver them, raising up unto them "saviours."

We will now turn to the *particular* failure before us. "They did evil in the sight of the Lord." The last few chapters are full of this evil, but as the account is not given in regular consecutive order, they give us the moral east of the whole book. "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in *his own eyes*." *Judges* xxi. 25. How striking the lesson! A man is going to rise up in this world—the personification of Satan. The most striking thing the Scripture tells of him is, "the King will do according to *his own will*." Have we not often rolled sin under our tongue as a sweet morsel,—found our delight in what caused the Son of God the deepest agony? There is no use trying to

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evade the discipline of God—the sooner we put our necks under the yoke the better. The Lord Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and *learn* of me." Matt. xi. 9. The children of Israel pleased themselves,—did what they liked—"what was right in their own eyes," and thus very little that was right in God's eyes. The enemies that oppressed them were different ones. Often the Philistines who were the descendants of Mizraim, (father of Egypt). They present Satanic principles destructive of our heavenly calling. They were people that occupied Canaan, but instead of occupying it legitimately, they *stole* into it. They represent those who would like to enjoy the benefits of Christ's death without bearing His cross. They were troublesome people to deal with. They stopped up the wells, etc. We will now come to the *Midianites*. We find from Genesis xxx. that *Abraham* had a wife named *Keturah*, and that *Midian* was one of her sons. The *Midianites* then could say "we have *Abraham* to our father"—half-brothers, as we might say, of the *Israelites*—and they were the scourges of God's people. Do we not find things that answer to the *Midianites*—things, which if you give them too much place, will mightily oppress you, strip you, and greatly impoverish you? *What* is there that is to me like the *Midianites* of old were to *Israel*? Let us consider this, beloved brethren, "The *Midianites* came up and destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for *Israel*," etc. What are these unsuspected things that rob us of communion with the Lord? Each one of us must decide *what* for himself. And how are we to be *restored*? At last "the children of *Israel* cried unto the Lord." In Psalm cvii., we read six times, "Then they cried unto the Lord," and as many times, "then the Lord heard them." That is what we read here (*Judges* vi.) "they *cried* unto the Lord." And "He *delivered* them." Is not this what we always find? I appeal to you—and I say it before God for myself—He never *failed* us, and He never *can*. Do not seek hallowed spots on earth—*Gilgal* etc.—for deliverance, but go to the Lord Himself. (See *Amos* v. 4-8).
 Now, the manner of His deliverance. The Lord sent the *Israelites* a *prophet* before he sent an *angel*. What is the moral significance of that? He must first send a man to search their hearts—to bring them into the immediate presence of God. It is a mistaken thought about prophets

that they only foretell future events. It is not at all necessary that they should. The office of a prophet is to bring people face to face with God. We never hear of a prophet in Israel except when there was failure. The priests were there to maintain communion. There are numerous instances to prove this. In the failure of the *priesthood* in Eli, Samuel the prophet was sent. When David, the *king*, fell into sin, he was restored by Nathan, the prophet. When they got off the track, then a prophet was sent, and so many other cases. The Lord Jesus sits by the well of Samaria, and tells the woman of her sinful life. As He does so, she says, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a *prophet*,"—because He put His finger on the spot in her soul that had never seen the light of day. How often has the Lord done that for you and me! He sent us a prophet. We wanted comfort, but he had to plow furrows in our souls first. The prophet said—"Ye have not obeyed my voice." The angel cannot be sent till after the prophet. First, the prophet is sent to lay our hearts bare, and then the angel to tell us the goodness of God's heart, when our hearts are open to receive it.

Gideon was "threshing wheat by the wine-press," (vi. 11). He is determined to keep his wheat from the enemy as long as he can. He has grown it off God's good land, and he is determined not to give it up without a struggle. "*Buy the truth and sell it not*" is its language to us. The angel said to him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of *valour*." We can hardly see any valour in him at this stage of his life. But God, from the first, sees all that He is going to make of us. In the block of stone the sculptor sees the statue. God can see jewels where none other can but He. One thing He sees in Gideon, a man who cannot think of himself without thinking of God's people too. The angel had said, "The Lord is with *thee*." Gideon's reply is, "If the Lord be with *us*." He cannot speak except in the *plural*. He was heart and soul with his people in their distress. "If the Lord be with *us*, why then is all this evil befallen us, etc.?" In other words, he says,—The Lord seems to have given us up. He wants to see Israel, what God had set them to be, the *head*, instead of the tail of the nations. How is it with us? If *we* are quite comfortable, and our *work* prosperous, do we think of the thousands who have not

what we have? The Lord make us like Gideon, and enable us to say from our hearts, "If the Lord be with us." There is thus a genuine work in the man's soul. It has the right ring about it. He says, "Oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is *poor* in Manasseh, and I am the *least* in my father's house." What a lesson for us! What was Manasseh? Not the tribe of Israel's *royalty* or *priesthood*, but one of little note among them. What was this but "*repentance toward God?*" Every man who thus bites the dust—who bows low before God in true hearty self-judgment—repentance—must next learn "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—"Repent ye, and believe the GOSPEL," is God's order.

Gideon next says, "If now I have found grace in Thy sight . . . depart not . . . until I bring forth my present," and he brings a kid, unleavened cakes, and broth. All the great questions of eternity are being raised and settled; as we have here this three-fold type of Christ—the *meat* offering, *burnt* offering, and the *drink* offering. The *meat* offering indicates Christ in life; "I do always those things that please my Father." The *burnt* offering—"a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour (Eph. v. 2); the *drink* offering—"His soul poured out unto death." The *unleavened* cakes—Christ in His spotless humanity. The *kid slain*—Christ making atonement to God. The *broth poured out*—the Saviour's deepest woe. There Gideon stands before God, with only *one* thing between him and God,—and how sufficient *that*—Christ in all these blessed aspects. Has this been true of *you*? Has God looked upon that offering for you, and taught you His acceptance of *it* and *you* in it, as trusting Him. If so, the judgment that was your due has fallen upon Jesus! What does Gideon learn? The grandest truth of the gospel—*substitution*. "The just died for the *unjust*"—that "Christ died for the *ungodly*." As a man that has passed the fullest self-judgment on himself, he stands in the presence of a holy God, cast upon His *mercy*, to learn how it "rejoiceth against judgment." The "fire of God" consumes his sacrifice, not him. But how like us all Gideon was, full of doubts and fears in the presence in God's infinite grace! After all this favour, he is afraid to believe it true. He says "I surely *die*, for I have seen God." One more thing is needed—God's blessed *word* to assure us of the

value of what Jesus has done for us. There, the sinner is assured. Mark the moral grandeur of this Gospel sermon! Do you know where it came from? The very heart of God, rich in *mercy*, great in *love*, abundant in *loving kindness*, exceeding rich in *grace*.

Now, we have to notice two things further. What is the Lord's second message to Gideon? "*Fear not.*" That is what the Gospel says. "*Perfect love casteth out fear.*" You say, that is just what I want, I want that perfect love. If you seek to get it, it must be God's perfect love, not yours,—*THAT alone*. 1 Jno. iv. 10. The third message was, "Thou shalt not *die*" Just so with us, "shall not come into judgment." Jno. v. 24. And in Rom. v. 1, 2. *Peace* (past), *grace* (present), *glory* (future). The worst sin of all our lives is that we ever doubted Him. Is God's word not enough to assure us? He has told us that, for the believer, the question of sins is settled; that he stands in God's favor, and that his judgment is passed.

Now, with Gideon, we have a further thing. "It came to pass the *same night* that the Lord said unto him, "Throw down the altar of Baal, that thy father hath," (verse 25). The same night that I found the Saviour for *mine*, He found me for *His*. The same passage that says, "My Beloved is *mine*," says, also, "I am *His*." God has wedded these together, and let us not sunder them. This alone can be full, true Christianity.

That meant that you took Him not only for your *Saviour* but also for your *Lord*. Every breath of our bodies, every faculty of our beings were henceforth to be His and His alone. So it is here Baal means *Lord*: throw down his altar. "Though there be that are called gods . . . to us there is but *one God*, the Father . . . and *one Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things, and we by Him." 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. People are objected to as being *exclusive*. There is no other God but a God who is exclusive—no Lord Jesus but one who is an exclusive Lord Jesus. May God help us to be better exclusives in a divineway—forbearing in grace with others—separate to the Lord ourselves. Gideon's heart was sincere, but he has not the courage to throw down Baal's altar in the day. He does it at night. Thank God that he has the courage to *do it at all*. See what a stir throwing down this hoary-headed iniquity created!

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As sure as you step off the beaten track there will be a stir among the neighbours. There always will be some people, however, that will be true to their convictions. And "when a man's ways please the Lord He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." His idolatrous father even is on his side. He says "let Baal plead for himself." After salvation realized in this way first, repentance toward God, then faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, then assurance—you have to stand for God. Now you can put the trumpet to your mouth and give your testimony.

After Gideon's testimony, after the "words of God," then prayer. Gideon puts the fleece out, and asks God to let the dew be on the fleece, while all the earth is dry. God does so. Then he thought that this was not hard enough for God, and he asks that the fleece may be dry, while on all the ground there is dew. God does this too. Dew is the emblem of God's blessing. If we ask Him in faith to put blessing anywhere according to His will He will do it. Trust Him, brethren. Believe in God—that He is sovereign.

God looks on Gideon's army, and He sees some who have come there from unworthy motives. God has to prune the army down. This is true not only collectively but individually. A man trusts too much to himself, and God has to bring him down. So Israel had to travel through the wilderness till all the men of war who had come with Moses out of Egypt died, till the right arm of their own strength was dried up, and God took the little ones and planted them in Canaan. God will not have a mere machinery among us. He will drill the army till every man is a tested man. God does not want pressed men in His army—they must be all *volunteers*. If you want blessing in this room, and ask for it in faith God will give it to you. If you want it all over, God will put it there. A few invalids on sick beds have brought blessing on cities, and perhaps some preacher got credit for it.

The first test is, who is *afraid* of the enemy. Nineteen years ago I set out in the Christian path with a number of young men. Two of these by their own confession were taken away to heaven, because they would not be faithful here. Just as one might take their boy to the field to serve him, and finding him useless there send him home. Many a son the Father sends home, because he will not be drilled

and bear the yoke. Any one who had married a wife, built a house, or planted a vineyard,—whose heart was not set on the battle—was to be sent back. *Our* houses are often more thought of than *God's* house. The face of the enemy appalled a large number of Gideon's men. But troops and walls only find out what is in a man, the extent of his energy. "By Thee have I ran through a troop; by my God have I leaped over a wall." I thank God for all the sorrows, tests, and heart-aches He has led me through. They have taught me more what He is. I desire to be with Him that He may be with me.

But it is not only the face of the enemy that can send people back. God told Gideon to bring down his men to the *water*, and He would try them for him there. Strangely enough this drink of water has slain many a man. *How* will they drink? Nine thousand seven hundred drank their fill, and three hundred lapped with their hands, and passed on to the battle, just taking a little by the way. Where can we find a parallel to this in our case? In our comfortable firesides, our prosperities, God's mercies. Have we a wife and children, the comforts of a home? Are we prospered in our business? Let us be careful about good things. They try us more than bad things. Not that we should not enjoy God's temporal blessings, but that we should "use the world as not abusing it." God help us not to be like the 9,700 who laid down and drank their fill. God made a gourd for Jonah, but He had to take it away from him next morning because he was occupied with it, and out of tune with the Blessor. How often this has been true to the very life of *you* and *me*,—you know it and I know it, may we have honesty to confess it—and now!

Next, how shall we fight the battle? Gideon's men were to gird their swords on their thighs, take their trumpets in their right hands, and as they blew, break the pitchers that the light might shine out, and shout "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon,"—their eyes on the captain. The earthen vessels (pitchers) express weakness. They had not to fight the battle. God fought for them. "They stood every man in his place." May God teach us to win victories like Gideon's three hundred, and to render to Him all the praise: Henceforth to drink of the "brook by the way" and so lift up the head—pressing on to victory.

B. C. G.

FALSE AND REAL STAYS.

(2 Chron. xxviii. 21. Josh. x. 12-14.)

They are worse than nothing—a delusion, a snare. We get nothing from them in the end but shame and disappointment. An unholy alliance is sure to be a humbling one. “God will not give His *glory* to another.”—The world, with all its power arrayed on one side, will prove but a poor substitute for our God. He has a host at His disposal—is a host in Himself. One of old could say, “With the help of my God I shall leap over a wall.” Fire, sword, wild beasts or men still wilder, are no real difficulties to our progress if *God* be with us. Lean upon Him, and you are safe; lean upon anything else and it will prove a thorn to pierce you,—not only your hand, but also your heart. Never mind what comes: “So that we may boldly say the *Lord is my helper*, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” What a contrast this case!

“Then spake Joshua unto the Lord . . . And the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man.” Joshua did well to speak first to the Lord before He spake to His creatures. He *prayed* to *God*, he *commanded* them; and very pertinently is it observed, not that the sun and moon hearkened, but that the *Lord* hearkened. Joshua fearing that he shall not have time, while the light lasts, to complete his victory, prays for its extension. He believes in the sovereignty of the Creator over His works, of the Ruler of His own laws; not that these laws crippled and cramped His operations, but that they were only so many ministers of His to do Him service. And, no doubt, he acted under Divine impulse when he was prompted to ask for the miracle, for the prayer would not have been granted by Divine *power*, had it not been dictated by Divine *grace*. What God will give, He inclines the hearts of His people to ask: the Spirit stirs up our spirits, and has made intercession through the saints of every age, “according to the will of God.” Prayer has burst many a cloud, and put to flight many an army.

“Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love;
Brings every blessing from above.”

“*Is anything too hard for the Lord?*” Let this question solve a thousand difficulties, and silence a thousand objections against the sure Word of God.

THE PRUNED BRANCH.

A PARABLE.

A vigorous branch of a noble vine rose up above the top of the wall, and said to himself, "Here is a sphere which none has appropriated, a place where enlarged views and enlarged capacity are things of course, where nails and shreds are things of the past, and where, of course, fruit of an extraordinary character may be expected to grow.

So the branch stretched himself higher and higher, until he was very high indeed, and he heard the gardener say, "Well, well, his time will come."

"Yes, truly," said the branch, "my time will come, no doubt. It ought to come up here. My brethren below will, of course do the best they can, but one must not expect too much of them."

"Nor," said the gardener, "must we expect too much of thee."

Slowly, as it seemed to the branch, which was so lonely in its elevation, the season for gathering the grapes came round, but how great was his shame and grief to hear the gardener say, "Never mind the top branch, it is empty."

Time passed on, and the pruning-knife was brought out, and the branch said to the gardener, "O, my Master, canst thou do ought for me?"

"Smiling, the gardener replied, "What! wouldst thou deny thyself?"

"Yea, Master," said he, "I would."

"Be it so;" and instantly the lofty part of the branch was severed, the remainder brought down upon the wall, and made fast in a sure place.

When another vintage was gathered, the gatherers looked at the humbled branch, and saw nothing but a few folded leaves. "It has not recovered its wasted strength," say they. But the gardener himself drew near, and lifted up the leaves, and, lo! there hung upon it the largest, richest cluster of all."

"Master!" said the branch, "*I hid it for Thee. Thou didst prune me in Thy wisdom, and bind me in Thy love.*"

W.B.

JESUS WEPT.

(Read Jno. xi.)

Surrounded by Jews who had come from Jerusalem to comfort them, Mary as Martha had done, left them all for Jesus. They could condole with her but they could not help her. What a picture is this of the emptiness of mere human consolation! Something more is wanted which *Jesus only* can supply. She turned, therefore, from the whole company of the Jews to the *One* who was still outside the village. He could comfort, and He could help; and He could show it. Man, in the folly of the heart thinks it unmanly to weep. He, who is Son of God, would show *He* could "weep with those who weep."

"*Jesus wept.*"

He wept, but not because Lazarus was dead, for He was about to raise him up. He wept, surely, as He witnessed the sorrow sin had brought into the world. "He wept." The Jews beheld it and said, "See how He *loved* him." He wept really for the *living* who sorrowed, and not for the dead who rested; and all present were permitted to see Him weeping, that when absent from earth, as he shortly would be, His people should count on His *sympathy* when in circumstances of bereavement like these two sisters. But He did more. What no human ear could hear, that God heard, and the pen of inspiration has recorded it, He "*groaned* in spirit." He manifested before men how fully He could sympathize with His people in sorrow: but He entered into all its depths and bore it on His heart before God. He wept before the *Jews* and groaned in spirit before *God*. "Upholding all things by the word of His power," He could yet be occupied with the sorrows of two of His people, and so enter into them as to bear the whole weight before God. Many around were weeping, but surely the tears He shed consoled Mary and Martha more richly than all the attention and sorrow of their friends. The Jews and the sisters bewailed their *loss*. Jesus shed tears and so manifested how really He felt for *them*. His heart was discovered to the sisters that day, and blessed be His name there is no change! What He was, He is still.

"Who in each sorrow bears a part,
That none can bear below,"

(Selected.)

GLEANINGS.

Good works are not the cause, but the fruit of righteousness. The tree maketh the apple, but not the apple the tree.

Christ, with a chain is liberty; liberty without Christ is a chain. Christ without other things, is riches; all things without Christ, is poverty indeed.

He who hath already done so much for me, will leave nothing undone.

Good actions avail nothing, if the soul be unrenewed. You may stick figs, or hang clusters of grapes upon a thorn bush, but they cannot grow upon it.

God has the same knowledge, inspection, and care of every one, as if there was but one.

Faith in Jesus is inconsistent with every evil way.

Faith can do more than remove mountains; it can still a clamorous conscience, make a bad conscience good, soften a hard heart, bend a stubborn will, and bring God and man together.

Trouble is the lever in God's hands to raise us often up to heaven.

"Lord, remember me," saved a dying male-factor.

"God, I thank thee," condemned a proud Pharisee.

Dung and prune a bad tree to all eternity, it can bring forth no other than fruit of its own kind.

The devil's clock is ever too fast or too slow: to the young he saith, "Rejoice in your lusts and passions; gulp down the pleasures of this life; it is time enough. The older he endeavors to drive to despair, saying, "The door of mercy is shut; it is too late; there is now no hope."

Never dare to go where you have reason to question God will go with you. A Christian should never willingly be where there is no room for his Saviour.

All boasted wisdom out of Christ is folly; all imaginary righteousness out of Christ is guilt; all assumed sanctification out of Christ is sin; all fancied redemption out of Christ is slavery.

Christians should ever remember that they are the epistles of Christ, known and read of all men, and that no word or action of theirs is too insignificant to bring either honour or reproach on his precious name.

A WILDERNESS SONG.

"When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path."—Psalms cxlii. 3.

My God ! whose gracious pity I may claim,
Calling Thee 'Father,' sweet, endearing name !
The sufferings of this weak and weary frame,
All, all are known to Thee !

From human eyes 'tis better to conceal
Much that I suffer, much that I hourly feel ;
But oh ! this thought does tranquilize and heal,
All, all is known to Thee !

Each sickening conflict with indwelling sin :
Each sickening fear, 'I ne'er the prize shall win :'
Each pang from irritation, turmoil, din,
All, all are known to Thee !

When in the morning unrefreshed I wake,
Or in the night but little rest can take ;
This brief appeal submissively I make,
All, all is known to Thee !

Nay, all by Thee is ordered, chosen, planned,
Each drop that fills my daily cup, Thy hand
Prescribes for ills none else can understand ;
All, all is known to Thee !

The effectual means to cure what I deplore,
In me Thy longed-for likeness to restore—
Self to dethrone, never to govern more—
All, all are known to Thee !

And this continued feebleness—this state
Which seems to nunnere and incapacitate,
Will work the cure my hopes and prayers await :
That cure I leave to Thee !

Nor will its bitter draught distasteful prove,
While I recall the Son of Thy dear love ;
The cup Thou wouldst not for *our* sakes remove—
That cup He drank for me !

He drank it to the dregs—no drop remained
Of wrath—for those whose cup of woe He drained :
Man ne'er can know what that sad cup contained :
All, all is known to Thee !

And welcome, precious can His Spirit make
My little drop of suffering for His sake ;
Father, the cup I drink, the path I take :
All, all are known to Thee !

THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGE.

"Enoch walked with God."—Gen. v. 24.

To walk with God! O fellowship divine!
 Man's highest state on earth—Lord be it mine
 With Thee may I a close communion hold,
 To Thee the deep recesses of my heart unfold:
 Yes, tell Thee all—each weary care and grief
 Into Thy bosom pour, till there I find relief.
 O! let me walk with Thee, Thou mighty One!
 Lean on Thine arm, and trust Thy love alone:
 With Thee hold converse sweet where'er I go:
 Thy smile of love my highest bliss below:
 With Thee transact life's business, doing all
 With single aim for Thee, as Thou dost call:
 My every comfort at Thy hand receive,
 My every talent to Thy glory give:
 Thy counsel seek in every trying hour,
 In all my weakness trust Thy mighty power:
 O! may this high companionship be mine,
 And all my life by its reflection shine.
 My great, my wise, my never-failing Friend,
 Whose love no chan^{ce} can know, no turn, no end.
 My Saviour-God! who gavest Thy life for me,
 Let nothing come between my heart and Thee!
 From Thee no thought, no secret would I keep,
 But on Thy breast my tears of anguish weep.
 My every wound to Thee I take to heal,
 For Thou art touched with every pang I feel,
 In Thee, and Thee alone, I now confide,
 And Thee I'd follow as my Lord and guide.
 Earth's 'broken cisterns'—ah! they all have prov'd
 Unsatisfying, vain, however lov'd;
 The false will fail, the fondest they must go!
 O, thus it is with all we love below.
 From things of earth then let my heart be free,
 And find its happiness, my Lord, in Thee.
 The Holy Spirit for my Guide and Guest,
 Whate'er my lot, I must be safe and blest;
 Washed in Thy blood, from all my guilt made clean,
 In Thee my righteousness alone am seen:
 Thy home my home, Thy God and Father mine,
 Dead to the world—my life is hid with Thine:
 Its highest honours fade before my view—
 Its pleasures, I can trample on them, too.
 With Thee by faith, I walk in crowds, alone,
 Making to Thee my wants and wishes known,
 Drawing from Thee my daily strength in prayer,
 Finding Thine arm sustains me everywhere;
 While through the clouds of sin and woe, the light
 Of coming glory shines more sweetly bright;
 And this my daily boast, my aim, my end,
 That my Redeemer is my God—my Friend!

"GOD IS LIGHT."

THERE is nothing more dangerous than to use the word when it has not touched my conscience. I put myself into Satan's hands if I go beyond what I have from God, what is in possession of my soul, and use it in ministry or privately. There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the word apart from the guidance of the Spirit. To talk with saints on the things of God beyond what I hold in communion is most pernicious. There would be a great deal not said, that is said, were we watchful as to this, and the word not so used in an unclean way. I know of nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it.—*Coll. Writ. of J. N. D.*

GAIN THE HEART AS WELL AS CONSCIENCE.

(AN EXTRACT.)

The whip and the scourge may be *righteous*, but there is no winning *the heart* of man with these. Nor is it righteousness which reigns among the saints of God, but grace through righteousness unto eternal life. Alas! how many sins that might have been washed away (Jno. xiii.) have been retained! How many brethren alienated for all time, that might have been won back to God and to us, because we have hammered at the *conscience* merely, with the heart ungained—with the heart, I may say, *almost unsought!*

We have not overcome evil, because we have not overcome it with good. We have taken readily the judge's chair, and have got back judgment; but the Master's lowly work we have little done. But how little yet do we understand that mere righteous dealing—absolutely righteous as it may be—will not work the restoration of souls; that judgment, however temperate, and however true, will not touch, and soften, and subdue hearts to receive instruction, that, by the very facts of the case, are shewn *not* to be in their true place before God.

Man is *not all conscience*; and conscience reached, with the heart away, will do what it did with the first sinner among men, *drive him out* among the trees of the garden, to escape the unwelcome voice.

J. N. D.

BEHOLD,
his soul
which is LIFTED UP
is NOT UPRIGHT in him :

But
THE JUST
shall live
by His
FAITH.

Although
the FIG TREE shall not blossom,
neither shall the fruit be in the VINES;
the labour of the OLIVE shall fail,
and the FIELDS shall yield no meat;
the FLOCK shall be cut off from the fold,
and there shall be no HERD in the stalls :

YET
I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD,
I WILL JOY IN THE GOD OF MY SALVATION.

The Lord God is my *strength*, and He will make my
feet like hind's feet, and He will make me to walk
upon mine high places.—HAB. ii. 4, iii. 17-19.

"MY BELOVED."

(SONG SOL., v. 9.)

O what is thy Beloved? They oft enquire of me.
And what in my Beloved so passing fair I see?
Is it the heavenly splendour in which He shines above?
His riches and dominion, that won my heart's best love.

O No! 'tis not His glories. He's worthy of them all!
'Tis not the Throne and Sceptre, before which angels fall:
I view with heart exulting each crown His head adorns:
But O, He looks most lovely, wearing His crown of thorns.

I'm glad to see His raiment, than snow more spotless white,
Refulgent with its brightness, more dazzling than the light;
But more surpassing lovely His form appears to me,
When stripp'd, and scourged, and bleeding, He hung upon the tree.

With warmest adoration, I see Him on the throne,
And join the loud hosannas that His high virtues own;
But, O, most blessed Jesus, I must confess to Thee
More than the throne of glory I love that sacred tree.

I joy to see the diadems upon Thy royal brow,
The state, and power, and majesty in which Thou sittest now;
But 'tis Thyself, Lord Jesus, makes heaven seem heaven to me,
Thyself, as first I knew Thee, uplifted on the tree.

Though higher than the highest most mighty King Thou art,
Thy grace, and not Thy greatness, first touched my rebel heart;
Thy sword it might have slain me, Thine arrows drink my blood,
But 'twas the cross subdued me, and won my heart to God.

Thy sceptre rules creation, Thy wounded hand rules me;
All bow before Thy footstool, I but the nail-prints see.
Aloud they sound Thy titles, Thou Lord of Lords most high,
One thrilling thought absorbs me—this Lord for me did die.

O, this is my Beloved, there's none so fair as He:
The chief among ten thousand, He's all in all to Me.
My heart it breaks with longing to dwell with him above,
Who wooed me first, and won me by His sweet dying love.

J. G. DECK.

Where Your Treasure is there will Your Heart be also.

(Luke xii. 34.)

Blest day when crossing Bedron-vill,
There left proud Zion's crested hill
A humble company,
Unseen by man, to world unknown,
The risen Lord led forth His own
To quiet Bethany.

His blessing gave each heart a sense,
With penetrating influence,
Of His almighty love.
Himself their treasure, hope, and stay ;
Then left them on the upward way
To glorious rest above.

O that we all were fully set,
As that small band on Olivet,
On such a heavenly prize !
The father finds His own delight
To give the upper realm of light
To those whom men despise.

The Father's will that we should be
A poor unworldly company,
Waiting His Son's return ;
Rich in His love, all else He sold,
Nor seek the dust that men call gold,
He daily bids us learn.

Each hour that strikes upon the chime
Tolls of a transformation time
Rapidly coming on ;
And faith the "little flock can see
Sitting in housed security,
With the beloved Son.

The saints in glistening white array
The heavenly feast in order laid,
The glory lighted hall,
The Master of that radiant place,
Ere well-known condescending grace
Serving the guests withal.

Lord, may this heavenly hope awake
Our drowsy souls their sleep to shake :
Thy coming sure is nigh ?
With girded loins, and lamps alight,
Each bearing heart be turned aright,
Towards the dawning sky.

Heart be also.

THE FLESH AND SPIRIT.

Why am I Thus?

How soon, after souls have been brought by the grace of God to know the forgiveness of sins, are they led to raise this enquiry, not understanding the strange enigma that if they are God's children—born of Him, that *evil* still dwells in them. And how often are they, on the one hand, tempted by Satan to doubt they ever were converted at all, and thus discouraged, drop back into the ways of the world again. Or worse, upon the other, holding to the fact that they have been blessed, and yet unable to reconcile the existence of indwelling evil, they palliate sin and excuse themselves for committing it, calling it temptation for which they are not responsible, and often vainly imagining they are at last *clear* of it.

Dear reader, God has a "way of peace," unknown to "vulture's eyes" (the keenest sight) and untrodden by "lion's whelps" (the firmest steps) and if we will but hearken to Him, He will make it known to us. May He guide, as we now consider what He says—

1. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"—shows plainly that the true Christian possesses *two* natures, on his being "*born again*," which, mark, is not a change of the old to a new nature, but of the PERSON by receiving a new one. With this fact, we will see what He thinks of *each*, and what He tells us to do with reference to them.

THE OLD NATURE—with its relatives—"the flesh"—"*carnal mind*"—"old man," is evil and evil continually.

THE FLESH (in one-third of the passages in which it is found) meaning the *nature* of fallen man; the rest, our bodies, "*flesh and blood*."

What it is. "In it dwelleth no good thing." Rom. vii. 18
What it does. "Lusteth against the Spirit." Gal v. 17.

Its works are these:—

"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 19-21.

"Sindwelling in it" God has condemned. Rom. viii. 3.

"They that are IN it (unsaved) cannot please God." Rom. viii. 8.

"They that live AFTER it shall die." Rom. viii. 13.

"CARNAL MIND"—the evil will that energizes the flesh. Is *enmity against God*—by its every act in declared rebellion against Him, hence sin is "*against heaven and in God's sight*."

"Not subject to God's law"—before that was given man was lawless; after, a law-breaker, and when God's Son came in grace took Him with wicked hands, and crucified and slew Him, God-hater—now that the Gospel tells of salvation needed and provided—Spirit resister.

"Neither indeed can be."—It is unaltered by any of God's dealings in the past and by conversion to Him in the present; and more, it is *unalterable*. Put it in what circumstances we will, and it is evil—under law, and it breaks it—under grace, and it abuses it.

OLD MAN—our former standing before God as having this evil nature—"the flesh," and governed by this sinful will—"the *carnal mind*."

WAS "crucified with Christ"—ended in His cross.

Is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts"—we put it off at our conversion for the "*new man*" in which we are born of God, and according to which we are now to walk.

What are we to do as to it?

"Have no confidence in the *flesh*." Phil. iii.

"Reckon ourselves to be *dead* indeed unto sin." Rom. vi. 11.

"Mortify your MEMBERS which are upon the earth." Col. iii. 5.

"Keep under our BODIES," which it would use. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

"Always bearing about in the body *dying* of the Lord Jesus, that the *life* also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. iv. 11

WHITE AND RUDDY.

"My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand."
Song Sol., v. 10.

It is said of David that he was "ruddy and of a fair countenance," referring no doubt, to his youthful bloom and beauty. But in the description here given of the true David, the spotless purity of His person, and the character of His sacrifice, may be referred to by the spirit of prophecy. These are significant words—"White and ruddy." The Holy Spirit delights to set forth whether in type or allegory, the glories of His person, and the infinite value of His blood. "Can you tell me of any thing that is whiter than snow?" enquired one, who was addressing a Sunday School. "The soul that has been washed in the blood of Jesus," was the satisfactory answer of a little child. But, if I a brand plucked from the fire, blackened and consumed, as it were, by sin, can thus be made whiter than snow—pure as the light of heaven, in virtue of that most precious blood, what, we may ask, must be the essential holiness, and infinite dignity of Him, by whose blood-shedding this marvellous work is accomplished! Yes, indeed, one soul thus blessed would prove the wondrous efficacy of the sacrifice; but what wilt thou say, my soul, when in heaven thou beholdest myriads upon myriads of ransomed souls, singing the song that is ever new: "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." O! what exalted adorning thoughts we shall then have of the once lowly Son of Man, but now highly exalted Christ of God! What thou shalt then see with thine eyes, my soul, thou art now to believe with thine heart. O meditate upon it, and glory in the truth, "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." What so "white," so clean, so holy, as the blessed person of the Son of Man—Jehovah-Jesus—the root and the offspring of David? What so "ruddy" as the blood that flowed from His immaculate veins on Calvary? Who, O who, is worthy to be the Chieftain of all God's hosts, save the Captain of our Salvation? "Med. Song Sol."

How wondrous the glories that meet
In Jesus, and from His face shine,
His love is eternal and sweet,
'Tis human, 'tis also divine?

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME.

This gives us the history of the Church as regards its earthly destinies. The vessel sets out in due order, as a compact and well regulated thing, framed to endure the violence of the stormy ocean, over which it had to pass. After a time the Apostle makes a certain suggestion, which being rejected, the ship is dashed to pieces by the waves. There was, however, an important distinction between the vessel and the *individuals* on board,—the former was lost, the latter were all saved. Let us apply all this to the history of the Church in its earthly path. The *testimony*, as we know, emanated from Jerusalem, from whence Paul started on his way to Rome. Apostolic testimony was designed to guide the Church in its earthly course, and preserve it from shipwreck, but this being rejected, failure and ruin were the consequences. But in the progress of the failure, we perceive the distinction between the preservation of the Church's *corporate testimony*, and *individual faithfulness* and salvation. "He that hath ears to hear," will always find a word of instruction and guidance for him in times of thickest darkness. The waves may dash in pieces the corporate thing—everything connected with earth may vanish away, "but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

The above picture might be traced far more minutely by those who feel they have intelligence and warrant to do so.—*Selected.*

"THE LAST NIGHT OF SODOM."

"Tarry all night,"—the words of *man*.

"Escape for thy life,"—the words of *angels*.

The celestial messengers have come to see whether there were any in all that city who could be persuaded to escape from the impending doom. And the iniquity of the inhabitants was full, the last drop was added to the fiery cup of wrath to be poured upon their heads when they received the warning as an idle tale, and treated the messengers with contempt. So dreadful a thing is it to slight God's offered salvation even though it should be meant only for *once*. For when the angels of mercy go back to Him that sent them it may be that they will kindle behind them the fires of His wrath.

NOTES OF BIBLE READINGS—2.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

(ROMANS XIV. 10-12.)

The first point we have to look at in the consideration of this subject is, *who* will appear there? Rom. xiv. 10-12 says: "We shall ALL stand before the judgment seat of Christ. *Every* knee shall bow, and *every* tongue confess to God. So then *every one of us* shall give account of himself to God." On that ground we are not to sit in the judgment seat ourselves,—not to judge our brother.

But though this is true, all will not be there at the same time,—nor for the same *object*,—nor to the same *result*. Next, John v. 24, seems to contradict this *general* view. It says: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall *not* come into *condemnation*, etc." If we carefully examined, we should find that it is the same word which is translated *judgment* in the twenty-second, *condemnation* in the twenty-fourth, and *damnation* in the twenty-ninth verses. It is one and the same word in the Greek, for all these three English words. The Roman Catholic version reads, "Cometh not into *judgment*," and so in all three. The Douay translation is thus in these verses better than ours. There are two classes mentioned, and one of them can never come into *judgment*,—they have "*passed out of death into life*." This is quite opposite to the thoughts of many. But let me say that no one understands the *grace* of God who expects to meet and answer *for* his sins in the day of judgment. I will show you *why*. Hebrews ix. 27-28 shew *why* some will never come into judgment. "As it is appointed unto men *once to die*, but after that the judgment; so Christ was *once offered* to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The twenty-seventh verse says AS; the twenty-eighth, so. As it is God's appointment for men *once to die*, and then be judged, so Christ gave Himself *once to die*—was "*offered to bear the sins of many*." He took the *judgment* that was our due, and now to them that look for Him He shall appear, etc." I will illustrate this. Suppose a Bro. has an appointment to preach. When the time has come he is too ill to go, and asks me to go as his substitute, fill his appointment, preach in his place. As he was to preach, so another preaches for

him, and he is free. Did the Lord Jesus come down from Heaven and fill our appointment, or not? Let us study His cross a few minutes, and *whose* sins He is bearing there. For if ours were upon *Him*, they can never be upon *us*.

"God will not payment *twice* demand,
Once at my bleeding surety's hand
And then again at mine."

People say that Christians are all to be judged,—but they say so because they do not fully believe the Gospel, as the last two verses of Hebrews ix. present it. What then about my *sins*? Christ bore them. Then *death*, the sting is taken out of. *Judgment*, passed and gone to all eternity. What is left to look for? My sins are "cast behind God's back." Death I am not looking for, as I may never die. Judgment spent itself upon Him. So I am looking for the *One* who bore my sins, death and the judgment due to me,—not my *Judge* now, but my *Saviour*. It is a *fact* then that not a single true believer will *ever* be *judged* in eternity. Heb. xii. 22-23 tells us that "we are come unto Mount Sion, . . . and to God, the *Judge of all*, etc." Suppose a man holds my promissory note, and I have not the means to pay it. Meeting him, I tell him my case; he takes out the note, and strikes my signature off it. I do not fear the paper then, nor the day of payment. I have met the *man* that holds the note, and all is settled. So every one that comes to Christ now has met the *Judge*, before the judgment *day*, and so does not fear the judgment *seat*. Will you meet the Judge at the *judgment seat*, or the *mercy seat*? If at the judgment seat, you will be *lost*,—if at the mercy seat, *saved*. Heb. x. 1, 2 tells us of "no more *conscience* of sins." Have you been once purged? Then you have *no more conscience of sins*. What does that mean? No more stain of *guilt* on the conscience, because the precious blood of Jesus has *washed* it all away. Did I say, no more *consciousness* of sin? No, every believer has *sin* in him, but his *sins* are all washed away. God says: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.) Do you *believe* Him? When Almighty God declares to us that the feeblest believer thus is as clear as the One whom he trusts—when He says "no more," shall we say "any more"? In the face of the world, the flesh, and the devil, put this word, God says "no more," and God is to be believed. Our worst sin is that we will

not believe Him. Thus there is no more *conscience* of sins to any that know the value of the blood of Christ, and no more *remembrance* of sins. So there is no more *offering* for sin." Heb. x. 18. If it were possible to get our conscience unpurged after the blood of Christ has cleansed us, we never could be saved. He can never come down to die again. If any sin could come on us after being once cleansed, it could never be taken off. Some have the erroneous thought that the blood of Christ must be re-sprinkled,—a daily application. The Bible has no such thought. The blood of Jesus is on the *mercy seat* before God. God says He is satisfied with the finished work of Jesus. In Heb. x. 26, we have also "~~no~~ more *sacrifice* for sins" in connection with the apostate,—the wilful sin of trampling under foot the blood of Christ. It is impossible for the man to be saved who turns his back on the sacrifice of Jesus. What is Satan doing? He lulls the unsaved, and troubles the Lord's sheep. If He tells you, dear unsaved one, that you are not quite *lost*, do not listen to him. You, dear Christian, that you are not quite *saved*, "he is a liar and the father of it."

I was for years a child of God, and afraid to believe this,—afraid to credit the Father's blessed will, because my own legal heart would not allow me. In this I listened to the father of lies, instead of the Father of truth. In Romans iv. 7, we read, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven." Many a one will go that far, and say, "Yes, when I was converted, all my sins were forgiven." But ask them, what about their sins since? Verse 8 says: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will *not impute* sin." Does that *mean* what it says? It does. Let this word possess our souls. It is just as impossible for God to put sin down against the feeblest believer, as for God not to have raised His Son from the dead after He had glorified Him in the work of the cross. The glory of the Father raised up Jesus because He had done so perfect a work. "*In Christ*" is like a small book put inside of a larger one. The smaller one cannot be seen at all,—it is always and only the larger one that is presented to view. So God always sees Christ alone, and all His people beauteous in Him. Does God then, not care what His people *do*? Yes, and they will get the rod on their backs if they transgress,—"*do the abominable thing which He hates.*" But He has no charge against them in His court. So with many of us

for years. To the last verse quoted I say: "Blessed God, I believe it." And "He that believeth hath set to his seal that God is true." It is not a question of *deserving*. It is *too good* for us to deserve, but it was not too good for Him to give.

"Clean every whit, Thou saidst it Lord,
Shall one suspicion lurk?
Thine surely is a faithful word,
And Thine a finished work."

Has sin then never troubled me? Yes, and still does, for it is *in* me, and "in many things we all *offend*." The answer to all is in Romans iii. 24. "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The man who is justified is cleared of all that was put down against him. *Creation*, said guilty,—*Providence*, the same,—*conscience*, the same,—*law*, the same. All four witnesses said *guilty*. We bow our heads, and say, "*Guilty, my Lord*." Our "mouth is stopped." What does God do? He says He is going to clear those people that condemn themselves as guilty. That explains it all. "*There is nothing like the cross*," "*Mercy and truth* have met together, *righteousness* and *peace* have kissed each other. Why? Because Jesus died there. Now *what*? God says, "Poor sinner, I put down to you all the *value* of what my Son has done, because He did it for *sinners*, and you own that you are such.

Let me illustrate it. A little girl at school was sentenced to sit out in the porch for some offence. Her sister Mamie said, "Please, Teacher, Mamma fears she will get consumption if she takes cold, let me take her place." But, said the teacher, "if you do, the scholars will think *you* are bad, and there is not a mark against you." A shadow passed over her face, but at last she looked up, and said, "Teacher, any way *you* will know that I was not." "Thus the "*Just One* suffered for the *unjust*." On the cross Jesus stood as the sinner. On His holy head, dear Christian, met ALL OUR SINS. What then? God treated Him as if He had committed every one of our iniquities. Sins, that that we never thought of, took hold of the soul of the Lord Jesus so that He could not look up. Mamie took her guilty sister's place, and she went free. So every sinner who trusts Christ is as clear before God as if he had never sinned. God will settle all your sins against Him, if you but come and reason with him. The Bible does not say Abraham *prayed*, or *wept*, or *worked*, (though he may have

done all these, and rightly too,) that "it was counted to him for righteousness," but that he "*believed God.*" Thousands pray who would be saved on the spot, if they would but listen to God praying to them "to be reconciled to Him."

I visited a man once who was dying from intemperance. He said to me, You will make a prayer with me, won't you? Sick people often want a little dose of prayer or religious consolation, and many are thus lulled to sleep by religious opiates. Knowing that was not God's way of saving souls, I said to Him I should be glad to pray,—but *what am I to pray for?* I suggested a few things. Shall I ask God to send His Son to save a sinner like you? Or to send a message from Heaven to say that He will pardon you? That is just what was done for you 1800 years ago. Shall I ask God to send you a message of forgiveness of sins? He has already said in His word, "Through this man is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins.*" I said to him further, "If I understand the matter aright, God does not want you to pray for what He has already offered—but He has been praying to you for 40 years, and you have never listened to Him yet. He did not believe it,—but I read it to him, and here it is for you. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did *beseech* you by us; we *pray* you in Christ's stead, **BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD.**" 2 Cor. v. 20. God helped me to shew him that he had a quarrel with Him, and the Gospel message was, "Be ye reconciled." I left him. The next time I came, he had listened to God praying to him, and was saved. If poor sinners praying for blessing would only stop and take heed to what God says and offers to them, how much better it would be for them. Blind Bartimeus received his sight, when he did this.

Every believer received the full due of all his sins 1800 years ago on the cross. "There is therefore now no *condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 1. "God. . . *condemned sin in the flesh,*" verse 3. *What is it that troubles me?* "*Sin in the flesh.*" What did God judge 1800 years ago? That very thing. Rising in the morning, God often brings some portion of His precious word to my remembrance and I see there how God has condemned sin, already judged it. Am I not foolish then to indulge it? But not a sin is charged in the Court above against us. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord *will not impute sin.*"

There is a sweet little illustration of this in Philemon. Onesimus, a slave, runs away from his master and gets to Rome, and is saved. Paul writing his master Philemon, says, "Receive him *as myself*;" Philemon 17. Onesimus was seen in Paul. He was to be received just as he. What about the *wrong* he had done? "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, *put that on mine account.*" How glad Onesimus would be to hear this! "*As is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly.*" "*As Christ is, so are we in this world.*" What about our *daily* sins? Where are they? Hear Jesus say, "If they have wronged Thee, or owe Thee ought, put that on mine account." Do we believe it *thus*? If so, how happy and holy we ought to be, since we know the blessedness of God's salvation.

Now, if all believers received their judgment 1800 years ago, *what* are they to go to the judgment seat of Christ for? 2 Cor. v. 10, answers this question. "We must all *appear* before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may *receive* the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Refer also to 1 Cor. iii. 9. "We are *labourers* together with God." Every Christian here has the right foundation. What is it? Jesus Christ. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's *work* shall be made manifest. For the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's *work* of what sort it is." Verses 12, 13. "Gold, silver, precious stones,"—three things that cannot be burned; "wood, hay, stubble,"—three things that can. Now, let me read the fifteenth verse, as many think it ought to be, "If any man's *work* shall be burned, *he shall be lost.*" I read it that way to a young man to make his mistaken view the more striking. He said, yes, that's just my way of thinking exactly! Is that *your* way of thinking? If so, the sooner you give it up the better, and the better for you at the judgment seat of Christ. Our thoughts in the things of God are vanity, and worse than vanity.

When the Christian stands at the judgment seat of Christ, and all passes in review before him, and he sees every thing in the pure light of that day when everything will be made manifest, should he behold the wood, hay, and stubble burned down to the bottom,—if ever there is a moment when the Saviour will be dear to him, it will be

then! He will thank God that "the *foundation* standeth sure,"—that *that* cannot be burned; thank Him too for burning up all his work, and that, if he did not understand the meaning of the word *love* before, he understands it then! What he thought, perhaps, splendid works may be all destroyed; and much accounted little, "abide the day of the Lord." Perhaps I kept my temper under very trying circumstances, and nobody saw it,—the hours I spent on my knees, of which nobody knew—all that will be jewels that He will not put into the rubbish heap, the "gold, silver, and precious stones" which will not be burned. Things will be turned upside down at the judgment seat of Christ. The feeblest believer as the strongest, will then see that ALL that saves him is the finished work of Christ, and that all that can be rewarded is the fruit of His grace working in us.

What about *our works*, I may be asked. The reward for everything that we did will be over and above being saved. Suppose that I have two sons, and I promise them both a reward if they do their work well. I give one the reward I promised because he worked faithfully; the other loses his, but still has the same old place at the table, is still in the place of relationship as a *child*, though he has lost his reward as a *servant*, because not faithful. The one is not any more my son than the other who lost the reward. He is my *child* like the other, but as he was a faithful *servant* too he gets a reward also. Think of the penitent thief in heaven, and say would it not be folly to ask whether he will be at the *right* hand or the *left*? It would be arrant folly! God saves people on earth as absolutely as if they were in heaven already. What do people tell us? That if men have all this, independent of their works, though surely as producing them, and believe and know it, they will commit all kinds of wickedness. It is a libel upon the grace of God. Is there no other *motive* to keep people's souls right but the *terror* of hell? The man who serves God, only because he is afraid of everlasting torment, never *really* serves Him at all. The man who said, "Lord I knew that thou wast an *hard* man," is the one that hid his talent. Jesus says to Bartimeus, "*Go thy way*,"—and he turns sharp round in the track to *follow Jesus in the way*. There is no power to attract us like enjoyment of His love. I thoroughly and utterly disclaim the idea that to *know* that I am saved wholly by the finished work of Christ leads

to the committal of sin. The man who *enjoys* this fact will be careful to walk so as to please Christ. The child conscions that it has clean white robes on will be careful not to soil them. But the one who has dirty ones will not be so careful,—will say, they are *dirty anyway*. Most Christians seem to think *their* robes are so, and so they do not mind a few rubs with the smut of this world,—*they are dirty any way*. Let each one of us ask himself, Did I enjoy the world the day I kept closest to my Saviour. Let us consider how *much reward* we will receive, and how *soon* He may come “whose reward is with Him, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. xxii. 12.

“Lord, haste that day of cloudless ray!”

B. C. G.

O Christ, what burdens bowed thy head !
Our load was laid on Thee ;
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead—
To bear all ill for me.
A victim led, Thy blood was shed ;
Now there's no load for me.

* * * * *

Jehovah lifted up His rod—
O Christ, it fell on Thee !
Thou wast forsaken of Thy God ;
No distance now for me.
Thy blood beneath that rod has flowed :
Thy bruising healeth me.

The tempest's awful voice was heard,
O Christ, it broke on Thee ;
Thy open bosom was my ward :
It bore the storm for me.
Thy form was scarred, Thy visage marred ;
Now cloudless peace for me.

For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died,
And I have died in Thee ;
Thou'rt risen ; my hands are all united ;
And now Thou'rt 'st in me.
The Father's face of radiant grace
Shines now in light on me.

BIBLE DIFFICULTIES.—I.

Apparent discrepancies of Scriptures furnish to the diligent reader the strongest confirmation both of the facts themselves and of the Book that records them.

They also have a further end to serve—to lead us to search and compare industriously the Word of God in its various parts. Thus, then, the Bible itself, so far from shrinking from criticism and inquiry, courts and commands the most searching investigation; and where this is done in a *reverential* spirit the result will generally be the same as in the case of the Bereans, “*Therefore many of them BELIEVED*” Our search and research in the Scriptures will always be rewarded. To use a commercial phrase for it—*it pays*. Those who already believe will find their faith strengthened, their gratitude deepened, and their intelligent interest vastly augmented; whilst by this practice many of the most inveterate haters of Christianity have been converted—they have opened its pages to mock and have closed them to pray. Happy and glorious change!

(JUDGES i. 19.)

“*He drove out inhabitants of mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of valley, because they had chariots of iron.*”

He plainly refers to Judah, and not to Jehovah whose power had been realized in the case of one class of enemies, and might assuredly but was not in the other. See Josh. xi. 4-9. And *why*? “With Judah faith was entirely wanting notwithstanding all they had seen of the Lord’s doings. *Unbelief paralyzed their arm*. Had they looked to the Lord as Joshua did they would swept the valley just as easily as they had swept the mountains, despite the “chariots of iron”; but looking on the heaving billows of horses and steel (as with Peter, Matt. xiv.), their hearts failed and they began to sink, though walking on *terra firma*. God had promised to give their enemies into Judah’s hand; but he failed to rely upon the promise. The secret of the failure was simply mistrust of God! God was with Judah, but JUDAH WAS NOT WITH GOD.

“Them that honor me I will honor; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.” So Judah found it

to his cost! My brethren, we must be wholly with the Lord; there must be no hesitation, no reservation, no half-heartedness, but full trust for full deliverance! So shall we triumph over every foe. But when the hosts of the Lord lose confidence they can do nothing. **STRONG IN THE LORD** should be their motto, and "in the power of His might."

"Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in His mighty power,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

Stand then in His great might,
With all His strength endued,
And take to arm you for the fight
The panoply of God."

"I can do ALL things," said one. But how? "Through CHRIST that strengtheneth me." That was the secret of His life of conquest and moral triumph. So may all God's people be, and the embattled host of the Israel of God shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Let not the unbeliever fancy for a moment that this expedition miscarried for want of power on the Lord's side. For one angel would have been sufficient for the work. Look at the blaspheming host of Sennacherib; they heave like a mighty sea, a vast multitude, fierce as wild beasts, and foul as fierce. Hezekiah spread the matter before the Lord and He sent the message

"I WILL DEFEND THIS CITY."

God had no ammunition to prepare, no magazines to fill, no swords to whet. "And it came to pass that night," what? That the God of Israel was disturbed in the serenity of His majesty? No! oh no! "It came to pass that night that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred, fourscore and five thousand; and when they—inhabitants of Jerusalem—rose up in the morning behold they (viz.: 185,000 Assyrian warriors) were all dead corpses. Yes brethren beloved of the Lord; there is your safety.

KEEP NEAR TO GOD.

"Draw nigh unto me," is His invitation and command; and His promise is

I WILL DRAW NIGH TO YOU.

(Selected.)



PEACE.

"The *counsel* of peace was between them both." Zech. vi. 13. It was *planned* by the Father and the Son together. The son said, Father, I stand in the breach, let the judgment fall on me! How grand, how simple,—down from God the Father's heart, where the plan was made! But when the Son, the "Prince of peace" came bringing it, (Luke ii. 14) was it welcomed? Alas! no. There was "no room for Him in the inn," and none for Him in the people's hearts outside. So next, we read, "He came not to send peace, but a sword," (xii. 51). Was that *His* fault? No, but *theirs*. They would rather have the Roman yoke, and their sins, than peace by "receiving Him." Jesus must go back with that peace. So His disciples sing "peace in *heaven*," no more, "peace on earth," (xix. 38). On the cross, then, He took up all the dread question of the sinner's sins,—paid the full penalty of all that God could demand of us. Now God sends down His gospel to tell us that "peace is made." Do you "set to your seal that God is true?" Do you *possess* this peace—the peace purchased on the cross of Jesus 1800 years ago? You know how common it is to ask people "if they have *made* their peace with God." An old gentleman had lost his son. Some one, who was not certain if he had died a Christian, said to the father that he hoped his son had made his "peace with God." "None to make, sir," was his reply. Supposing that he had not heard him correctly, the person repeated his remark a second and a third time. At last the old gentleman said, "Young man, the peace he had was the peace that *Jesus made*." How many, otherwise, are on good easy terms with themselves and their neighbors, who are not at ease with God!

Fidelity in the most common and homely duties of life opens the door of the house for the greatest of heaven's blessings to come in. The discharge of duties that are fully known and easily understood is the first qualification for the comprehension of the deepest and most awful mysteries of our being and destiny.

"ONCE PURGED."

"There is a wide difference between a consciousness of *sin in me*, and a "conscience of *sins*" *on me*. The former, we shall have till the close of our career, the latter we should not have, if "once purged." The reader should seek to understand the distinction; many do not see it, and hence they think it right to be always occupied with their sins; but when God's full salvation is laid hold of by faith, we learn that both the *sins* of our life, and the *sin* of our nature, were all judged, and put away as to God's view of them, on the cross. To know, and to believe this on God's authority, is to be 'once purged' and to have no more "conscience of *sins*."¹

"It is very needful to distinguish between perfection in the *flesh*, and perfection as to *conscience*. To pretend to the former, is to exalt self; to refuse the latter, is to dishonour Christ. The babe in Christ should have a perfect conscience, whereas St. Paul had not, nor could have perfect flesh. The flesh is not presented in the word, as a thing which is to be perfected; but as a thing which has been crucified. This makes a wide difference. The christian has sin *in* him, but not *on* him. Why! Because Christ, who had no sin *in* Him, had sin *on* Him, when He was nailed to the cross."

SACRED MAXIMS.

He alone is truly wise, who is wise unto *salvation*.

Proud hearts and lofty mountains are always barren.

They who are too poor to trade in the world, may buy abundantly in God's market.

The trees that are most *in the sun*, bear the sweetest fruit,

The children of God have much in hand, and much more in *hope*.

The faith that unites to Christ, separates *from iniquity*,

God's *promises* are as certain as his actual *performances*.

A man may well bear his cross patiently whilst *on the road* to wear his crown.

To tell a Christian that he runs fast, may soon make him stand still.

LEAN HARD.

IF YOU LOVE ME, "LEAN HARD."—Miss Fiske, who has laboured so long and successfully amongst the Persian women, writes thus:—"I was weary and longed for rest, and, with no support, it seemed to me that I could not sit there till the close of the service; nor could I hope for rest even when that was over, for I must meet the women readers of the village, and encourage them in reading their Testaments. I thought how I would love to be with you; but God took the thought from me very soon, for, finding that there was some one directly behind me, I looked, and there was one of the sisters, who had seated herself so that I might lean upon her. I objected; but she drew me back to the firm support she could give, saying, "If you *love me, you will lean hard.*" Did I not then lean hard? And then there came the Master's own voice, "If you love *Me*, you will lean hard;" and I leaned on *Him* too, and felt that He had sent the poor woman to give me a better sermon than I might have heard even with you. I was rested long before the services were finished; and I afterwards had a long hour with the women readers, and closed with prayer. A little after sunset we left, to ride six miles to our home. I was surprised to find that I was not at all weary that night, nor in the morning, and I have rested ever since, remembering the sweet words, "*If you love me, lean hard.*"

Child of My love, "lean hard,"
 And let *Me* feel the presence of thy care;
 I know thy burden, child; I shaped it,
 Poised it in Mine own hand, made no proportion
 In its weight to thine unaided strength;
 For even as I laid it on, I said,
 "I shall be near, and, while she leans on *Me*,
 This burden shall be Mine, not hers.
 So shall I keep My child within the circling arms
 Of Mine own love." Here lay it down, nor fear
 To impose it on a shoulder which upholds
 The government of worlds. Yet closer come—
 Thou art not near enough, I would embrace thy care
 So I might feel My child reposing on my heart.
 Thou lovest *Me*? I know it. Doubt not then
 But, loving *Me*—lean hard.

SOFTLY and gently these words were breathed,
 To the loved one, thus first addressed,
 As she sat on the ground in a far-off land,
 Whilst her weary-worn frame craved rest.

The Persian offers her firm strong form
 As a living prop and stay,
 But the pressure so light shews that she who leans
 Fears lest she too heavily weigh.

Love wants the whole burden upon herself cast,
 And deems it a deep joy to bear ;
 " If indeed, then, you love me, lean hard, O ! lean hard : "
 Is her tender, importunate prayer.

And the Holy Comforter echoed the words,
 In the depths of the fainting one's soul ;
 And she felt that her Saviour's love required
 All her cares she should on him roll.

My Saviour, these words bring a lesson from Thee ;
 For, alas ! I as yet but *half* trust ;
 I know not what 'tis to *take hold of strength* ;
 Thus often fall prone in the dust.

Yet He who has borne the dread load of my sins
 Will surely my weaknesses bear ;
 He who takes up the isles as a very small thing
 Cannot sink 'neath the load of my care.

He bids me to lean my soul *wholly* on Him,
 For without Him I tremble and fall ;
 And with deep thankful joy I obey, and respond
 To His loving, compassionate call.

In quiet repose, like a babe on the breast,
 Would I rest, gracious Saviour, on Thee :
 I am weakness itself, but Thou, Thou art my strength,—
 Thine arms everlasting clasp me.

Oh ! teach me at all times on Thee to lean hard,
 And shew thus how truly I love ;
 Keep me close to Thyself ever bound to thy side,
 Till I lean on Thy bosom above.

F. E. W.

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"THE PERSON OF THE SON OF GOD."

His *Person* lent a glory to all His course of service and obedience, which rendered it of unutterable value. Nor is it merely that His Person made all that service and obedience *voluntary*. There is something far more than its being thus voluntary. There is that in it which the *Person* ("my Fellow saith the Lord of hosts") imparts—and who can weigh or measure that? We know this full well among ourselves. I mean *in Kind*. The higher in dignity—in *personal* dignity—the one who serves us is, the higher the value of the service rises in our thoughts. And justly so, because more has been engaged for us, than when the servant was an inferior, more has the heart instinctively learnt, that our advantage was indeed sought, or our wishes and desires made an object. We do not forget the *person* in the *service*. We cannot. And so in this dear mystery we are meditating on. The service and obedience of Jesus were perfect, infinitely, unmirrored worthy of all acceptance. But beyond that—beyond the *quality* of the fruit—there was the person who yielded it, and this, as we said imparted a value and a glory to it, that are unutterable. The same value rested on the services of His life which afterwards gave character to His death. It was His Person which gave all its value to His death or sacrifice, and it was His Person which gave its peculiar glory to all He did in His course of self-humbling obedience.

J. G. B.

"Thou art the everlasting word,
The Father's only Son,"
God manifest, God seen and heard,
The Heavens beloved one."
Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou,
That every knee to Thee should bow.

How sad for any one to be called to go home with a quantity of things to settle! Blessed to be able to say, "What little bit of work the Lord gave me to do, is done, and I am ready at any moment to go up to the Father's house." Would you like your coming Lord to take you by surprise?

A BALANCE SHEET.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. viii. 18.

DR.

"THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME."

In labours more abundant. In stripes above measure. In prisons more frequent. In deaths oft. Five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods. Once was I stoned. Thrice I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often. In perils of waters. In perils of robbers. In perils by mine own countrymen. In perils by the heathen. In perils in the city. In perils in the wilderness. In perils in the sea. In perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness. In watchings often. In hunger and thirst. In fastings often. In cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

Total, "LIGHT AFFLICTION, BUT FOR A MOMENT."

CR.

"THE GLORY TO BE REVEALED IN US."

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

That He might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

And so shall we be ever with the Lord.

Total, "AN ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY."

Waters

HE

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they be
Ps. xxix

HE SITTETH O'ER THE WATER-FLOODS.

"The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever." "Who is a *strong* Lord like unto Thee? or to Thy *faithfulness* round about Thee? Thou rulest the *raging* of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, Thou *stillest* them." He maketh the storm a *calm*, so that the waves thereof are *still*. Then are they glad because they be *quiet*; so He bringeth them unto their desired *haven*." Ps. xxix. 10; lxxxix. 8, 9; cvii. 29, 30.

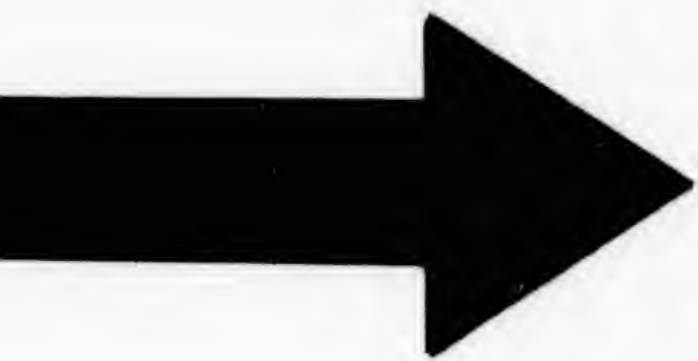
HE sitteth o'er the water-floods
 And He is strong to save:
 He sitteth o'er the water-floods,
 And guides each drifting wave.
 Though loud around the vessel's prow
 The waves may toss and break;
 Yet at *His word* they sink to rest,
 As on a tranquil lake.

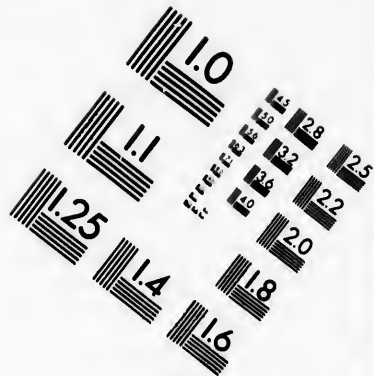
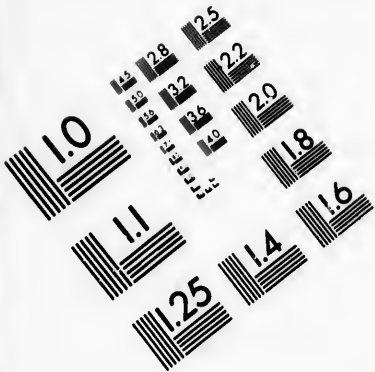
He sitteth o'er the water-floods,
 When waves of sorrow rise;
 And while he holds the bitter cup,
 He wipes the tearful eyes.
 He knows how long the wilful heart
 Requires the chastening grief,
 And *soon* as sorrow's work is done;
 'Tis HE who sends *relief*.

He sitteth o'er the water-floods,
 As in the days of old,
 When o'er the Saviour's sinless head,
 The waves and billows rolled.
 Yes, all the billows passed o'er Him,
 Our *sins*—they bore him down;
 For us He met the crushing storm—
 He met the Almighty's frown.

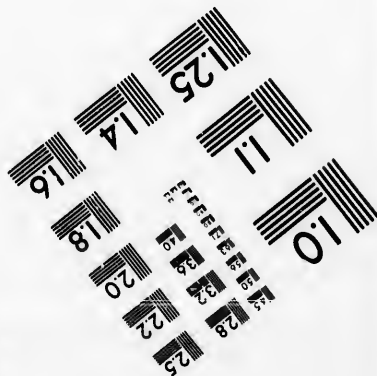
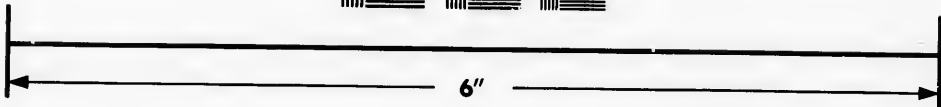
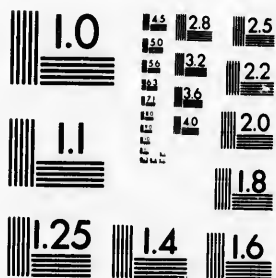
He sitteth o'er the water floods;
 Then doubt and fear no more,
 For he who pass'd thro' all the storms,
 Has *reached* the heavenly shore.
 And every tempest-driven bark
 With Jesus for its guide,
 Will soon be moored in harbour *calm*,
 In glory to *abide*.







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BE STRONG O HEART.

"Be strong saith the Lord and work: for I am with you. My Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not." Haggai ii. 4, 5.

Be strong to BEAR, O heart of mine,
Faint not when sorrows come;
The summits of these hills of earth
Touch the blue skies of home.
So many burdened ones there are
Close toiling by thy side,
Assist, encourage, comfort them,
Thine own deep anguish hide.
What though thy trials may seem great,
Thy strength is known to God,
And pathways, steep and rugged, lead
To pastures green and broad.

Be strong to LOVE, O heart of mine,
Live not for self alone;
But find, in blessing other lives,
Completeness for thine own.
Seek ev'ry hung'ring heart to feed,
Each saddened heart to cheer;
And where stern justice stands aloof
In mercy draw thou near.
True, loving words, and helping hands
Have won more souls for heaven
Than all the dogmas and the creeds,
By priests or sages given.

Be strong to HOPE, O heart of mine,
Look not on life's dark side;
For just beyond these gloomy hours
Rich, radiant days abide.
Let hope, like summer's rainbow bright,
Scatter thy-falling tears,
And let God's precious promises
Dispel thy anxious fears.
For every grief a joy will come,
For every toil a rest:
So HOPE, SO LOVE, SO PATIENT BEAR,
"God doeth all things best."

THE NEW NATURE.

Equally plain as the fact that when we are born into this world we possess a fallen *old* nature is it that when we are "born again" into the "new creation" we possess also an unfallen, *new* nature;—in other words are "made partakers of the *divine* nature." But it is not nearly so clear to many that while this is true, there still remains within us the old one, unchanged in its character to the very end and incapable of any improvement: and that only as we walk daily in the judgment of it, and nourishing our new life by the Word of God can we walk happily with Him. May we now see what *He* says with reference to this latter, realizing as to all our path as God's children—*knowledge or practice*—we need to *pray*, "*Order my steps in Thy Word,*" Ps. cxix. 131. The names of it and its relatives are 1. "THE INWARD MAN" (our new nature). "I delight in the law of God after the *inward man* . . . with the mind *I myself* serve the law of God, (Rom. vii. 22, 25), shewing its character. "Of His own will *begat He (God) us with the word of truth*" Jas. i. 18. "Partakers of the *divine nature,*" (2 Pet. i. 4) i. e., of God, as its *source*—the fountain of its being.

"That which is born of the SPIRIT is *spirit* (Jno. iii. 6) contrast to the *flesh*, and as it is alone *produced* by the Spirit, so HE is the only power to *sustain and guide* it. "CHRIST *liveth* in me" all its life is Christ, as the babe vitally linked with its mother, first in *birth*, and afterwards in *living*. To it, Christ is ALL, and IN ALL. 2, "THE NEW MAN" (our new *standing*), "*The new man*, which after God is created in *righteousness* and true *holiness,*" Eph. iv. 24. "Renewed in knowledge after the *image* of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but *Christ is all, and in all.*" Col. iii. 11.

"THE SPIRIT" (our new *power*.) "The *Spirit* is life because of righteousness." "As many as are *led* by the *Spirit* of God they are the sons of God." Walk in the *Spirit*, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Rom. viii. 10, 14; Gal. v. 16.

The believer then having this new *nature*, seen in this new *standing*, and with this new *power* is no longer "a debtor to the FLESH to live after it," but is "*made free*"—"dead to sin" by Christ's death—"does not practise sin because he is born of God." 1 Jno. iii. 9.

The *life* and *nature* he possesses is contrary to "the flesh" in all its feelings and desires, delighting in God's law which it scorns and breaks, and sorrowing over the sins in which it delights. Its *power* and *energy* is the Holy Spirit, just as with the flesh it is Satan, the Evil Spirit. Eph. ii. 2; Rom. vii. 22; Gal. v. 17.

We, who possess this nature—if *nourishing* it as God would have us, not "*grieving* the Spirit" are made "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Compare 1 Pet. ii. 2; 1 Tim. iv. 6; Eph. iv. 14, 15, 30; Rom. viii. 37.) When otherwise we have indulged the old nature, and hindered the growth of the new, "let us search and try our ways and turn again unto the Lord," remembering the words, "If any man sin, we have an ADVOCATE with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 Jno. ii. 2.

"Only *acknowledge*" our iniquity to Him who says: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely," and how surely will we realize the grace that would have *restored* us to Himself.

And further, by even this our folly will He teach us that the *life* He has imparted to us is one *dependent* upon Himself the Giver—that the new nature being His own is holy, and must ever be a mourner where sin has been allowed, and take His side against it in self-judgment and true repentance. The Spirit too, thus "*grieved*," is only then able again to take freely "of the things of Christ and *show* them unto us." May we realize this grace for His name's sake!

B. C. G.

SOWING AND REAPING.

Sow in hope, nor cease thy sowing,
Lack not patience, faith nor prayer;
Seed time passeth, harvest hasteneth,
Precious sheaves we soon shall bear.
Follow Him, thy bright example,
Copy Him in all His ways;
Let thy life and conversation,
Tend to thy Redeemer's praise.

(Eccles. xi. 6. Psalm cxxvi. 5-6. 2 Cor. ix. 6-15.)

"HEAR YE THE ROD AND WHO HATH APPOINTED IT." Micah vi. 9.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent."—Rev. iii. 19.

THE washing of a vessel supposes that there is some *soil* or *stain* upon it which requires to be removed. There would be no need for washing were it not for this. It would be labor lost to him who washes, and perchance, also serious injury to the vessel.

The casting of gold or silver into the furnace implies that there is *dross* upon them to be thus purged out by fire. There would be no need for fire, or furnace, or refiner's labor, were there no dross. It is the dross that makes the necessity for these. They are but means for getting quit of it.

So with *chastisement*. It supposes *sin*. Were it not for *sin*, chastisement would be unknown. In heaven there is no chastisement, for there is no *sin*. Angels know nothing of it, for they know no *sin*. And in the coming glory when "all things are made new," there shall be no chastisement, for there shall be no *sin*. It is only where there is *sin* that there is chastisement. There being such a thing as chastisement on earth is just God saying, "I have found *iniquity* there." And God's sending chastisement to an individual is just his saying, "I have seen *sin* in thee."

But more than this. CHASTISEMENT implies a determination to get quit of *sin*. It is not merely God's saying there is *sin* upon thee, but also His adding, "I must purge it away; I cannot allow it to remain on thee." It is God's expression of His deep interest in us, and His paternal anxiety for our welfare. To make us clean is what He seeks; and this He is resolved to accomplish at any cost. It must be done, for He is *holy*. It must be done, for He *loveth* us. *Sin* must be got quit of, whatever pain or sorrow it may require to affect it. What is pain if it expels *sin*? What is sorrow if it purges away the evil of our ways, or a lifetime's gathered dross?

But chastisement is something more peculiar still. In one sense, it may be said that all the woes and wretchedness of earth are intended to drive men from their sins.

God is *thus* speaking to *all*. He is thus warning all. He

is pleading with men to turn from iniquity, and seek His face. He embitters all sin,—He embitters all pleasure,—He fastens sorrow upon everything beneath the sun, that He may lead men to repentance and salvation. In this general way He is addressing all. To every sinner upon the broad earth He is speaking and saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die." Every pang that shoots through the frame, and makes the flesh to quiver, is a message from God. Every sorrow that shades the brow and saddens the eye is a message from God to a sinning, suffering world. They speak to sinners not only of the holiness of God, but of the exceeding riches of His *grace*, and of His deep and affectionate interest in their welfare.

But, strictly speaking, this is not *chastisement*. Chastisement is something more special and peculiar in its nature and design, than this. It is the strictly *paternal* dealing of God with the members of His own redeemed family. It takes for granted the *family* relationship. It is a family word,—a household name. For thus the Apostle teaches us:—"Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you *as unto children*, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord *loveth* he chasteneth, and scourgeth every *son* whom he receiveth; but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. xii. 5-8.)

There is then a *necessity* for chastisement. It is part of the children's portion here. It is the family discipline, and no member of the redeemed family from the beginning has ever been without it in some measure or form. It is one of the family badges, and as such has been worn from generation to generation by all the children. Not that they are a sad and wretched company. No: They "greatly *rejoice*, even though now if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations." There is no joy like theirs, no peace like theirs. Yet they have sorrow too. There is the tear in the eye, even when the calm smile is playing round the lip, and peace is shedding the serenity of its sunshine over the countenance. Their life is often as to most outward things, a sorrowful one; but as to what is inward, it is full of peace. They are *forgiven*; and that is peace. They are "*accepted* in the Beloved"; and that is peace. They are "*delivered* from this present evil world"; and that is peace. They have a rich "*inheritance* in heaven"; and that is peace. Yet have they "fightings

without and fears within": they are "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Yes, chastisement is their lot on earth. It is "through much *tribulation* that they must enter the kingdom of heaven." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous."

Now, *why* is this. We are sure it is not in vain. God sends no needless sorrow to any of His children; He "afflicteth not willingly." It pains Him to do it, if we may thus speak after the manner of men. *Why, then, does He afflict?* Let us inquire into this. It much concerns us to understand this aright. For affliction misunderstood by the sufferer becomes doubly bitter and piercing. It then becomes not only unalleviated, but unprofitable sorrow.

Chastisement springs from *love*,—the deep love of God. Let us never forget this. It is love that fills and presents to us the cup of sorrow. Whether it is of mingled or unmingled bitterness, still it is love that pours it out:—the bitter as much as the sweet. The love that lets the child alone to do as he pleases is foolish love, if, indeed, it can be called love at all. But the love that restrains and chastises is deep, wise, tender love. It is from the very bottom of the loving heart that chastisement comes. Chastening love is, in truth, the deepest and most self-denying of all. Hence it shows us how much God is *in earnest* with us. It shows us what pains He is taking to bless us. It is in affliction that we see the strength and the earnestness of the love of God. This of itself may be enough to lead us to acquiesce in His dealings as all right and wise,—to say "it is well," "it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to Him good," "shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" But still it is well to inquire more particularly into God's *reasons* for afflicting,—the *ends* he has in view in bringing us under the rod. For thus we shall not only be more fully satisfied that "all is well," but also learn particularly the lessons which God is seeking to teach us.

1. *Tribulation proves us.* We really do not know ourselves till trial comes. Of many a sin and many a weakness we are utterly ignorant till affliction brings them out and exposes them to view. It was for this end that God led Israel into the wilderness to "try them and to know

what was in their hearts." Their desert-trials *proved* them, that is put them to the proof. And when thus proved, what iniquity was found in them that had lain hidden and unknown before! The trial did not create the evil; it did not make their hearts worse than before. It merely *brought out* what was there already, but had been lying unseen and unfelt, like a sleeping serpent. When Israel was thus tried, what worldliness came out; what unbelief; what rebellious murmuring against God; what atheism and idolatry; what self-will, self-confidence, and self-pleasing! They could not have believed that such wickedness could be found in them, or that if their hearts did contain such evil, it could have lain concealed so long. Yet it never came out till then.

So with the saints still. God chastises them that He may prove them and bring out the evil that is within. And when the trial comes what a difference it makes! The flesh, the old man, is cut to the quick, and forthwith arouses itself. When it was asleep, we did not know its strength and vitality; but now that it has been wakened up, how fearful its still-remaining might! The wind rises, the storm drives o'er us, the billows heave, and soon we find it but a "troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." When all was calm, there seemed nought but purity, and ripple folded over ripple in the brightness of their transparent green. But the tempest stirs the depths, and all is changed. So often with the soul even of the saints in its hours of tribulation and storm. The hidden evils come forth. Sins scarcely known before display themselves. The heart pours out its wickedness. Hard thoughts of God arise. Atheistical murmurings break out. Questionings both of His wisdom and His love are muttered. Distrust and unbelief assume the mastery. And what a scene the wretched soul presents! All this was *in* us before, but we knew it not. It was needful that we should know it, and hence God sent the trial to bring it out. And thus we are led, on the one hand, into deeper views of our own exceeding sinfulness, and into fuller discoveries of the abounding grace of God. We learn to prize more than ever the "open fountain;" and to shelter ourselves with more confident security under the wings of the righteous One.

Thus the Lord *proved* Job. He let loose the tempter: He sent tribulation. And straightway the hidden evils

of his heart come forth,—impatience, unbelief, self-righteousness. Then when the Lord has showed him these things, and led him to deeper views of sin, when He has searched him through and through, and made him to “abhor himself;” then He leads him to the “blood of sprinkling,” and sheds down anew the brightness of His gracious countenance, filling him with the “joys of His salvation,” and lifting up his head for ever.

II. *Tribulation purges us.* To be proved is one thing, to be purged is another. It is good to have the evil brought out, but it is better to have it taken away. The heat of the furnace burns out the dross, and leaves the gold or silver behind. “Take away the *dross* from the silver and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.” Prov. xxv. 4. Now this is God’s wish and aim. As He says to Israel so He speaks to us, “I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely *purge away* thy dross. And take away all thy tin.” Is. i. 25. And, again, “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have *purged* the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of *judgment*, and by the spirit of *burning*.” Is. iv. 4.

Now there is not only much in us that requires to be taken away, but much that will yield to nothing, save chastisement. Other processes of discipline may remove a great deal, yet still there remains behind very much which nothing but trial and suffering will purge away. Some parts of the stone to be polished are so hard and rough, that heavy strokes are needed to smooth them down. They resist every milder kind of treatment.

In some, *worldliness* is so strong that chastisement is needed. In others it is simply *love of the creature*. In others it is *pride* that needs to be abased. In others it is *selfishness* that needs to be eradicated. In others it is *stubbornness* and stoutness of heart. In others it is the *desire* of the “honour that cometh from men,”—man’s love, man’s approbation, man’s smile. In others some *idol* needs to be broken in pieces. In others some *creature comfort* needs to be taken away lest we should settle down and be at ease. In others *strong passions* need to be broken down, or a *froward will* needs to be bent and subdued. These are some of the evils that need to be purged out of us. For the accomplishment of this, sometimes the trial is short, but

sharp and pointed, going into the very vitals like a sword. Sometimes it is long, protracted, heavy, bruising and crushing us with its weary ever-pressing weight. Different processes are required, some longer and some shorter; some a sudden stroke of the rod, others a continual "thorn in the flesh:"—some a quick cutting off of the diseased member, others a long-running issue to carry off the deep-seated malady. Yet all is *wise* and all is *gracious*. Love is the prompter in all, and perfect skill is the director of each operation or each blow. To "deliver us from evil," and to make us "partakers of His holiness," is God's one object throughout. Oh! deep, deep must be the love which takes such pains with us. It is love of which we are altogether unworthy. Who are we that God should so deal with us? Surely if we are not worthy of comfort and prosperity, much less are we worthy of affliction.

III. *Tribulation rebukes us.* "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." It is God's way of pointing out what He sees amiss in us, calling our attention to it and condemning it. It is His way of saying, "I have *somewhat* against thee," or "I have not found thy works perfect before God." The rebuke of God is a solemn thing. It cannot be called anger, or a frown, or punishment; all *these* have passed away; from all these we are delivered for ever. Yet still there is something in the rebuke of God that should make us stand in awe. He rebukes the world, and it trembles and flees away in terror. But when he rebukes His saints, it is that they may draw near, "to serve Him with reverence and godly fear." A parent's rebuke is much to a loving child, how much more is the rebuke of our God!

He administers many rebukes, some lighter, some severer. To the former especially we often give but little heed. The touch of transient pain; a few days' illness; a slight indisposition; a passing weakness; some common domestic care or vexation; the severance of friendship; some short parting from one we love; some unkindness where least we looked for it; some disappointment on which we were not calculating;—these are His fatherly rebukes. I do not here speak of the sharper and sorer ones, for we are not so apt to overlook them. They force themselves upon our notice. We cannot mistake them. But these briefer, commoner, slighter ones need to be pointed out; for they

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are so little recognized, so much undervalued or unheeded, as if the *hand of God* was not in each one of them; as if, because they were so slight, so mild, so gentle, they were not to be owned as the laying on of a Father's hand, but casual things, coming and going, we know not how or why.

I feel that this is a much-needed admonition to the saints of God, for the point adverted to is a much neglected one. Our continual tendency is to overlook any slight ailment or trouble as not worth noticing, and as not coming from God. We are thrown into a raging fever, till our life is despaired of; and in this we do not hesitate to own the finger of God. We take a slight cold or sustain some slight injury; and here the finger of God is oftentimes not perceived at all. The gentleness of the rebuke makes us forget that it comes from God! Strange! Should not its gentleness call forth immediate thanksgiving? Should not its gentleness be accepted as a new token of paternal love and care?

Ah! it is thus that we provoke God to inflict heavier blows. We compel Him to send the heavier chastisement by our inattention to the lighter. We make bitter trial absolutely necessary. We bring it upon ourselves. How gently God rebukes for a while! If we may speak after the manner of men, He just hints or whispers His reproof. He is most unwilling to chastise with severity. He tarries long. He tries other means. He sends milder trials, that we may be led to self-searching and repentance, and thus He will be spared the necessity of inflicting a heavier blow. But we trifle with His gentle rebukes, till He is constrained to lift up His voice and speak in a tone which can neither be mistaken nor overlooked. Oh how sad that we should thus, by our heedlessness and perversity, draw down upon us sorrows which God would fain have spared us! Let us learn the meaning and the use of small trials;—of slight rebukes. Let us count none too small or slight for our most serious thought. It will save us much. It will teach us many a blessed lesson in an easy, pleasant, gentle way.

IV. *Tribulation arouses us.* We often fall asleep. We dwell on the world's enchanted ground, and often, ere we are aware, we are soothed to sleep, forgetful of the quick passing time. And while we sleep, all goes wrong. Our faith waxes feeble; our love is chilled; our zeal cools down. We lose our earnestness, our boldness, our energy, our

freshness, our simplicity. All our movements are those of a man but half-awake. Our purposes are carelessly formed and drowsily carried into effect. With how many in our day is it thus?

But God will not have it so. He cannot allow such indolence and listlessness in His work. Such sloth makes but poor work either in a man's own soul, or in his efforts for the souls of others. We must be awakened at whatever cost. He does it gently first. He causes us to hear some distant noise;—it may be the tumults of the *nations*, or it may be the tidings of some terrible disaster afar off. He means by this to awaken us out of our sleep. Perhaps this fails. Then He comes nearer and makes His voice to be heard in *our own* neighborhood, or within the circle of our kindred. This surely will arouse us! Perhaps not. Then He comes nearer still, for he cannot allow us to slumber away our precious hours. He speaks into our very ears. He smites *us* upon some tender part, till every fibre of our frame quivers, and every pulse beats quicker. Then we start up and wonder how we slept so long. But oh! how difficult is it sometimes to awake us! It takes many a stroke before we are thoroughly aroused.

Ah! let us beware of the world's enchanted ground. Many a saint has fallen asleep on it, and only been awakened by severest chastisement. Let us beware of sloth and ease, lest, being led on from step to step, we be overtaken by sleep which may yet cost us a bleeding,—it may be, almost a broken heart.

V. *Tribulation solemnizes us.* It is a gay world in which we live, and we are prone to fall into its *levity*. Around us are the sights and sounds of mirth by which a vain world is seeking to cheat away its ever-fretting uneasiness, or drown its deeper sorrows. Oftentimes the saints seem to catch the tone of levity and frivolity, making mirth with the most mirthful, jesting with the most foolish, singing the world's songs of vanity, and joining in its idle works, as if its friendships and its pleasures were not forbidden things. Apart, however, from the contagion of the world's influence, our tone is apt to fall low, and our deportment to lose that solidity and seriousness which becometh saints. We get light and airy; we give way to the current of "vain thoughts;" we do not "set a guard upon our lips;" "foolish talking and jesting" is too much

indulged in, even among the children of God. Our words are not "with grace seasoned with *salt*." We forget the admonition "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." And this levity, this frivolous habit, grows upon us. Seriousness becomes a thing reserved entirely for the closet or the sanctuary. We "grieve the Holy Spirit," who cannot dwell unrieved amid levity and mirth any more than amid profanity and crime. I do not mean that the saint is ever, even for a moment, to be gloomy. Gloom and melancholy are not the inmates of a soul that has tasted the joy of pardon, and is walking with a reconciled God in blessed light and love. No. He rejoices "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But still, as has been well said "*true joy is a serious thing*." True joy is deep. It is the waking up of the heart's deep springs. Mirth and levity are not joy. They are too shallow and empty to deserve the name. All is hollow. In coming to him who is the fountain of all gladness, the saint of God bids farewell to gloom. Tribulation he may have, but not gloom. *That* has left him for ever since first he knew the Saviour and opened his ears to the "joyful sound." Peace is now his heritage. It is not so much as if joy were abiding in him as if he were abiding in joy. It is not so much as if joy were poured into him as if his heart were ever pouring itself out into a vessel of joy; so deep, so calm, and so abiding is the gladness of the redeemed of the Lord.

But still it is not *levity* that is their portion; it is joy. And this joy is not only far superior to this vain mirth, but it is utterly inconsistent with it. This levity is as much an enemy to real joy as it is to holiness and spirituality. Hence it must be rooted out of them. God cannot suffer it in his children. His desire is that they should be *holy*. This element of earthliness must be purged out. They must be made solemn and thoughtful. For this end he sends affliction. In a moment, perhaps, he smites him to the earth; or by some more slow but withering crushing calamity, He purges out the foolishness that had wrought itself into their inmost being. His purpose is to make them *thoughtful*, serious and solemn. And what He sends to them is fitted to make them *think*, and that in a way in which they have never done before. The blow He inflicts lays them down in the dust. It in a moment puts

to flight all levity. It withdraws them from an airy shadowy world, and sends them into the very inmost recesses of their spiritual being, or forward to the infinite *eternity* whose vastness and reality they had been little heeding. It brings them into contact with solid certainties, and that makes them thoughtful. It brings them acquainted with sorrow, and sorrow drives off all levity. Sorrow and levity keep no companionship. Affliction awakens them to a sense of their selfishness. They look around them and see, as for the first time, the *world* they live in, with all its sin and sufferings. They had seen these before, but now they seem quite new and clothed with a reality which had hitherto been unfelt. It is through sorrow that we see truth best. It is when seen through this sad medium that all objects assume their right proportions. Shadows then evaporate; realities compass it about. And *realities* make us solemn. It is shadows that make us light and vain.

Thus God solemnizes his saints, and brings them, in this respect, into closer sympathy with "the mind of Christ." All was solemnity with Him. And the nearer we are brought to resemble Him, the more will this calm, this blessed, this *happy* solemnity possess us. We shall live solemn lives and do solemn deeds. Our looks and tones will be alike solemnized. We shall be earnest men; men who have no relish for levity, because it is so incompatible with the deep peace which is their portion, and who have no time for it, because eternity is so near.

VI. *Tribulation quickens prayer.* It sends us to our knees. In the day of prosperity a man has many refuges; in the day of trial but *one*, and *that is God*. To this refuge he betakes himself. Prayer, perhaps, was something to him before, now it is *all*. Man's arm has failed, and there is none to lean upon but God. Prayer becomes now a far more real thing than ever. Its value and its importance are seen in a new light. It is prized now as it never was prized before.

We cannot do without it. Of necessity we must now pray, and send up our cries from the depths. It is real asking, a real pleading now. As a mere form it has passed away. What new life, new energy, new earnestness are poured into each petition! It is the *heart* now that is speaking, and the lips cannot find words wherewith to give utterance to its desires. The "groanings that cannot

be uttered" are all that burst forth and ascend up into the ear of God.

There is new nearness to God now. It is close dealing with Him now. New arguments suggest themselves where-with to plead; new desires spring up; new wants disclose themselves. God's fulness and our own emptiness are brought before us so vividly that our soul's longings are kindled, and our heart "crieth out for God, for the living God, as the heart panteth for the water-brooks," so we are made to pant after God. It was David's sorrows that quickened prayer in him. It was in the belly of the whale that Jonah was taught to cry aloud. And it was among the thorns and in the fetters of Babylon that Manasseh learned to pray.

Such are a few of the blessings that flow from chastisement. Only a few have been mentioned, yet there are many. And this the saint knows. Each sorrow brings with it its own train of blessings; and thus, though "not joyous, but grievous, it *yieldeth* the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

But in all this we must see a *Father's love*. We shall lose much of the benefit of trial, perhaps all of it, if this is overlooked. It is out of the deep love of "Him who gave for us His only begotten Son" that sorrow flows down to us. Let us ever rest on this. "He that *spared not* His own Son, but delivered him up for us, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?" And surely the blessings of chastisement are among these "all things." "All things work together for our good." *Love can do us no wrong*. That is a blessed impossibility. In all that it sends of suffering it is only opening new channels in which to pour itself into us, as well as deepening and enlarging the vessel that it may contain the more. Every sorrow not only is the proof of love, but draws after it larger streams of love. It is love making way for itself because the place is too narrow. The inflicting of the wound is love; much more the healing of it. Surely all is love. There is no unkindness, no harshness, no inattention to our feelings, no needless cause of grief.

Beloved, "*it is well*." We could not do without affliction. We should neither know ourselves nor God. The depths of His varied love would be as a sealed spring. He wants to teach us *all* His love. He is seeking for occasions to show it; and if He cannot find them, He must

make them, rather than that we should not taste the riches of His immeasurable love. And shall we call Him *unkind* for this? Shall we have hard and rebellious thoughts of Him for this? Shall we count it a *wrong* done to us to have new streams of love flowing in upon us which sorrow has opened? Shall we *shrink* from that which opens up to us more of the Father's heart?

Who can tell or measure the deep love which chastisement implies? We may, perhaps, be able to measure the love which sends us days of gladness,—but the love which draws the cloud of sorrow over our skies is too deep to be measured or weighed. God's interest in our welfare is to be seen in everything that He bestows; but most of all in His chastisements. How deep must His interest be, how affectionate, how tender, when, in order to secure our welfare, to make us holier, and to add to the weight of our crown hereafter, He can consent to send suffering upon those whom He loves so well. This is *love*,—paternal love, in its truest kindest form.

Beloved, "it is well." Let us learn, then, to "*glory* in tribulation." The world, perhaps, *submits* to it, but it is ours to *glory* in it. The world tries to *bear up* under it; but it is ours to "*give thanks*" for it. The world may try to get over it as an evil that cannot be helped; let us know "*how good* it is to be afflicted." HE who is infinitely wise and loving calls it *good*, and shall not *we*?

Beloved, "it is well." We are not worthy of affliction. We are not worthy that God should take such pains with us to prepare us for His kingdom. Yet He does so. And He will continue to do so to His chosen ones; for it is through much tribulation that they enter the Kingdom. And in this let us "greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, we are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto *praise* and *honor* and *glory* at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. i. 6, 7.

O Lord, through *tribulation*
Our pilgrim journey lies,
Through scorn and sore temptation
And watchful enemies;
'Midst never-ceasing dangers
We through the desert roam;
As *pilgrims* here and *strangers*,
We seek the rest to come.

“FEAR THOU NOT,”

(Isaiah xli. 10.)

And the Cause of Fears.

1. *Neglect of God's Word.*—Unchecked sin results in indolent, desultory, aimless readers of the *Word*, instead of earnest, eager, and praying searchers of it. How different with our blessed Lord!

2. *Neglect of “assembling ourselves together.”*—If you willingly forsake what God says you shall *not* forsake, you incur a penalty, which sooner or later will shake your soul with fears.

3. *Neglect of “exhorting one another.”*—Are you one of Christ's saved ones—bear His name—sit at His table, and yet for weeks and months have not spoken to one single fellow pilgrim, about our common hope through the blood shed, and the Spirit bestowed?

4. *Neglect of the Lord's Work.*—Keeping Christ's commandments it is that we *abide* in His love, and consciously abiding in *His love*, fears will not abide in *our hearts*. But you *will* have spiritual ills, until you render freely, hearty, honest, gospel service *i. e.*, springing from reception of the gospel.

5. *Neglect of self-judgment.*—We are apt to bear about with us sins unconfessed upon our hearts, instead of going off at once—the moment they are discovered—“to the fountain opened.” Thus through a kind of spiritual lethargy—they are allowed to grow; and where *sins gather, doubts grow*.

Finally, as a consequence or combination of the preceding causes, there will be found this further root of fear, *viz.* :—

6. *Neglect of Communion.*—Instead of continuing to walk (consciously) in the light, you are raising earthly clouds to shroud the sunlight—you are placing yourself at a distance from God. The child may not fear, even in the darkness, while the Father's arm is round it, but cries in very dread should that be away. Is it not so with *you*? You have gone to a distance—clouds of your own creating are darkening your horizon, and your Father is not near. No wonder you are sometimes *afraid*!—But Oh! my friend, get back again: get *near*. Down in the dust, and with open heart “be *filled* with God's blessed Spirit.”

1. "Search the SCRIPTURES," John v. 39 ; Acts xvii. 11 ; Col. iii. 16.
 2. "Go to your own company," Acts ii. 42 ; iv. 23. Heb. x. 25.
 3. "Shew forth His PRAISES," Mal. iii. 16 ; 1 Pet. ii. 9 ; Jude 20.
 4. "Work while 'tis day." John ix. 4 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58.
 5. "Watch unto prayer." Col. iv. 2 ; 1 Thess. v. 6 ; 1 Peter iv. 7.
 6. "Keep thy HEART with all diligence." Prov. iv 23. Then like the child walking in the light and by the Father's side, you will company and commune with your God ; and then no longer shall fears paralyze you, or continue to invade the sanctity of your useful and onward life—"FEAR NOT."
- "Fear thou not ; for I am *with* thee : be not *dismayed* ; for I am *thy* God ; I will *strengthen* thee ; yea I will *help* thee ; yea I will *uphold* thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Is. xli. 10.
- W. H. E. (Adapted.)

THE RIGHT MUST WIN.

Oh, it is hard to work for God,
To rise and take His part
Upon this battle-field of earth,
And not sometimes lose heart.

Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when He
Is most invisible.

Blest, too, is he who can divine
Where real *right* doth lie,
And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blindfold eye.

For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win :
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin !

WORKING AND WAITING.

FATHER, I know that all my life
 Is portioned out for me ;
 The changes that will surely come,
 I do not fear to see ;
 I ask Thee for a present mind
 Intent on pleasing Thee.

All things work together for good to them
 that love God. *Rom. viii. 28.*

Casting all your care upon Him ; for He
 careth for you. *2 Pet. v. 7.*

Now the God of peace . . . made you per-
 fect in every good work to do His will, work-
 ing in you that which is well-pleasing in His
 sight, through Jesus Christ. *Heb. xiii. 21.*

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
 Through constant watching wise,
 To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
 And wipe the weeping eyes ;
 A heart at leisure from itself,
 To soothe and sympathize.

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one
 another, if any man have a quarrel against any ;
 even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
Col. iii. 23.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain-
 glory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem
 other better than themselves. Look not every
 man on his own things, but every man also on
 the things of others. *Phil. ii. 3, 4.*

I would not have the restless will
 That hurries to and fro,
 That seeks for some great thing to do,
 Or secret thing to know ;
 I would be treated as a child,
 And guided where I go.

Be not carried about with divers and strange
 doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart
 be established with grace, *Heb. xiii. 9.*

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way
 which thou shalt go. *Psa. xxxii. 8.*

Wherever in the world I am,
 In whatsoe'er estate,
 I have a fellowship with hearts
 To keep and cultivate;
 A work of lowly love to do
 For Him on whom I wait.

Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. *Col. iii. 23, 24.*

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. *Gal. vi. 2.*

I ask Thee for the daily strength,
 To none that ask denied;
 A mind to blend with outward life,
 While keeping at Thy side;
 Content to fill a little space,
 If Thou be glorified.

My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. *2 Cor. xii. 9.*

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? *Luke xi. 13.*

Briers beset our every path,
 Which call for patient care;
 There is a cross in every lot,
 A constant need for prayer;
 But lowly hearts that lean on Thee
 Are happy everywhere.

Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. *Phil. iv. 6.*

Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he. *Prov. xvi. 20.*

In service which Thy love appoints,
 There are no bonds for me;
 My secret heart is taught the truth
 That makes Thy children free;
 A life of self-renouncing love
 Is one of liberty.

By love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. *Gal. v. 13, 14.*

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. *Jas. i. 25.*

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2; 1 Chron. xi. 15-19.

It is true that those who resorted to David in this cave appear to have had no character to lose. They were either themselves debtors, or companions of those that were. But the day of Saul in Israel was like the world, a scene of apostacy and enmity to God. Either God had to act in grace, sovereign grace, or full destructive judgment. And grace can and will gather the harlot and the publican, or receive the discontented and the debtor.

But then, observe what this company became in the cave of Adullam. They resort thither as men *without* character, but there they *make* character. (See Scriptures given.)

Fellowship with David has power and virtue. He was no debtor, though he will receive debtors. His distress was that of *righteousness*, and not of *wrong*. He had won a character already, though he would now, in his "den and cave of the earth," receive those who had lost their's. But in his company they become new men, and do such exploits of virtue, as give them honour in the day when righteousness is exalted.

David's receiving of such is the condemnation of that *world* out of which they gathered to him. His making of them new creatures; or their becoming such while with him, is the vindication of that *separated* place to which they thus gathered.

How easy is it to apply all this to a greater than David! When Jesus receives, He receives in grace. It is no question of previous character with Him. He gathers "bad and good," as we read—those found in the lanes and alleys, the highways and hedges: It matters not in the reckoning of the Son of God. Not that He countenances evil, or can brook it in His presence. But He will not sanction the self-righteousness of the world. He will receive *sinner*s, and eat with them. But His presence has its *virtue*—virtue to write a new description under a man's name as here.

Such is the mystic power of this *separated* place in the Wilderness, or of *Him* whose presence and company make it what it is. And what do we covet to be but such Adullamites?—men who having destroyed ourselves, in the ruin of character and of circumstances have fled to the Son of God, and *with* Him, and *through* Him, and *under* Him, have acquired names and dignities which He will own in the day of enthroned righteousness.

J. G. B.

(119)

WORDS OF EXHORTATION.

FROM THE LORD.

to one on His side in a day of decline.

“THOU DIDST SAY

Woe is me now!

for

THE LORD

hath added grief to my sorrow;

I fainted in my sighing,

&

I find no rest.

THE LORD SAITH THUS;

Behold

that which I have built

will I

Break down

and

that which I have planted

I will

Pluck up even

this whole land.

And

seekest thou

great things for thyself.

SEEK THEM NOT

for

Behold

I will bring evil upon all flesh,

saith the Lord;

but

thy life

will I give unto thee

for a prey

in all places whither thou goest.”

JER. XLV. 3-5.

ALONE, YET NOT ALONE.

“And Jacob was *left alone*, and there wrestled a man
with him till the breaking of the day.”

I'm *left alone*. No friend is nigh
Who stoops to listen to my sigh
Or marks my spirit's bitter cry—

I'm left alone.

My heart is faint, my strength all gone,
My spirit troubled, there is none
To help or comfort, *no not one*—

I'm left alone.

Alone in darkness, deep around,
A desert, where no rest is found,
Where snares and dangers me surround.

I'm left alone.

It is the *Lord!* I know it well,
Who makes me thus alone to dwell.
He has some word that He would tell

To me alone.

“And suddenly, when they had looked round about
they saw no man any more, save **JESUS ONLY.**”

I'm *not alone*—My God is nigh!
He knows my thoughts before I sigh,
He hearkens to me while I cry—

I'm *not alone!*

What though I'm weak, in Him I'm strong;
My spirit shall rejoice ere long
In Him who is my strength and song,

In *Him* alone.

In *darkness* I His face shall see,
In *desert* He my guide will be,
From snares and dangers set me free

And bring me **HOME.**

To *His own* home, where welcomes sweet
Of love and joy my heart shall greet,
Where I shall dwell before His seat

No *more* alone.

Till then, where 'er my path be bent,
O teach me Lord to be *content*
With shoes and staff and desert tent

With *Thee* ie.

THE PILGRIM.

The way is dark, my Father; cloud on cloud
Is gathering o'er my head; and loud
The thunders roar above me. See, I stand
Like one bewildered; Father, take my hand,
And through the gloom lead safely home
Thy child.

"The way is long, my Father! and my soul
Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal;
While yet I journey through this land,
Keep me from wandering. Father! take my hand,
Quickly and straight lead to heaven's gate
Thy child.

"The path is rough, my Father, many a thorn
Has pierced me, and my weary feet are torn,
And, bleeding, mark the way. Yet thy command
Bids me press forward. Father, take my hand,
Then, safe and blest, lead up to rest
Thy child.

"The way *is* dark, my child! but leads to light;
I would not have thee always walk by sight.
My dealings now thou canst not understand;
I meant it so; but I will take thy hand,
And through the gloom lead safely home
My child.

"The way *is* long, my child! but it shall be
Not one step longer than is good for thee;
And thou shalt know, at last, when thou shalt stand
Close to the gate, how I did take thy hand,
And quick, and straight, lead to heaven's gate
My child.

"The path *is* rough, my child, but oh! how sweet
Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet,
When thou shalt reach the border of that land
To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand.
And, safe and blest, with Me shall rest
My child.

"The cross *is* heavy, child! yet there is One
Who bore a heavier for thee: My Son,
My well beloved; with *Him* bear thine, and stand
With *Him*, at last; and from thy Father's hand,
The cross laid down, receive thy crown,
My child."

DAYSPRING FROM ON HIGH.

Gen I. Luke i. 78, 79.

"God said" (in the beginning) "let there be *light*, and there was light," when "the earth was without form and void, and darkness covered the face of the deep." Thus were the first rays of "light from above" let in upon a scene of ruin, and disorder, and darkness, well suited, indeed, to picture to us what the condition of our *souls* is as God's eye surveys it, when He is about to bring us "out of darkness into His marvellous light."

But this *first* light was not to cheer and gladden animated nature, nor to set in order the existing chaos; for of the former there was none in being, and as to the latter it must first be seen *as it is*—"made manifest"—ere the same mighty word that discovered it, placed all in suited order for "Him who is the Father of LIGHTS, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

And thus, beloved reader, is it as to *ourselves*, and the ways of that same God with us, and the action of that same word—then in His *creative power*, and now in the "*riches of His grace!*" His word comes to *convict* and test—ere it delivers—to make "all naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do," ere giving the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The *entrance* of it giveth LIGHT," 'tis true, but it is not joy, but *misery*—not freedom, but our *bondage realized*—not peace, but anxious *fears*—not the faith that gives us to "*see Jesus*," but to judge *ourselves*—not looking off unto Him, but looking *within*—not joy and gladness, because "sorrow and sighing have fled away," but, "*Woe is me*, for I am undone," "Depart from me, O Lord," not God's appreciation of the "sweet savour" of the cross of Jesus (burnt offering), but His holy judgment of our sins (sin offering) that first we learn.

But all this is transitory, thank God,—*along* the way, and not the *end* of it—our necessity, not God's delight and joy to impart.

As the patient's *need* is carefully learned by the skilful physician, so ours must be, ere the healing balm be known. *Jesus comes to us where we are*, ere He *leads us where He is*. He has compassion on us, and teaches us to have compassion on ourselves, ere He "binds up our wounds" with His precious "oil and wine." He must *break* our hearts about the sins that once bore Him down, ere His hand can *bind*

those broken hearts. Willingly would He spare us, but it cannot be. If chaos is our condition, then it must be *realized* ere it can be met. If He ~~has~~ come as "light," thus "lighting every man," and that "whosoever believeth should not abide in darkness," then first it must be told us what the nature of that darkness is, and *then* we "behold His glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of *grace and truth.*" This brings us to the notice of other "lights" connected with creation and giving the order of His blessed ways with *us* as with *it.* "And God said, let there be *lights* in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night, to *give light upon the earth,* and to *rule over the day and over the night,* and to *divide the light from the darkness,* and *God saw that it was good.*"

Thus beautifully and suggestively is this second and richer giving of the light in God's creation described to us. And surely the lessons (so plainly parallels of what is there given, as to things of earth and time) are near at hand for us, as to things of heaven and eternity. Again, let us notice that His word, in this case as before, introduces these glories of "the heavens," setting them in their place as the *blessers* and *rulers* of the scene below. Even so it is with us, as first we learn "'mid clouds and darkness," by the shining in of the testimony of God, that we are "*sinners,* lost and ruined in His sight," and afterwards find the rays of His glory as the *Saviour-God* shining in in grace upon us, bringing peace and blessing. And then, further, we learn that His glory shining is to *rule and separate,* as well as cheer and gladden. Thus richly does it unfold for us so learn it—the light that searches and discerns, exposes and makes manifest, first entering, where "more" will follow to set right all that is proven to be *not* so. This answering to *repentance* and the judgment of ourselves in humiliation and self-aborrence, which is the first action of His word upon us—the working of His Spirit within us. Then the setting above the greater lights to shine down upon the scene where darkness once had reigned. This giving the exaltation before our hearts of the one whom God has seated at the right hand of His Majesty in the heavens, meeting us in all the stirrings of our *consciences,* and satisfying all the yearnings of our *hearts,* claiming us thus to live for Him, and *separating* us to Him.

Manifestly thus lessons of our need and divine blessing are before us—*ourselves* with "no good thing dwelling in us," *Himself* as "altogether lovely, chiefest among ten thousand."

ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS—3.

ELIJAH.

1 Kings xvii. James v. 17, 18.

These last verses are the only reference, save one in Luke's Gospel, which we have in the New Testament to *Elijah*: I have read them for the following reasons: "Elias was a man subject to *like passions* as we are," and the motive power of all his wonderful life was this, that he was found upon his knees. All that we are told is that he *prayed* twice. He encountered all the difficulties with which we are surrounded, was a man of like weakness with us, and yet he *stood for God alone* in the darkest days of Israel's apostasy. Why? Because he prayed, sought God's face, not in vain—abode in dependence upon Him. Surely this should impress our hearts. It is good for our souls to face these histories in the book of God, to see how Divine power could sustain a man in the midst of the most terrible trials. Some one may say, "Elijah did not live in *our* day; those were the days of miracles, &c." We are apt to think that they were days of *special* favour and privilege, and that it was in some ways easier to do God's will then than now. If we knew our Bibles better we should know that all the angelic visits, etc., are far surpassed by what we have in God's *written word*, and "*His Spirit* abiding with us for ever." Let us look at this. Much evil is recorded in these books of Kings. The climax is reached in the preceding chapter. "Omri wrought *evil* in the eyes of the Lord, and did *worse* than all that were before him." "Ahab, the son of Omri, did *evil* in the sight of the Lord *above all* that were before him, and it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him." But that was not all. "In his days did Hiel build Jericho." In those days of darkest apostasy, when the kings of Israel surpassed in iniquity all their predecessors, there was a man that *dared* to build the city on which God had pronounced a curse. Such are the days before us, days of the darkest religious apostasy, days when kings and queens stepped down from all that God had entrusted to them to profane His holy name. And *then* a man rose up to defy God to His face, and built up a city which He had

cursed. Jewels show best on a dark background. So God selects this darkest background, and then takes up a man as weak as any of us to let us see what Divine grace can do for the man who *leans hard* on the arm of Almighty God. The lesson to be learned is absolute *dependence* on God. What cutting of heart by the cross of Christ must be known to learn this lesson! That will be before us to-night, *dependence* on the living God on one side—absolute *obedience* on the other. And if Divine grace could be proved hundreds of years ago, why not *now*? If by Elijah, “a man of like passions with us,” why not by *me*? *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* Can I be *at home* with Him, and He with me, so that I can go on day by day in this most blessed or company, glad that *He* knows my heart, and lets *me* know His? May we see. Elijah’s birth and early life are not recorded. It is not so with biographies written by men in the world. We like to tell the most trivial circumstances of the lives of our *heroes*. But the omissions of Scripture are as significant as its *records*. God does not want us to know Elijah’s early life. He bursts on us like a meteor in the shades of night, a man, a full grown man, of whom we knew nothing before but that “he was of the inhabitants of *Gilead*.” *Who* were they? People on the wrong side of Jordan,—not Canaan proper, not the special portion of the people of the Lord. *Gilead* was where the children of Israel first came to. Two and a half tribes asked leave to settle down there. That was a mistake. They fell a ready prey to the enemy, and were carried into captivity before the rest. They answer to a large class of Christians whose Christianity is not very distinct. They must have some great “altar to see to,”—they have to *lean* on this, that, and the other, traditions, ordinances, rites and ceremonies. They may be really people of God, but the color and texture of their coat are not very *distinct*; their lives are not *separate*, nor their testimony *decided*. They are on the wrong side of Jordan. If we have not yielded ourselves wholly to God,—not seen the line of demarcation which should mark the people of God off from the world, may God grant us to learn the lesson now! We must go down the banks of Jordan, learn the lesson of *death* and *resurrection*. Angels might weep over many of us who seem to be in earnest, but stop short of blessings we might enjoy. If we belong morally to Gilead, may God arouse our consciences, and get us across Jordan! May we learn “God forbid that I should glory,

save in the *cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world!" Gilead, then, is not the place where we would expect to find heroes of the Lord. We would expect rather to find them in Judah, the *kingly* tribe, or Levi, the *priestly* tribe. I am glad to know this:—that God could find a man in *Gilead*, as He sometimes finds one where all are away from Him, and makes him "a man of God," *prepared* (2 Tim. ii. 21,) *furnished* (iii. 17), *ready* to do His will (Titus iii. 1). It was once said to a colored person, do you know that you are saved? "Thank God I do" was the reply. "What purpose can God have in saving *you*, you will not adorn heaven?" "He will have me to point the angels to, and say, see what My mighty grace can do," was the answer. And Christ *sets* those gems well that have cost Him so much. When God takes up people He never looks at them as they *were*, but as He is going to make them. The *first* thing recorded of Elijah's testimony is what he said to Ahab. His challenging the king was no small matter—he had nothing to back him but God, no credentials, no place at court—no weight nor influence among men, and yet he challenges that wicked king, and *sets* him that the judgment of God is upon his head. We do not see in *Kings* what *led* to this, what sustained him. We are indebted to *James* for a look behind the scenes. He *PRAYED*,—had been in the presence of his God, "and wept sore for the hurt of his people." No doubt his heart took the whole burden upon it. He saw what those people needed to bring them back to God—that the vaults of heaven must be closed over their heads. He has power through faith to touch the throne of God itself, and to close and open heaven that it might withhold or give forth its blessing! Does God so honor his people *now*? Yes. Let the soul learn what it is to be in the secret of God's presence in dependence, and all God's power can be wielded by one thus near His heart.

Next, what was Elijah's *message*? "As the Lord God of Israel liveth *before whom I stand*, there shall not be *dew nor rain* these years, but according to *my word*." He had been in God's presence, and, so to speak, never left it. If he has to go *out* in testimony, he still can say "The Lord God of Israel *before whom I stand*." I like to think of that. Luther said, "When I preach, I see only the *face of God*." Happy the preacher who sees only God, and does not think of *people*. Elijah does not think how he can taper down

the message, round its corners, or shape it so that it will not sound so harsh. He gives it in all its simple reality, and just as God had sent it. May God make us messengers like Elijah! We see from *Deuteronomy* that *dew and rain* represent "blessing from above." "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of *brooks* of water, of *fountains* and *depths* that spring out of valleys and hills," (viii. 7). "For the land whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowest thy seed, and waterest it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs, but the land (whither ye go to possess it) is a land of hills and valleys, and *drinketh water of the rain of heaven*, a land which the Lord thy God *careth for*: the eyes of the Lord are *always* upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year," (xi. 10-12.)—It is instructive to see that *Canaan* is a picture of what we now have in Christ, a land dependent on God alone, a land in which we have nothing if *out* of communion with God, but everything if *in* communion with Him. What does *Egypt* care for rain? If, in the latter days, Egypt does not go up to keep the feast of tabernacles, God does not withhold the *rain* from heaven—she does not need it—but plagues her instead. She has her river of which she says, "My river is *mine own*, I have made it *for myself*." Just as people speak every day, they do not mind talking of God under cover, so to speak,—Providence, Nature, the Great Cause,—all as a mighty stream which brings them good. But they do not want to have Him too near. The river brings its blessing, but they never find its *source*. Where does the Nile rise is still a question which geographers discuss endlessly. So it is little people care except to get their blessing. They never travel up to the source. *Our* land is not one that has a great river with the source unknown and uncared for, but a land with the *Father's care* over it, yet withal a land worthless and barren to us if we live out of communion with God. A land of sunlit hills and fertile valleys, of highs and lows, but of dependence on God. The child of God out of communion with Him is the most miserable creature in the world. One who has known the joys of God's salvation when drifting from the moorings is the most pitiable object—he neither enjoys the *world* nor *God*.

What did God mean by withholding the rain and dew from Israel? He meant to force His people's hearts back

to Him. When blessing does not come down upon us, when the word no longer yields us sweet refreshment, something has gone *wrong* in Israel. Its mountain tops are no longer fruitful, its fertile valleys no longer yield abundance; the God of heaven is holding back His blessing to turn His people's hearts to Him again. Elijah says "that is the only thing that can be done,—*smite* them, stay the heavens from their due and rain, and thus turn them back to Thee."

But here is a serious lesson,—after all this, the preacher himself has to be preached to. After preaching to others, we often have to be put through much exercise by the Lord about it; He says, My child you have not learned this lesson deeply for *yourself*. "And the word of the Lord came unto him saying, get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan." Entrusted with a message from the Lord to Ahab, Elijah now receives one for *himself*. Let me study God's blessed word to keep *my* heart in communion with Him, and then if God's message comes to me for *others*, I can deliver it. If I linger near the door of evil, if I am in fellowship with what He has condemned, God will hold me back. I could be allowed, in any bar room, to give a temperance lecture; if afterwards I invited every one to drink; the testimony given *against* it is nullified by acting *with* it.

Three short words in the beginning of this third verse ring with no uncertain sound "*Get thee hence.*"

Is there any thing in the New Testament like this? Yes. And on hearing it we may see that we have not half broken with the world yet. Then it was, "*Get thee hence.*" Now, "*Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*" This does not mean merely the wicked world around us, the circus, the horse race, or the wine cup. We may truly say we are not in Sodom, and yet there are other ways in which we be in the world, and connected with iniquity. Just as Abraham, called to be a stranger in Canaan, and having to buy the little bit of ground in which to bury his wife, was surrounded by Mesopotamia, Egypt, Sodom, and the land of the Philistines.

Abraham left the former, kept clear of Sodom, but he went down to Egypt, and then to Gerar, and twice denied Sarah his wife. Do not think because you have given up the *wicked* world that you may not be swamped in the *natural* or *religious* one. God save us when there is "*a famine in the land*" from going down to Egypt to enjoy all

we can, and forget that we are "pilgrims and strangers!" God has given one man a comfortable home; and, nestling down there, he forgets his neighbours—and he has gone to Egypt. Another has a good business, his thoughts are wholly occupied with bills to collect, goods to buy, etc.—he has gone to Egypt. If we have steered clear of Sodom and Egypt, take care that we have not gone to Babylon. We are told of the onward march of progress in science and religion—that Scripture is "behind the times"—that is the Babylon of which God says "Come out of her, My people." Thus we are either making "bricks" for Babylon, or hewing "stones" for the new Jerusalem. Some one wishes he could understand the Bible better, thinks that if he could have an hour with another Christian, it would be a great advantage, "as the Bible unlocks for him," he says, "and does not for me."

I was once sent for by a man to have a conversation; I thought he might be an *anxious* soul, as he wanted me to explain the book of Revelation. Lifting my heart to God that I might find the whereabouts of the man's soul, I said to him, I believe that it *is* a Revelation, not a sealed book, for God says "*seal it not*;" but though this is true, it cannot be understood by *every* one, but by those "to whom it is given." Matt. xiii. 11., Rev. i. 1. A challenge is presented at the door, as if an angel were to say "Your passport, sir." Now let us see if *we* may enter. I took him to two things: first, a man must be *washed* from his sins, and secondly, he must *follow* in the footsteps of his Saviour (Rev. i. 5-9.) He wanted no more of Revelation nor its expounder. He would have liked to talk about the horns of the beast etc., but I felt that I must stop at the door with him first, and enquire as to *this*, and there it ended.

Would you like to know what is *wrong* with you that you cannot unlock the Bible? Take this word, "Get thee hence and turn thee *eastward*." When a man turns his back on what he knows to be wrong, he turns to the place whence *light* ariseth. Morally, we turn eastward when we turn our back on anything in or around us that we know to be sin. "In *God's* light we see light." "To the *upright* there ariseth light in the darkness." Light is sown for the *righteous*, and joy for the upright in heart.

Next, "*hide thyself*." What a *life* lesson for the people of God. It is hard to learn it deep down in our souls. The Pharisees sent to John, asking who art thou? John will

not say a word about *himself*. They ply him with questions. To every one he answers "No." Happy John! he hid *himself*, and put the Master in the fore-ground. Was not that morally grand? He hides behind his Master. The messengers of the Pharisees say that they *must* have an answer. Well then, he says, I am a *voice*, I say simply what is told me.

"By the brook *Cherith*." *Cherith* means "*cutting off*." Elijah has to sit down there, and learn *separation*,—"cutting off." That is just what we do not like to learn,—the "cutting off" that is "before *Jordan*." That little brook must dry up if there is to be no rain for years. Elijah does not ask to be excused, because it will. He goes in simple *dependence* on God, doing what God tells him, sit beside a brook that is failing fast. But what about Elijah's *God*? He is still the *living God*—"does what He *will* in the armies of heaven, and *none* can stay His hand, or say unto Him what doest Thou?" For *sight*, all Elijah has is a failing brook, and ravens to bring him bread and flesh, morning and evening.

And what about *ravens*? They are the birds that we are specially told God feeds; this marks them as specially dependent on Him; and these are the very birds taken to sustain His servant. "Who provideth for the *raven* his food? when *his young ones cry* unto God, they *wander* for lack of meat." (Job xxxviii. 41.) "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young *ravens* which *cry*." (Psalm cxlvii. 9.) God will not fill Elijah's cupboard for a *whole* day; he has to have his food in the morning, and yet again in the evening. We may suppose that Elijah begins to think, God does not like His people to have a stock for the whole day, and he looks straight up to Him for a *fresh* supply—communion in the morning, and communion in the evening. Elijah says all I have got is *up there*; to *God* I look, not to the brook and the ravens. Are *we* like Elijah? If not, may God help us to be! If we are, we will know that there is a *living* God. We will not need any thing collateral to prove that this is God's holy book, we will *know* that it is His word, because He has spoken to *us*, and we are *at home* with Him. The same lesson that I commenced to learn years ago—*dependence* on God and *obedience* to Him—I am learning yet, and will never be done learning until I get home to Heaven.

"After a while the brook *dried up*." . . . Just what we said

was inevitable. Has God *failed*, the living God, before whom Elijah stood? He can be just as happy when there is *no* water as when there is, because the secret of communion and power is "the *living God* before whom I stand." Next he was sent to *Sarepta*, which means the *crucible*. This was a tremendous test, sent to a city of the *Gentiles* to be debtor to the grace of a poor *stranger*, and withal a *widow*. Could he have had a more "forlorn hope" than that? A widow, "desolate in heart," the prop of her life gone, and she now out "gathering of sticks" to make the last cake for herself and son and then *die*. God was "purging away the dross that there might come forth a vessel for the finer," and Elijah comes out bright. He went out trusting God unreservedly, without a murmur "he *arose and went*." Just as he gets to the gate of the city, there is the very woman; Fortune, as men say, favours him. He asks her for a drink of water, and she goes to get it, has only enough to make a cake, is on the very verge of starvation, yet runs with willing feet to give him all she can give. He adds, "Bring me a morsel of bread," and then out comes the whole story. She has reached the last, one more meal for herself and darling boy, and then *death*! Everything had failed to human sight. What a death knell to all human hopes! Yet with it comes the comfort, "As the Lord *thy God liveth*." God met him thus, and gave him this encouragement just there. Is *your* God the living God? Then all circumstances are only the occasion to *prove* Him more, and *learn* Him better. "Fear not, go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a *little cake first*," says the prophet. What a test for the woman's soul! If God is ever going to bless us, we must, in heart, at least, give Him His share *first*. We may expend so much on earthly comforts that we have only *coppers* left for the Lord. We wonder that God does not use us better in this way and that, and the reason is, we do not give the Lord *His cake first*. Let us give the Lord *His own*, and we shall prove His resources unfailing (Mal. iii. 10.) "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." On *which* side of this matter do we stand, *sight* or *faith*? Do we think that it is hardly worth while going on? Let us go to the other side of the barrel! She says, "an *handful* of meal in a barrel and a *little* oil in a cruse." God says "the *barrel* shall not waste, the *cruse* of oil shall not fail,"

and so it was. One precious provision for our souls is Christ—"God's meal, which *strengtheneth man's heart*," the other, "joy in the Holy Ghost," "the oil which *makes his face to shine*;" these render us superior to everything around us; joy and strength unailing, that all the wear and tear of the world will not take out of us. "The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail" all the time the prophet stayed in the widow's house. But God sent Elijah there not simply to have a place to stay in, but to *bless* the widow's soul. She had had the light and witness of God's *Creation* and *Providence* and of her *conscience*, and yet she does *not know him*. He has to knock a little louder, and the bolts of her heart give way, and God comes in. He touched the quick in her soul. Her child dies, and she says to Elijah, Art thou come unto me to call *my sin to remembrance*. Whether the child was the child of her sin or not we do not know, but all was now "made manifest in the light." The Lord dealt in wonderful grace with this poor stranger. The receiving back of her child is "*life from the dead*," and she says to Elijah, "Now by *this I know* that thou art a *man of God*, and that the *word of the Lord* in thy mouth is *truth*." Are you puzzled to know whether Christ really saves sinners, has really saved *you*, whether the Bible is the word of God or not? Let us face our sins honestly, repent and confess them, and we will know it before morning. May God grant that all our hearts, if not yet so, may receive this blessing; and if it is, may we follow on to know Him in these deeper and fuller lessons of his servant Elijah, for His name's sake! Amen.

B. C. G.

HIS HEART AND HIS HAND.

Do you seek solace from Christ's sympathy as much or more than you do from the interference of His hand? Is it His heart or His hand which comforts you most? If He had not come down and walked beside us in all our circumstances down here, He could not have sympathized with us; He could not have made us *feel* His heart for us. He might have stood at a distance and have stretched out His hand as Moses did, when with his rod he smote the waters of the Red Sea; but Christ came down here, walked on the waters, and said to Peter, "Come" to where He was. He walked

beside Mary going to the grave of Lazarus; and wept as He went. It was His heart He was unfolding in that walk! It was His hand when He called Lazarus out of the grave. If He were to come and relieve you by His *hand* out of every pressure of health or circumstances, and order things for you, you would after all be only a solitary unit in your good health, or with your improved circumstances; but if you are relieved and comforted by His *heart*—His sympathy—you have made an acquaintance with Him personally, and you have all the comfort and cheer of enjoying His company in your dreariness; so that adverse circumstances with Him are better than happy ones without Him. It is better to have His company in the desert, like the disciples, or on the cross, like the thief, than to be a solitary Adam in Paradise. The brightest *things* cannot perfectly relieve the heart. It is His *heart* only that can relieve; and this is known when no other heart could or would know how to draw near and bear one company. Surely company is better than comforts. It is with sorrow only here that He can sympathize, for there is nothing of God in the joys of man.

It was need at the marriage feast (John ii.) which drew out His hand. Nothing but His hand would suit that, but in the second miracle at Cana, His heart entered into the sorrow of the father; and when he said, "Thy son liveth," the hand of mercy won the heart and faith of the father and of his house.

You must practise yourself in learning His heart; you must learn how He would act in your circumstances; for He is beside you when you are toiling in rowing; and if you become more sensible of His being beside you, and that He Himself has gone through every sorrow that a godly one could endure, you will, as you look for it, find a solace in His sympathy—in His heart which no interference of His hand could obtain for you. Better for you to be at ——— wanting the Lord every moment, and finding Him near you every moment, than if you were in the brightest scene, where you could draw on things around for your enjoyment, and where according as you had power in yourself, you would be able to appropriate the beauties around you. Seek to learn and to enjoy the interest which Christ takes in you, and you will find that, like the rock of Israel, He follows you, and makes up for your lack, by the stream that gladden the city of God.

DISCIPLINE.

“O Lord, by these things men live.

And in all these things is the life of my spirit.”—*Isiah xxxviii. 16.*

Porpora, one of the most illustrious masters of music in Italy, conceived a friendship for a young pupil, and asked him if he had courage to persevere with constancy in the course he should mark out for him, however wearisome it should seem. When the pupil answered in the affirmative, Porpora wrote upon a single page of ruled paper the Diatonic and Chromatic scales, ascending and descending, the intervals of the third, fourth, and fifth, &c., in order to teach him to take them with freedom, and to sustain the sounds, together with the trills, groups, appoggiaturas and passages of vocalization of different kinds. This page occupied both the master and scholar during an entire year; and the following year was also devoted to it. When the third year commenced, nothing was said of changing the lesson, and the pupil began to murmur; but the master reminded him of his promise. The fourth year slipped away, the fifth followed, and they were always at the one eternal page. The sixth found them at the same task; but the master added to it some lessons in articulation, pronunciation, and lastly in declamation. At the end of this year the pupil, who supposed himself still in the elements, was much surprised, when one day the master said to him, “Go, MY SON, YOU HAVE NOTHING MORE TO LEARN, YOU ARE THE FIRST SINGER OF ITALY AND OF THE WORLD!”

He spoke the truth, for this singer was none other than the celebrated Gaetano Caffarelli, who was born at Naples in 1703, and died in 1783, the above anecdote of him being recorded in Fetis’s History of Music.

Such an anecdote as this, like a parable, well illustrated the Lord’s ways with us. As Caffarelli was told by his master, “You have nothing more to learn, you are the first singer of Italy, and of the world,” so we in the higher sense, having learnt our lesson, shall find to our joy and amazement, that we are *perfect musicians*. And oh, what a song will be ours! such strains as no ear ever listened to before; telling out, as they will do, the praises of Him who is infinitely worthy—who was slain—who has redeemed us from death by His blood, and with whom our God and Father has assigned to us, poor creatures of the dust as we are, the nearest place to Him, the Son of His love, in that circle of glory and blessedness, of which He, in “**THAT DAY**” (2 Tim. i. 12) will be both the light and the centre.

"POPULAR WITH ONE."

May grace be given to each of us to know Him, and to enter into the joyous devotion of the Apostle, who, knowing Christ, gladly surrendered all to Him, and gloried in saying, "Whose I am, and whom I serve." "For me to live is Christ." A dear companion of the writer, for three years a true yoke-fellow in Evangelistic work, one extremely cold winter evening, as he joined him in a railway train, to take his last journey on earth in the service of his Master, said pleasantly, "I got a good illustration from the man at the gate as I came on the train. It is very cold and every one was grumbling, and some abusing him, as he made them all get their tickets out and show them before they got past. I said to him, you don't seem to be very popular around here. If I am popular with the man that put me here it is all that I want, was his reply." "Ah," said this dear friend, "if we could go through this world, keeping the same thought towards Christ, what a straight path we should make." "Popular with one Man." May this be our ambition, the only ambition the Gospel enjoins. "Therefore also we are AMBITIOUS, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him." (2 Cor. v. 9., R. V. Marg.) If we please Him we cannot please the world; and if we please the world we cannot please Him. Dear child of God, which is your ambition?

FOLLOW ME.

Our path is very simple and blessed in this day—to keep from evil and follow the Lord. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." I cannot follow without renouncing every impediment. I am set on following. Like a dog following his master, it is the master he is thinking of, and cost what it may, he follows. I begin to follow with the simple determination that neither river nor fence, nor any force, can prevent me from reaching the object of my heart. I ask not an easy path. I simply inquire, "Is this the way *He* went?" I have the word; the dog has only the scent; does he not put me to shame? "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him shall my Father honour." It is here the "honouring"—the decoration takes place.

"I LOVE TO POINT HIM OUT."

An Incident.

A gentleman, while travelling, came to a river, which he must needs cross before he could reach his destination. Joe Brown, a colored boatman, was accustomed to ferry passengers over the river, and the boat being ready, the gentleman seated himself in the bow.

Joe stepped into his place, and taking up his oars the two glided swiftly along. There were sloops going up and down the river as they did every day, when the winds would carry them on their way. Suddenly Joe drew in his oars, and springing to his feet pulled off his ragged old straw hat, and with his hand shaded his eyes while he strained his sight to some object on a sloop in the distance.

"As I'm a living man," he exclaimed, "that's the Captain!"

The gentleman, started out of his musing, followed the eyes of Joe, but could distinguish nothing but the forms of three or four men on a sloop in the distance.

"See him, sir?" exclaimed Joe. "Don't you see that strong, kind-looking man against the mast," urged Joe.

"Perhaps I shall see him when the vessel gets nearer."

"I wish you could see the Captain," said Joe, in a tone which seemed to imply he *might* if he would but look.

"Who is the Captain?" he asked.

"The Captain?" said Joe, turning upon him a look of surprise, as if he should have known.

"He's the man that *saved me*." But quickly turning his eyes again to the sloop, he said: "I can't miss seeing him while he's in sight," and gazed with an intense earnestness.

The sloop did not come very near, and passed by with no apparent signal to Joe, who stood as steady as a mast in a ship, with his hat in his hand and his eyes still shaded. As the sloop sailed on, the figures of the men became hidden, and Joe sat down again to his oars.

"I told you, sir," said he, "that he's the man that saved me."

"How did he save you, Joe?"

"He stripped off his coat, and jumped into the river and caught hold of this child with his strong arm, just as he was sinking into the great depths with the ropes around his feet. *That's* the way he saved me," said Joe, growing eloquent with emotion.

"You have not forgotten to be grateful, I see."

"*Grateful!* Joe Brown would breathe every breath he draws for him if he could. I told him I would work the rest of my days without any pay. It would be enough and more, and it pays me just to be allowed to serve him. But," he added rather sadly, "I stay as *close* by him as I can. He runs by here once a month. I watch for him always, and *I love to point him out*. It's all this poor nigger can do."

The traveller, who was a christian, was deeply moved by the earnestness of the poor negro, and at the depth and tenderness of his gratitude.

In a moment there flashed across him a humiliating sense of his own ingratitude towards One whose strong arm had snatched him from the jaws of an eternal death. Why should he ever forget the high privilege of pointing out "Him, whose name is above every name, the Man Christ Jesus."

Has not this little incident a voice for us too? What power there would be if it were practically true of us that we loved to "point Him out." And this is the only thing that will keep us in this age of unreality—truth may be known and in a certain way enjoyed, but if Christ Himself is not our object, "our sole desire," Satan will get power over us. O that there might be inwrought in us by the Holy Spirit, an ever-increasing desire after Himself, that so we might in our every day walk "point Him out."

Look at the instances in Scripture. John the Baptist beheld Jesus as he walked, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God: and the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."

How blessed this is. The looking and then the speaking.

Again, look at Peter and John in Acts iii. They gave a bold testimony, and the result was, "they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."

Again, look at Stephen in Acts vii. "He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus." As his eye becomes accustomed to the glory, he sees the centre of that glory is Jesus, and so he testifies: "I see the heavens open, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

I have not longer space to dwell on this, but if you study these three instances carefully and prayerfully, you will find real blessing to your souls.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Our yet unfinished story
 Is tending all to this :—
 To God the greatest glory,
 To us the greatest bliss.

If all things work together
 For ends so grand and blest,
 What need to wonder whether
 Each in itself is best!

If some things were omitted,
 Or altered as we would,
 The whole might be unfitted
 To work for perfect good.

Our plans may be disjointed,
 But we may calmly rest ;
 What God has once appointed
 Is better than our best.

We cannot see before us,
 But our all-seeing Friend
 Is always watching o'er us,
 And knows the very end.

What though we seem to stumble,
 He will not let us fall ;
 And learning to be humble
 Is not lost time at all.

What though we fondly reckoned
 A smoother way to go
 Than where His hand has beckoned,
 It will be better so.

What only seemed a barrier
 A stepping stone shall be ;
 Our God is no long carrier,
 A present help is He.

And when, amid our blindness,
 His disappointments fall,
 We trust His loving-kindness,
 Whose wisdom sends them all.

They are the purple fringes
That hide his glorious feet ;
They are the fire-wrought hinges,
Where truth and mercy meet.

By them the golden portal
Of Providence shall ope,
And lift to praise immortal
The songs of faith and hope.

From broken alabaster
Was deathless fragrance shed ;
The spikenard flowed the faster
Upon the Saviour's head.

No shattered box of ointment
We ever need regret,
For out of disappointment
Flow sweetest odors yet.

The discord that involveth
Some startling change of key,
The Master's hand resolveth
In richest harmony

We hush our children's laughter,
When sunset hues grow pale ;
Then, in the silence after,
They hear the nightingale.

We mourned the lamp declining,
That glimmered at our side ;
The glorious starlight shining
Has proved a surer guide.

Then tremble not and shrink not
When disappointment nears ;
Be trustful still, and think not
To realize all fears.

While we are meekly kneeling,
We shall behold her rise,
Our Father's love revealing,
An angel in disguise.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

“BE YE STEDFAST, UNMOVABLE.”

1 Cor. xv. 58.

If our hearts are not close to Christ, we are apt to get weary in the way.

All is a vain show around us, but that which is *inside* abides and is true, being the life of Christ. All else goes! When the heart gets hold of this fact it becomes (as to things around) like one taken into a house to work for the day, who performs the duties well, but passes through instead of living in the circumstances. To Israel the cloud came down, and they stayed; it lifted up, and on they went. It was all the same to them. Why? Because had they *stayed* when the cloud-went on, they would not have had the Lord. One may be daily at the desk for fifty years, yet with Christ, the desk is only the circumstance; it is the doing God's will, making manifest the savour of Christ, which is the simple and great thing. Whether I go or you go—I stay or you stay, may that one word be realized in each of us—“*stedfast, unmovable!*” In whatever sphere, as matter of providence, we may be found, let the divine life be manifested—Christ manifested. This abides, all else changes, but the life remains and abides for ever, ay for ever.

Not a single thing in which we have served Christ shall be forgotten. Lazy alas! we all are in service, but all shall come out that is *real*, and what is *real* is Christ in us, and this only. The appearance now may be very little—not much even in a religious view, but what is real will abide. Our hearts clinging closely to Christ, we shall sustain *one another* in the body of Christ. The love of Christ shall hold the whole together, Christ being everything, and we content to be nothing, helping one another, praying one for the other. I *ask* not the prayers of the saints, I reckon on them. The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, fulfilling as the hireling our day, till Christ shall come; and then “shall every man have praise of God”—*praise of God!* Be that our object, and may God knit all our hearts together thoroughly and eternally.

J. N. D.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH
and
THE ANSWER OF GRACE.

And
JABEZ

was more honorable than his brethren ;
and
his mother called his name Jabez,
saying,

Because I bare him with sorrow.

And
JABEZ

called on the God of Israel,
saying,

OH THAT THOU
wouldest *bless* me indeed,
enlarge my coast

and
THAT THINE HAND
might be with me,

and
THAT THOU
wouldest *keep* me from evil
that it may *not grieve* me !

And

GOD

granted him that which he *requested*.

1 CHRON. IV. 9-10.

"WALK SOFTLY."

"I shall go softly all my years."—Isa. xxxviii. 15.

Walk softly ; for the Saviour says,
 "Oh come, and learn of Me ;
 I'm of a *meek* and *lowly* mind,
 And rest I'll give to thee ;
 The meek I love and those whose hearts
 Are humble and contrite,
 Shall richly know my grace and love,
 For they are my delight,"

Walk softly ; for it well becomes
 A sinner saved by *grace*,
 And one who hopes ere long to stand
 Before his Saviour's face ;
 It well becometh such an one,
 With *lowliness* to go ;
 For grace excludes all boasting pride,
 And self-importance too.

Walk softly ; enemies abound,
 On either hand are they ;
 And snares and pits to catch thy feet,
 They thickly round thee lay ;
 Upon thy lips set careful watch,
 And "keep thy heart" secure,
 Lest fall thou mayest into sin,
 In some unguarded hour.

Walk softly ; 'tis an evil world
 That thou art passing through ;
 It hates the Cross, and hateth Him
 Who hung upon it too.
 And thou, professing His dear Name,
 It watches narrowly,
 And tests, by how thou *walkest* here
 The truth that thou may'st say.

Walk softly ; recommend the grace
 Which put away thy sin ;
Adorn the doctrine of the Lord,
 And glory for Him win ;
 In meekness, love, and gentleness
 Pursue thy blest career,
 And precious fruit to Jesus' praise
 In rich abundance bear.

Walk softly ; not to-day alone,
 Walk softly *every day ;*
 Walk softly, wheresoe'er thou art,
 And ever *watch* and *pray ;*
 Walk softly ; lean not on thyself,
 But look to Christ for strength,
 And thou shalt walk the streets of gold,
 In thy blest home, at length.

A. M.

PURGED OR STAINED—WHICH ?

There are just two classes in the world, namely, those who are purged by the blood that was shed, and those who are stained with the guilt of shedding it. What a solemn question for any one to put to himself.

Confession, if genuine, always *succeeds* self-judgment, of which it is the fruit, and expression Godward. Self-judgment is the effect in the soul of the *Word of God*, applied by the SPIRIT in answer to CHRIST'S intercession. This leads to repentance and confession, which puts God in His proper place before the soul ; so that, in virtue of atonement, He is faithful and just to forgive sin, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness ; thus restoring the believer to fellowship with Himself in the light.

Were we simple and subject to Scripture, the Holy Ghost could and would produce but one conviction. The only reason why Christians differ so widely is because unjudged flesh prevails against the Spirit.

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THE LORD'S SUPPER. WHAT IS IT?

It was instituted as a *memorial* of the dying love of Jesus, for all who believe on His name.

"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it, and said "Take, eat! this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me." After the same manner, also, He took the cup, when He had supped, saying "This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." 1 Cor. xi. 23-26.

Although the Master did not directly specify *when*, or *how often* this was to be observed, in the Acts we learn that the Spirit guided as to that. At first they broke bread at home, daily. Acts ii. 46. Afterwards, "on the first day of the week." Acts xx. 7. We cannot fail to see its appropriateness, since it was "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week," that He rose from the dead. We notice, also, from this Scripture that other services were subordinate; *this* was the main feature. Intelligent worship implies a slain victim, by whose blood we draw near to God. It is the "blood of Christ" that leads into the "holy of holies" to meet God, and by its *virtue* our sins are put away so that we can do so *acceptably*. In His death we learn something of the eternal life springing therefrom for us; *our life* originating from it; *life from death*.

This ordinance keeps before us the fact, that since the fall, by which life was forfeited, true worship *must* have a sacrifice. The ceremonies of the law have been fulfilled by Christ, in the offering up of the body He took for this purpose, and the shedding of His own blood. In the presence of the emblems that set this forth, we may "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God *by Jesus Christ*," even "the sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."

Nothing else can at all compare with this heaven-born privilege. Do all God's people know its power, its claim upon their hearts? Alas! how feebly does the church respond to this *key-note* of love from God to man!

The Lord's supper, too, is the expression of the communion of saints. "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is

it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are *one bread*, and *one body*, for we are *all* partakers of that *one bread*." 1 Cor. x. 16

Led by the Spirit into fellowship with the Father and Son, by the same Spirit we are led into fellowship with the entire body of Christ—all true believers—the church for whom Christ died, even though some of its members fail to see the oneness of the body, or manifest it. All are of the same family; children of the same Father; members one of another; being baptized by one Spirit, and are alike members of the body of Christ, receiving "grace upon grace;" out of the fulness which is in Christ, their hearts are filled with joy, they overflow with love and join in thankful praise.

(Selected.)

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord" etc., (Ex. xv)

A song in celebration of victory, in view of the full accomplishment of the counsel of God for Israel, and also *typically* for us. It accordingly takes no account of the wilderness, which is no part of His counsels, but rather of His ways; but the crossing of the Jordan enters into it (vs. 5, 16) and the conquest of Canaan, the setting up of His Sanctuary in the land, and the establishment of His Kingdom on earth. Thus the habitation for Him in vs. 2, contemplates the Temple in Zion, and concurrently with this, for the first time, we hear of the Lord's reign—in a word His house, and His Throne in Jerusalem. All the special features of God's counsels of blessings to Israel are thus before us in this Divine carol: salvation for a redeemed people, a habitation for God in their midst, God revealed in holiness, the enemy dashed in pieces, the Jordan crossed, all opposition subdued, the land enjoyed, Jehovah, King forever and ever! But how beautiful and how significant is the fact that, though they sang in the wilderness, it was as upon resurrection ground, and thus they sang not a word about it. Not a note could be raised until the vanquished enemy sank as a stone, and the people were free; but when that was achieved, the song which God inspired, and which Moses led them to take up on the further shore of the sea, raised melodies in the desert, which shall reverberate in mightier volume throughout eternity! For us, along with this a sweeter song is reserved. Rev. v. 9.

(130)

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"READY FOR EITHER."

The Missionary Union has adopted a device, found on an ancient medal, which represents a bullock standing between a plough and an altar, with the inscription, "*Ready for either.*" The whole history of Christianity has proved that its great object cannot be secured without both the *toil* and the *sacrifice*. Says the Apostle, "*I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church.*" In the agony of the atoning sacrifice, Jesus had no sharers. But he has left, unexhausted, enough of the bitter cup of His previous toils and trials to remind His followers, amid their great work, what their salvation *cost* HIM. A readiness for *hard work* on the one hand, and for *sacrifices* on the other, can alone evince not only our attachment to His cause, but also *our love to HIM*,

Christ's sufferings as God's witness or martyr—

(There is but one word in Scripture to express both.) Mark viii. 31: "The Son of Man must *suffer* many things, and be rejected, and be killed, &c." Ch. ix. 12: "Must *suffer* many things and be set at nought." Isaiah liii. 3: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of *sorrows* and acquainted with *grief.*"

Paul, in following him—

Acts ix. 16: "I will show him how great things he must *suffer* for my name's sake. Col. i. 24: "I now rejoice in my *sufferings*, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, &c." Phil. iii. 10: "Fellowship of His *sufferings.*"

Peter—

2 Pet. i. 14: "I must put off this my tabernacle, as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." Jno. xxi. 18, 19: "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death He should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, *Follow me.*"

Privilege for us—

Rom. viii. 17: "If so be that we *suffer* with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Phil. i. 29: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to *suffer* for His sake.

"Who *suffer* with Thee Lord below,
Shall reign with Thee above;
Then let it be our joy to know
This way of peace and love."

ENDURE HARDNESS.

2 TIM. II. 3.

"THE *soldier's* life is full of toil. Absent from home, deprived of the luxuries, and even the comforts of life, he must *endure* what he cannot avoid, and seek to accomplish the work desired by him who has called him to be a soldier.

"But the *hardships* of the Christian warrior's lot are far more desirable than the more coveted pleasures and indulgences which the world affords. There is safety in enduring hardness, in weariness, poverty, privation, and toil. Uriah in the camp of Israel was safer than king David was at home, where, while idling his hours away on the house-top, he was led into sins and sorrows untold.

"Many a man exalted, honoured, petted, caressed, adored, and envied too by those who walked in lowliness around him, has been ensnared, dishonoured and degraded, until in his secret heart he would gladly have changed places with the peasant at his toil, with the beggar on the dunghill, with the poorest, meanest, lowliest child of G d, so that he might have the comfort of a quiet conscience.

"Man of God, endure *hardness*! The bowers of pleasure are not for you. Hard, busy, earnest, honest work is your best safeguard against sin and the sorrow it brings. Delilah's lap may be a quiet place to lay a weary head, but poor blind Samson, shorn of his strength, mocked by his foes, clanking his fetters of brass, and turning the mill-stone in the Philistine dungeon, could tell you a tale which would spoil the pleasure of such gentle dalliance.

"Endure hardness. Get acquainted with economy, hardship, poverty, and toil. Lay out your strength in good honest labour for Christ. Spurn the baits, the luxuries, the phantoms, and the shams that are set before you for your ruin. The prophets were poor, the apostles were poor, the saints have been poor, and the Son of God was *poorest* of them all. Be content to share their lot.

"Endure hardness, and be strong in the grace of Jesus Christ. Count crosses, trials, and distresses, as a joy and a rejoicing to your soul. And remember that poverty, bereavement, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness, are all easier to bear than the secret guilt or the open shame, which sooner or later comes on all who, debased and enfeebled by luxury and indulgence, yield to sin, and are led away into forbidden paths. Well may we endure hardness, rejoice in trials, and suffer all sorrow, pain, and even death itself, rather than be led astray from God, and thus bring reproach upon Christ's cause, and guilt and sorrow on our own souls."

GROWTH IN GRACE.

We are taught by the Spirit of God, through the Apostle Peter, ever to feed, as new born babes, upon "*the sincere milk of the word*"—ever to come, as spiritual infants, to that precious word. In another sense, we are expected to grow and become *young men*, and men of *full stature* in Christ; but the active life of the soul in receiving the truth of God, is compared to that of the new-born babe—"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." We are placed in this position by the Spirit, that we may grow up in Christ.

But if we are to grow by means of "the sincere milk of the word," it is not simply by exercising our understanding upon it, nor even by much study of that word. We need the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we must exercise ourselves in *godliness*, "putting away all *malice*, all *bitterness*, all *hypocrisy*, all *envy*, all evil *communications*," that the Spirit may not be grieved. If the Christian cherishes these evil dispositions in his heart, he cannot advance in the true knowledge of the things of God. Accordingly, he is called ever to place himself in the position of a new-born babe, before receiving—in the sense of his weakness, his littleness, and his ignorance, and in simplicity of heart too—the nourishment of the word of God.

It is by this means that the Lord ever keeps His own in simplicity and dependence—"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the *knowledge* of God and of Jesus our Lord." But then the knowledge of God always humbles; the more we know of God, the more we perceive our own nothingness—"If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he *ought* to know."

Just as the child constantly receives nourishment from its mother, so ought we continually to feed on the spiritual food provided for us—the word of God. When we have received this word in faith, we become strong,—we grow thereby, in the knowledge of God and of His grace. The Apostle Paul, having heard of the faith of the Ephesians in the Lord Jesus, prays "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ may give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the *knowledge of Him*; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might *know* what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints," &c. "Having

tasted that the Lord is gracious," we come to His word, and thereby receive from Him that which is needful to comfort, nourish, and refresh our souls. The word of God always comes to the babe in Christ with its own proper savour; it presents itself, and is recognized as "*the word of His grace.*" I may study it again and again, but if I have not communion with the Saviour, it will avail me nothing,—at least at that time.

God does not reveal His secrets to "the wise and prudent," but to "*little children.*" The energy of a man's mind judging the things of God does not procure him blessing from Him; but the spirit of the *babe* desiring "the sincere milk of the word" does. He says, "*open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.*" The strongest mind must come to the word of God, just as a new-born babe.

And the same is true as regards *speaking* of the truth of God. As soon as we lack ability to "speak as the oracles of God," in the power of our communion with Him, our duty is to keep silence. Let us take care of treating lightly a truth which is not made plain to us—nothing hinders our progress so much; we are then attempting to teach that which we have not learnt from the Holy Spirit Himself.

But there is nothing so difficult to our hearts as to be *humble*, and nothing so easy to them as to decline from that happy condition. It is not by precepts alone that we can be kept so; it is by tasting by experience "*how good the Lord is.*" It is indeed true that God is a God of judgment, that He will execute vengeance upon His enemies; but He does not assume that attitude towards the Christian. He has revealed Himself to us as, "*the God of all grace,*" and we are placed in a position to enjoy His goodness.

How difficult it is to us to believe this *graciousness* of the Lord. The natural feeling of our heart is this,—"*I know Thee, that Thou art a hard master.*" Is our will thwarted?—we dispute the ways of God, and are vexed at not obtaining that which we desire. It may be that this feeling is not manifested, but naturally we are altogether destitute of intelligence about God's grace, and of capacity to appropriate it. See, too, the example of the poor *prodigal* child in the Gospel: (Luke xv.)—when he thinks of returning, the idea of his father's *grace* never enters his mind. He much rather expected to be received as a hireling; but what does the father say to him? what are the feelings of

his heart?—"Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Here is *grace*—*free grace*.

It was the same as regarded the *Samaritan* woman. This poor adulteress, being ignorant of Him who was speaking to her—"the only Son of the Father, full of *grace and truth*," and consequently the only one who was capable of supplying her wants,—the Lord said to her, "if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."—If thou hadst understood what *grace* is thou wouldest have asked it of Him, and He would have given it thee.

It is not only in the case of an open rebellion against God, and a total rejection of salvation, that this blindness of the understanding as to grace is seen to prevail. Our natural heart is so alienated from God, that to be happy it loves anything in the world—the devil even—better than the grace of God. When sin and its odious character are revealed to the conscience, we think that God *cannot* be gracious. If Adam, when he discovered his nakedness, had known the grace of God, he would immediately have gone to Him to be covered. But no; he knew nothing of God's grace; he saw his condition, and sought to conceal himself from God amongst the trees of the garden. This is what we do: the consciousness of our nakedness before God—this feeling apart from the knowledge of His grace—induces us to flee from His presence.

But there is something more as regard the *Christian*. As believing in Jesus, when our consciences come to be exercised, and we feel that we have to do with God in all things, instead of a clear sense of His grace (which *levels* all our actions,) and of the continual service of Jesus in the house, ever washing our feet, we are apt rather to have a deep feeling of our *responsibility* in the thought that we must perform all that which God requires, in order to be able to meet His judgment of us according to our works. There is indeed a great deal of truth in this; for it is necessary that that which God requires of us be performed; but the evil is in thinking that if we do not find in *ourselves* that which is pleasing to God, He will condemn us.

On the other hand, it cannot be supposed that *grace* implies that God treats sin lightly. Quite the contrary: grace declares sin to be so abominable a thing, that God cannot tolerate it. Were it in the *power of man*, after having been unrighteous and wicked, to better himself so as to be fit to stand before God, there would have been no need of grace. The fact of God's being *gracious*, shows that sin is something evil,—that man, being a sinner, his condition is completely ruined and hopeless, and that nothing but gratuitous grace can meet his wants.

A man may see that sin is a dead work, and also that nothing defiled can enter into the presence of God; he may even go so far as to have his conscience convinced of sin, but that is not to taste "that the Lord is *gracious*." It is undoubtedly a very good thing to be led thus far; for then I experience that the Lord is *just*, and it is necessary that I should know that; but I must not stop there; consciousness of sin without a knowledge of grace would drive me to despair. Peter had not tasted how good the Lord is, when he said, "depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." He thought that sin rendered him incapable of enjoying the presence of the Lord.

Such also was the thought of Simon the leper, when the poor woman watered the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Ah, thought he, if this man were a prophet—if he knew the thoughts of God—he would have thrust out this woman from his presence, "for she is a *sinner*." And why did he speak thus? Because he knew not that the Lord is *gracious*. He had a certain feeling of the justice of God, but no notion of His grace. If I do not know Christ, I am unable to say that God must be *gracious*, but I can say, that, as a sinner, He must thrust me from His presence, because He is *just*.

Thus we see that we have to learn what God is toward us, not according to our own ideas, but as He has revealed Himself; that is to say, as the "*God of all grace*."

From the moment that I understand, as Peter did, that I am a sinful man, and that, nevertheless, it is because the Lord knew the full extent of my sin and its odious character, that He is come to me,—from that moment I understand what grace is. *Faith enables me to see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God*. As soon as I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, I see that

God has come to me because I was a sinner, and that it was impossible for me to go to Him.

Can man answer to that which the holiness of God requires? Experience has resolved the question. The brighter the light has become the more it has shown man his darkness; and the stricter the law has been, the more has man's determination to do evil been brought out. And then it was, "when we were *without strength*, in an acceptable time," that "Christ died for the ungodly." "when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." See, here is grace here is goodness! God, seeing the blood of His Son, is *satisfied*, and if I am satisfied with it, I glorify God.

The Lord, whom I have known as having laid down His life for me, is the *same* Lord with whom I have to do every day of my life; and all His conduct towards me is based upon the same principle of grace. Do I want to learn what His love is?—His *cross* teaches it me, for He has given Himself for me, in order that all the fullness and all the joy which is in Himself may be made mine. But I must still learn as a new-born babe, "desiring the sincere milk of the word, that I may *grow* thereby."

The great secret of progress is to contemplate the Lord in His character of grace. How precious it is,—how strengthening, to know that at *this* moment Jesus experiences and exercises the same love towards me as when He was dying upon the cross. This is a truth which we ought ever to bear in mind. Suppose, for example, that I find an evil disposition in myself which is difficult for me to overcome; well, I have but to present it to Jesus, as my Friend, and a *virtue* will come out of Him to strengthen me. Faith, and not simply my efforts, ought always to be thus in exercise against temptation; my efforts are always insufficient. *True strength consists in the faith which one has in the Lord's goodness.*

But the natural man in us always denies Christ as the only source of strength and blessing. Suppose my soul is out of communion with God—the natural heart says, "I must remedy this before I shall be able to come to Christ." But Christ abounds in grace, and since we know it, we ought immediately to return to Him, such as we are, and to humble ourselves deeply before Him. It is only in Him that we shall find that which will restore our souls. *Self-abasement in His presence is true humility.* If we acknowledge ourselves before Him to be such as we are, we shall find that He will show us nothing but grace.

But (although "rejected by men," and by the natural heart which is in each of us) who is *He* that saith "Behold I lay in Zion, a corner-stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth in Him shall not be confounded?" It is *God* who says it; it is *He* who laid this corner-stone, and not a man, and it is *He* who says, "*See what I think of Christ!*" Being taught of God by the Holy Spirit, I have the same thoughts of Christ as God Himself. It is in Jesus that I find my strength—my consolation—my joy. It is *He*—in whom God delights, and will delight eternally—who is now my joy also.

God says, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth;" and, producing in me His own thoughts, I, too, see that Christ is precious, and I find my pleasure in Him. Thus *He* who has been crucified for me—who has borne my "sins in His own body on the tree," is precious to God, and to me likewise.

You cannot find rest but in Jesus. We may look around on all sides, but we shall find nothing in this world which can satisfy our hearts. Jesus alone can do that. If God has sought truth and righteousness He has found both in Jesus, and he has found them in Him *for us*. This is what gives consolation to the soul. I regard Jesus now as in the presence of God for us, and God is satisfied. God takes pleasure in Him. It is in Christ Himself that God rests, and will rest forever. But then, Jesus, having borne my sins, and blotted them out by His blood, has united me to Himself in the heavens. He has descended from on high, bringing God down amongst us. He is raised, having united the Church to Himself. *If God finds Jesus precious, He finds me, in Him, equally precious.*

Jesus, as man, has glorified God upon the earth. God rests in that. Jesus, as man, is "Head of His body the Church;" and has "gone into the heavens, there to appear in the presence of God for us." This is what procures permanent rest to our souls, and not what we may think of ourselves. *Faith never looks at that which is in us as a ground of rest; it loves and lays hold of that which God has revealed, so that it finds its happiness in God's thoughts about Jesus.*

It is not by learning, or human intellect, that we are enabled to comprehend these things. The poor, ignorant

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sinner, when he is instructed by the Spirit, can understand, as well as the most intellectual, how that Jesus is precious to the heart of God. The poor dying thief upon the cross, saying "This man has done no evil," gave a better account of the life of Christ than all those who surrounded Him. This thief was taught by the Spirit.

If we are much in communion with God our faces will tell it, although we ourselves may know nothing of it. Moses, when he had been with God, never supposed that the skin of his face shone; he seemed to forget himself; he was absorbed in God. If Jesus is precious to our souls—our eyes being fixed on Him, and our bodies occupied in His service,—we shall be secure from being carried away by the vanity and sin around us; and this will likewise be our strength against the sin and corruption of our own hearts. Whatever I see in myself, which is not in Jesus, is sin. It is not by considering my baseness, it is not by being occupied with that, that I shall be humbled; but it is by looking up to the Lord Jesus, by fixing my attention upon His merits. It is well to have done with ourselves, and to be taken up with Jesus. We are authorized to forget *ourselves*—to forget *our sins*—to forget *all*, except Jesus. It is by looking at Jesus that we are enabled to renounce all, that we obtain power to walk as obedient children. His love constrains us. If there were but *one* commandment, *we* should not have strength to obey even that.

May the Lord grant us thus to learn and realize the fullness of grace which is in Jesus, the well-beloved and elect of God, so that we may be "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

May we, beloved, in sounding the truth of God, having "tasted that the Lord is gracious," be constantly found "as new-born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby."

BARREN KNOWLEDGE.—The knowledge of doctrine which does not endear the the precepts of God's Word to us only hardens the heart, and leads to every degree of evil.—The man who knows the *doctrine*, and does not honour the precept, is in the most awful state of all.—(*Selected.*)

"ONLY A LITTLE WHILE, SIR."

"WELL, Molly," said the judge, going up to the old apple-woman's stand, "don't you get tired sitting here these cold, dismal days?"

"It's only a little while," said she.

"And the hot, dusty days," said he.

"It's only a little while, sir," answered Molly.

"And the rainy, drizzly days?" said the Judge.

"It's only a little while, sir," answered Molly.

"And your sick, rheumatic days, Molly?" said the judge.

"It's only a little while, sir," said she.

"And what then, Molly?" asked the judge.

"I shall enter into that rest which remains for the people of God," answered the old apple-woman devoutly; "and the troublesomeness of the way there don't pester or fret me. It's only a little while, sir."

"All is well that ends well, I dare say," said the judge; "but what makes you so sure, Molly?"

"How can I help being sure, sir," said she, "since Christ is the Way, and I am in Him? He is mine, and I am His. Now I only feel along the way. I shall see Him as He is in a little while, sir."

"Ah, Molly, you've got more than the law ever taught me," said the judge.

"Yes, sir, because I went to *the Gospel*."

"Well, Molly, I must look into these things," said the judge, buying an apple, and walking off.

"There's *only a little while, sir*, for that; and we are not quite sure of having even a little while," said she.

GOD'S WORD ABIDING.—An aged christian for fifty years past has not had newspapers in his house, but made the Bible his one study; and he says, "that is all that he can take with him"—the *knowledge of God*. All else—of earth—passes away, and cannot serve us then.

THE secret of *peace within* and *power without* is to be occupied with good,—ever and always to be occupied with good.

THE TEST FOR OUR HEARTS.

“Well, Bro. D., have you been thinking of the *coming* of our Lord?” was the enquiry of one taught by Divine grace to “*look for Him*,” of another, with whom he was having the privilege, given of God to His own, in “speaking often one to another;” and as “the Lord hearkened,” what must His heart have felt at the reply given: “No, I must say I don’t *trouble* myself about *these things*, Bro. S.”

“Brother, you have a wife, and if you were shortly to leave her to take a journey, expecting soon to come again, and while away, on being asked of your *return*, she replied, ‘I don’t *trouble* myself about *these things*,’ what would it make you feel as to the affections of *her heart*?”

The reply to this has not yet been given—can you give it, dear reader, or can I? Whether, or no, the *Lord* can, and has. “I have _____ against thee, thou hast left thy *first love*.” Rev. ii. 4. Read this passage and note that it is not *somewhat* to Him, but everything—this word being supplied to make it more readable, and in italics to show that there is no word for it in the Scriptures as they were given us of God. Yes, beloved Christian, we have *fallen* even as *the*; and must needs “*repent* and do the *first* works,” or else be soon set aside from holding a light for our absent Lord down here in this world.

What, think you, is it to Him that we have *words* and *works* abundant, and are quick to discern evil—using our hands and feet and eyes for Him, when He has lost our *hearts*? He may soon, and doubtless will say, “Who hath required *this* at your hands, to tread my courts?” as to much (how much He knows) of what we call Christian, and count up as works and testimony? The **FAITH** that *works* and knows not itself, but Him—the **LOVE** that *labours*, absorbed with its object—the *hope* that *waits* because He waits, (knowing the hour of His tarrying is best left in His hands) is what His eye seeks to find, as He searches within us. Is it so with us, or has His last loving appeal, “I will come again,” found no response in our cold hearts, and soon when He comes His greeting voice, as He wakens us from slumber, must needs be, “*What!* could ye not *watch with me* ONE HOUR? Alas! alas! how dimmed is the fine gold; and the snow white visage of His beloved ones become blackened as a coal!

B. C. G.

(161)

BELIEVERS.

EVERY believer stands before God now and forever, forgiven all trespasses. Col. i. 14 ; ii. 13. Crucified with Christ, Rom. vi. 6 ; Gal. ii. 20 ; vi. 14. This ends his standing in fallen Adam. Quickened, raised, and seated in heavenly places IN CHRIST JESUS, Eph. ii. 5, 6. Justified from all things, Acts xiii. 38, 39 ; Rom. iv. 3, 23 ; v. 1. MADE MEET to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints IN LIGHT, Col. i. 12. Made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, 2 Cor. v. 21 ; 1 Cor. i. 30. DELIVERED from the power of darkness, Col. i. 13. Translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, Col. i. 13. Accepted in the Beloved, Eph. i. vi. SAVED, 2 Tim. i. 9 ; Titus iii. 5. Sealed with the Holy Spirit, Eph. i. 13, iv. 30 ; 2 Cor. i. 22. Indwelt by the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19. Perfected forever, Heb. x. 14. Sanctified, (Christ in glory being his sanctification), 1 Cor. i. 30 ; vi. 11 ; Heb. x. 10. Complete in Christ, Col. ii. 10 ; John i. 16. A member of Christ's BODY, FLESH, and BONES, (and not a bone of Him shall be broken, was the word applied to the type,) Eph. vi. 30. Blessed with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in heavenly place in Christ Jesus, Eph. i. 3. Is kept by the power of God, 1 Peter i. 5. Every believer has eternal life and can never perish, John iii. 15, 16 ; v. 24 ; vi. 47 ; x. 27, 28, 29. Is born of God and so is God's child, John i. 13 ; 1 John iii. 1, 2, 3. Has Christ as his life, Col. iii. 4 ; John xi. 25 ; xiv. 6. Has liberty to enter into the holiest, Heb. x. 19. Has Christ as his High Priest to succour when tempted, Heb. ii. 18 ; iv. 14-16. Has Christ as his Advocate with the Father if sin is committed, (the term FATHER shows that relationship has not ceased although communion has been interrupted), and as HE IS FAITHFUL, the restoration of all His own erring ones is thus pledged, 1 John ii. 1, 2 ; John xiii. 1-10. See the case of David, 2 Sam. xii. 1-14. Also that of Peter, Luke xxii. 24. Not only were the SINS of every believer borne by Christ when on the cross, (see Lev. xvi. ; Isaiah liii. ; 1 Cor. xv. 1 ; 1 Peter ii. 24 ; Heb. x. 12) ; but Christ was MADE SIN for us by God. The nature being bad, God has judged it and put it away from before Himself forever in the cross of Christ.

Christ died, not only as the believer's SIN-BEARER, but as the believer's REPRESENTATIVE. Every believer has thus died to God and to faith, and NOW LIVES IN CHRIST, having Christ's standing before God.

THE SAWDUST CARRIER.

WHILE spending a few days lately in a small village where almost all of the people were employed in connection with a saw-mill, one person's work there threw him more in my way than the rest, and as I watched him going his rounds, I thought there was a lesson in it for me. His work was to dispose of the ends of the boards (called buttings), sawdust, &c. At one time he was delivering loads of these at the houses for fuel; at another, hauling the sawdust along the street, making it look all clean and bright; and then again, putting it in front of the doors, and when all this was done, occupying himself with filling up any holes or vacant places he could find around. As he was about his work, and I met with him again and again, I remarked "You seem to distribute your loads around everywhere," and he replied, "Yes, I put them wherever I can find a place, or where I think a little is needed. This set me thinking, as I was about sitting down to my morning reading of the Scriptures, of what an example it was for us as the children of God in the ministry of His Word. In some God has awakened a sense of present need and of their necessity "to *lay up* in store for themselves a good foundation against the *time to come*," as in the case of those who requested loads of fuel for present use and the approaching winter. Again, there is need made manifest as to learning "the way of the Lord more perfectly" in which we walk, perhaps not always expressed, but a little exhortation like a nice clean load of sawdust so helps to brighten and alter matters that soon another wishes his way bettered too, and thus they are "provoked unto *love* and *good works*." Then again, there are *differences* between people, points of character in each other that *offend*, and the way into each other's hearts seems difficult and obstructed, needing some spiritual energy to climb up to them. Here the loving service of "caring one for another" is so much needed, each according to our little measure looking not on *our own* things, but the things of *others*." How a little of the divine *love* of 1 Cor. xiii. that "*bears* all things, *believes* all things, *hopes* all things, *endures* all things," like the cart loads of sawdust in front of such places, would help to overcome difficulties, and open the way into the hearts of those estranged from others.

B. C. G.

"THEREIN ABIDE WITH GOD."

1 COR. vii. 17-24.

THESE significant words form the last clause of the apostle's exhortation to his brethren, given in the above verses.—Already had he been giving the suited directions for husband and wife; at one time, the *Lord's commands* which are imperative; at another, the *counsel* deemed helpful, as from one who had "obtained mercy to be faithful." And now, he passes further, to regard national and social distinctions—circumcision and uncircumcision—bonds and freedom.—Once have the words been given already—"abide . . . wherein . . . called," and now it is repeated, to add "*with God*," giving as it were the two edges of the divine Word as the sharp sword of God's Spirit.

In the first place there was the check put upon the restless will we find too often alas! at work within that would lead us to break loose from restraints placed over us by the hand of God, vainly imagining that thus we shall find liberty, and walk at large.—On the other hand there is the opposite evil contemplated, viz., that being servants it should be simply to men, forgetting that we are Christ's "freedmen," or being free that we forget that we are ever Christ's "bondsmen." How well for us that in His grace our God has put round about us the *shores* of His divine truth, that herein we may hear Him saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and *here* shall thy proud waves be stayed."—And now may the enquiry as to this be heeded by us. Are we seeking to "abide *wherein called*," and "*with God*"? There may be, 'tis true, occasions in which the Lord may interpose to change our circumstances, as in the case of the unbelieving husband or wife leaving the other, or of the servant set free who is told to "*use it rather*," or the man whose virginity he requires to give up in marriage—or the wife, whose husband is dead, at liberty to marry again, as to which, in each case, the Lord allows liberty. And yet withal, there is again and again the check line put upon our wills, by reminding us that "*the time is short*" of our Lord's absence—that the "*fashion of the world perisheth*," and we are to learn to "*use it as not abusing it*." Then "our abiding" is not to be the mere force of circumstances, but "*with God*."—Oh, that we may take it to our hearts!

B. C. G.

THE VALLEY OF BACA,

PSALM LXXXIV. 6.

THE vale of Baca dreary is and wild,
 And yet the path of every heaven-born child ;
 There will not stand before the throne of God,
 One, who this vale of sorrow has not trod ;
 Not one who there in vestments white appears,
 Whose sleepless couch has not been wet with tears ;
 No, all have Baca's vale of weeping known,
 Through tribulation each has reached the throne.
 Ask those who now their palm of victory wave,
 Conq'rors through Him who died the lost to save,
 If now they murmur at their former lot,
 Or wish they had escaped one mournful spot ?
 No, you would hear each grateful pilgrim tell,
 That vale was blessing's richest well ;
 The pools of trouble, filled with heavenly rain,
 Turned into myrtles every thorn of pain.

Think it not strange then pilgrim, neither faint,
 Much less indulge in murmuring or complaint,
 If what you meet with on your heavenly road,
 Is hard to bear since all is planned by God
 His child to train in wisdom's holy ways,
 And form a chosen vessel for His praise.
 Now we are slow those ways to understand,
 But let us bow beneath His mighty hand,
 Sure that His wisdom over all presides,
 His power controls, and love unerring guides.
 He that adorns the lilies with their bloom,
 Gives the frail grass its beauty and perfume,
 Watches and feeds the songsters of the air,
 Shall he not much more for His children care ?
 Has not His word at all times faithful stood,
 That all things work together for our good ?
 Needed each stroke, and thorn, and sigh, and tear,
 Soon shall the needs be of them all be clear ;
 Now let us drink the cup and meekly own,
 "Father, not mine, but let Thy will be done."
 "A little while," the desert will be o'er,
 The dangers past, the trials felt no more ;
 From day to day, from strength to strength we come,
 Nearer and nearer to our Father's home,
 JESUS, Himself the weary road has gone,

The "Man of Sorrows" now enjoys the throne,
Himself—Example—Captain—Leader—Guide,
Has every footstep of the journey tried ;
With words of comfort He allures us home,
"Be of *good cheer*, for I have overcome."

Faint not but lean in every strait on Me,
My heart is full of grace and sympathy ;
That faithful promise for thy buckler take,
Thee I will never, never, ne'er forsake ;
Where I am gone my pilgrim soon shall be,
And all the rest of glory share with Me.

The hands that now the pilgrim's staff must hold,
Shall then exchange it for a harp of gold ;
The armour doffed, the wedding robe to wear ;
No sword, or shield, or helmet wanted there.
The darkness changed to everlasting light,
Hope to fruition full, and faith to sight ;
No serpent's venom, or insidious snare,
No aching heart, no wearied limbs are there ;
Our souls shall bask beneath those cloudless skies,
And God's own hand shall wipe our tear-dimmed eyes,
But for *one* day such bliss divine to taste
Would make a thousand other days a waste ;
O sooner far the lowest place I'd hold,
In His fair courts than palaces of gold ;
There would I choose a doorkeeper to be,
E'en though I ope'd for others, not for me ;
I might look in and His bright glories see.

Be *patient* then ; with such a hope in view,
Blessed are they who Zion's ways pursue ;
Each faithful pilgrim, through His mighty grace,
Shall there appear, and see Him face to face :
He is their Sun to chase the shades of night,
And cheer their souls with heavenly warmth and light ;
"God of all *grace*," each day's march He'll bestow
The suited grace for all they meet below,
The "God of *glory*," when their journey's done,
Will crown with glory, what his grace begun.
Rich in the treasures of eternal love,
His watchful goodness all His people prove ;
Through time's short day and through eternity,
"Blest is the man, O Lord, who trusts in *THEE*."

THE CHARACTER OF OUR SERVICE-

LUKE XIX.

This parable of the "Ten Pounds" takes the Divine economy up from that moment, and carries us through the present age, until the second coming or Kingdom of Christ. Upon His rejection, He went into the same "far country" (heaven), leaving not an earthly portion behind Him to the care of Jewish labourers, but talents, under the promise of His return in the full title of the kingdom, then and there to reward them. And the parable, as well as the history of our present age, tell us, or will tell us, the end of this. A very full view, after this manner of God's great plans, these parables give, coming out here in the most artless and natural way, in the course of this action. But is not that a tender thought which is suggested here—that the saints are in this age left to serve their Master in a place, where, after fullest deliberation, He has been cast out and refused? The *citizens* of it have said they will not have Him; and service, therefore, to be fully of right character, should be rendered in the recollection of this rejection.

And again, if we thus learn the nature of service from this parable generally; from the history of the "Unprofitable Servant," we learn the *spring* of service. That man did not know *grace*; he *feared*; he judged Christ an *austere* man; his best calculation was to come off free in the day of reckoning; the bondage of the law filled his heart, and not the liberty of the truth. He was not a Zaccheus who bore away in his soul, from the joy of communion with Jesus and the certainty of his love, a readiness to give half his goods to the poor, and a purpose to restore to any he had wronged even more than the law exacted. He was no servant. He served himself and not Christ. And so does every one who does not begin with knowing that Christ has first served him, and that his is to be the service of grateful love. *Grateful* love!—how happy the thought! Paul served in this spirit. The life that he lived he lived by "the faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave Himself for him." Grateful love! in the sense of forgiveness sealed and made sure to his soul, accounts (under the Spirit, surely,) for fruitfulness in Paul; the want of that,—ignorance and disesteem of it,—in the unprofitable servant accounts for his barrenness.

J. G. B

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COMPLETE IN CHRIST.

- Our *life* in Him can never be forfeited.
- Our *righteousness* in Him can never be tarnished.
- Our *pardon* in Him can never be reversed.
- Our *justification* in Him can never be cancelled.
- Our *acceptance* in Him can never be questioned.
- Our *peace* in Him can never be broken.
- Our *joy* in Him can never be diminished.
- Our *rest* in Him can never be disturbed.
- Our *hope* in Him can never be disappointed.
- Our *glory* in Him can never be clouded.
- Our *sun* in Him can never be darkened.
- Our *happiness* in Him can never be interrupted.
- Our *strength* in Him can never be enfeebled.
- Our *purity* in Him can never be defiled.
- Our *comeliness* in Him can never be marred.
- Our *wisdom* in Him can never be baffled.
- Our *inheritance* in Him can never be alienated.
- Our *resources* in Him can never be exhausted.

ONLY TRUST ME.

(MARK v. 36.)

Only trust Me! Do the shadows
 Darkly o'er thy pathway lie?
 Was there ever earthly shadow
 That could hide thee from Mine eye?
 Dost thou shrink, and fear, and waver?
 Look upon Mine outstretched hand,
 Waiting thro' those shades to lead thee
 Onward to a better land.

Thou art weeping o'er thy sorrows:
 Dost thou ever think on *Mine*?
 How I toiled and how I suffered,
 Bore each sin and grief of thine:
 Toiled to win the rest before thee;
 Died to give thee endless life;
 Yet thou faintest, yet thou fearest,
 When I call thee to the strife!

Only trust Me! Dost thou ask Me
 Why the way should be so rough?
 Thou wilt know the need hereafter;
 Here, My *word* must be enough.
 When I tell thee all is working
 But to make thee meet for Heaven,
 Wilt thou not accept thy portion,
 Take thy lot by wisdom given?

There's a place within My temple,
 For long ages kept for thee,
 I must fashion thee to fill it
 Thro' a bright eternity.
 From the quarry I have hewn thee,
 Ragged, hard, and sin-defiled:
 I must change, and I must cleanse thee—
 Would'st thou stay the work, my child?

Ask it not ; 'twill soon be over ;
 Then thou'lt thank Me for the pain :
 See how every pang was needed—
 Not one stroke bestowed in vain.
 Tools of earth—sharp axe and chisel
 Will have ceased their work at last ;
 Perfect to thy place I'll bring thee,
 Every tear and trial past.

Only trust Me till that hour
 When the need for trust is o'er,
 Never weary days to fret thee,
 Never sin to harm thee more ;
 Never change or pain to grieve thee,
 Friend's neglect to wring thy heart,
 But the Friend who loved thee always
 From thy side no more to part.

CAST THY BURDEN ON THE LORD.

(CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT.)

Thou who art touched with feeling of our woes,
 Let me on Thee my heavy burden cast !
 My aching, anguished heart on Thee repose,
 Leaving with Thee the sad, mysterious past ;
 Let me submissive bow and kiss the rod :
 Let me "*be still*," and know that *Thou* art God."

Why should my harassed, agitated mind
 Go round and round this terrible event ?
 Striving in vain some brighter side to find,
 Some cause why all this anguish has been sent.
 Do I indeed that sacred truth believe—
 Thou dost not "*willingly afflict*" and grieve ?

My lovely gourd is withered in an hour !
 I droop, I faint beneath the scorching sun,
 My Shepherd, lead me to some sheltering bower,
 There, where thy little flock "*lie down at noon*,"
 Though of my dearest earthly joys bereft—
 Thou art my portion still,—Thou, Thou my God art left.

TO THE LAMBS OF CHRIST'S FLOCK.

DEAR YOUNG CHRISTIANS :

I would like to call your attention to a piece of poetry in this little book called "*Only Trust Me*," and if any of the readers of it have sorrowful hearts, or are beginning to taste the waters of Marah, and shrink from their bitterness, I trust they may find the sweet comfort that I once found through it when my heart was filled with sorrow. My dear mother had been ill for a long time, and although she was growing weaker every day, yet I could not give up hope of her recovery. My constant prayer was that she might be restored to health again, and I tried to think this would be so until one day the doctor said, "She is sinking fast, and will not be with you long." I felt the truth of his words, and they fell on my heart, crushing out all hope, and filling it with bitter grief instead. As I stood looking at the pale face of my mother, so very dear to me, I felt I never could bear to part with her, and unless God answered my prayers my heart would break with sorrow. In walking across the room, my eye caught the words "*Only Trust Me*," which lay on the table, and I picked up to read that which a few days before I had copied to send to a young Christian who was an invalid. My Heavenly Father was going to teach me the lesson first. I had trusted the Lord Jesus as my Saviour, and had started to follow Him where He might lead. Now when sorrow had come, should I shrink back fearing to trust Him? Could I not get closer to Him now, and let Him lead me on through what looked so dreary in the distance? For some days the struggle went on in my heart before I could pray "My Father, if it is Thy will to take her, give me *submission* to Thee." That prayer He answered, for when He took her, I could bow to His will, feeling He knew best. Now looking back I can thank

Him for it all. Other sorrows and trials have met me since then, and in them I have learned more of the wilfulness of my own heart, more of the tender, pitying love of the Lord Jesus, and my Heavenly Father's patient grace toward me.

Now, dear young Christians, my object in writing is not merely to tell of my sorrow (it was one that is common to all, and through which perhaps some of you have passed); but my desire is, if only in a feeble way, to lead you who have trusted Jesus as your Saviour, and wish to follow Him, to keep on *simply trusting* Him as you go on; and if in order to follow Him more closely some link must be broken, some tender tie severed, and loved friends left behind who will not go with you on your wilderness journey, do not turn back, for if you do, you will lose the sound of the Shepherd's voice and miss your path; but if you keep *close* to His side, He will gently lead you on and smooth the rough places for your feet; and in whatever form sorrow or trial may meet you, take it to your Heavenly Father, and if it is not His will to remove the bitter cup, ask for *submission* to take it from His loving hand, and seek to learn the lesson, and receive the blessing He has for you in it. And if you find your feet are growing weary, and feel faint by the way, get still *closer* to the Shepherd's side, and He will throw His strong arm of love around you, and bear you on, and thus by His love and power will He keep you until you are brought through the wilderness, home to His Father's house.

E. S.

"THOU wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee : because he trusteth in Thee."

"TRUST ye in the Lord for ever : for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength (the Rock of Ages, *margin*)," Isaiah xxvi. 3, 4.

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SEVEN HINTS TO YOUNG BELIEVERS:

BELOVED IN THE LORD:

If you have been led by the Holy Ghost to own the Lord Jesus as your Saviour—to know that, for His sake, your sins have been forgiven—allow me to exhort you on one or two particulars.

1. Let HIM, not the *instrument* used for your blessing, have all the praise; for He *alone* is worthy: and His servants would be “carnal” indeed (1 Cor. iii. 1—9), if they allowed you to think of *them*, when the praise and adoration belong only to HIM.

2. You have been led to see, at least, that you, know very little of God's word: so all of us should candidly admit (1 Cor. viii. 2). Then search daily to find in the Scriptures a deeper acquaintance with the PERSON to whom you are brought. You know what the *work* has done for your *conscience*; now learn about the *Divine Object* for your *heart*. In this day of confusion and lawlessness, the saint of God needs, as ever, to be commended “to God and to the word of His grace” (Acts xx. 32.)

3. Loud talking and much disputing ill become followers of Jesus in this day. A quiet, consistent walk, in whatever relationship of life we are found, will weigh much more heavily. (1 Pet. ii. 12.)

4. Make it a habit, when you meet together, to avoid the gossip-tendency of the day. The PERSON of the Christ, as shown to faith, by the Holy Ghost, in the word, should be *the only theme*. This will exclude slander on the one hand, and *creature-worship* on the other.

5. Next to thus living consistently before your relations, persevere in prayer to God (Eph. vi. 18) for them, and watch a favorable opportunity to speak to them. This needs wisdom. (Isa. 1. 4; Prov. xv. 23.)

6. Wait on the Lord to enlarge your hearts towards unconverted persons. To such as you know, watch your opportunity to commend a good Gospel tract or book. Respecting this, you should feel it your privilege to lay by, as the Lord prospers you, for the scattering of what you believe, according to God's word, is the truth to help souls. So also, instead of wasting money on needless things, look after the poor—especially those who are the Lord's, (1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)

7. I would lastly add, that you should most earnestly find out what is the mind of the Lord respecting you in these last days. To gather round *men*—to aid in schism, would be simply to go counter to the truth in John xvii., Eph. iv., 1 Cor. xii., &c. If you are willing to *do what* is right, the Lord will make plain your path (Phil. iii. 13—21). But surely every saint of God should feel that the present condition of the Church—*God's Church* on the earth, is anything but what it was when

All were of one heart and soul,
And love to Christ inspired the whole ;

when no names, and sects, and parties severed *practically*, as to outward testimony, the "One Body."

When the Lord was here His disciples gathered round HIM. Soon after His ascension the HOLY GHOST baptized the believers into One Body (1 Cor. xii. 13), and all then, "with one accord," owned no other name but HIS. And when He comes again it will be to gather all the *saints*, from Adam's time to the moment He comes—to whom?—HIMSELF.

May our true love, in Him, be manifested by us to all whom *He* loves and who love Him. May abundant grace, mercy, and peace be yours, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours truly in Him,

C. J. DAVIS,

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THE POTTER'S BROKEN VESSEL.

JEREMIAH XVIII., XIX.

I feel and judge very distinctly that there is a special character in this present time through which we are passing. The great powers which are destined to fill out the action of Christendom's closing day, are practising themselves, each in its several sphere, with great earnestness and skill. I mean the *civil* and the *ecclesiastical*.

I do not doubt but that, for a season, the ecclesiastical will prevail. The *woman* is to *ride* again for a while—a prophetic symbol, as I believe, signifying ecclesiastical supremacy. And this present moment is marked by many efforts on the behalf of that which takes the place of the Church, or of the ecclesiastical thing, thus to exalt itself; and she is so adroitly directing those efforts, that success may speedily await them, and then the blood of the saints may flow afresh.

The *civil* power, however, is anything but idle. The wondrous advance that is making every day in the cultivation of the world, proves great skill and activity on *its* part. It is largely boasting itself, showing what it has done, and pledging what further it means to do.

At this moment each of these powers is abroad in the scene of action; and the minds of men are divided between them. In some sense they are rivals. There is the *commercial* energy, and there is the *religious* energy: the one is erecting its railroads and making its exhibitions; the other is extending its bishoprics, building its temples, multiplying its ordinances, and the like. The attention of the children of men is divided between these things; but the saint, who knows the cross of Christ as the relief of his conscience, and the reason of his separation from the world, is apart from them both.

I doubt not that the civil power will have to yield the supremacy for a time, and the woman will ride again—though her state and greatness will be but for a little; for the civil power will take offence, and remove her.

If we, in God's grace, keep a good conscience towards Christ and His truth, we may count upon it, that no inheritance in the earth is worth, as people speak, many years' purchase. If we consent to become whatever the times

would make us, of course we may go on—and that, too, advancing with an advancing world.*

I have been sensible, lately, how much the spirit of Jeremiah suits these times. He lived in the daily observation of evil. Iniquity was abounding in the scene around him, though it was called by God's name, and was indeed His place on the earth. The house of prayer had become "a den of thieves," though it still cried, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these!" He knew that the judgment of God was awaiting it all; and he looked for happy days which lay in the distance, beyond the present corruption and the approaching judgment.

Over all this *corruption* Jeremiah *mourned*; against it all he *testified*; and, like his Master, he was hated for his testimony. (John vii. 7.)

He was, however, full of faith and hope; and in the strength of that (anticipating the future) he laid out his money in the purchase of Hanameel's field. (Jer. xxxii.)

All this was beautiful: the present sorrow over the corruption of the daughter of his people—faith's certainty of the coming judgment—and hope's prospect of closing, crowning glory.

This is a pattern for our spirit. And I observe another feature of power in the prophet. He was not to be seduced from the conclusions of faith by occasional fair and promising appearances. (See ch. xxxvii.)

The Chaldean army had broken up their camp under the walls of Jerusalem, because of the arrival of the Egyptian allies. This circumstance flattered the Jewish people into hopes; but Jeremiah left the city, because he would still hold to the conclusions of faith—that Jerusalem was doomed of God in righteous judgment.

All this is a fine exhibition of a soul walking by the light of God, not merely through darkness, but through darkness which seemed to be light.

All seems to be quiet around us at present; and even more than that, things are greatly and rapidly advancing, as far as all accommodations of social life extend. But the *moral* of the scene, in the eye of faith, is more serious than ever. The apostate principles of man's heart are but ripening themselves into their most fruitful and abundant exhibition.

* I speak, simply, of things as they are in the earth. I know that at any time, independently of them, the saints may be taken up to meet the Lord in the air.

There is something of rivalry in the different powers that are in action just at present. The secular and the religious are apart, to a great extent. Each has its respective worshippers. But, ere long, confederacy will take the place of rivalry, I believe. The world must, even for its own ends, adopt religion for a time, that man's system may grow solid, as well as extended and brilliant, and propose itself as that which has earned a title to conform all and everything to itself.

Separation is the Christian's place and calling—*Church* separation—separation because of heavenly citizenship, and oneness with an already risen Christ. Abraham's separation was very peculiar; it was two-fold. He was separated from the *natural* associations of Mesopotamia, "country, kindred, and father's house," and from the *moral* associations of Canaan, or its iniquities and its idols.

In the thought of these solemn truths, beloved, may the Lord Himself be more real and near to us! May the hope of His appearing be found lying more surely and calmly in the midst of the affections and stirrings of our hearts! All was reality with Jeremiah, to whom I lately referred. The present corruption was a reality to him; for he rebuked it and bewailed it—the approaching judgment was a reality to him; for he wept at the thought of it, and deprecated it—the final glory was a reality to him; for he laid out his money upon it. He had occasional refreshments of spirit. His sleep, and the dream that accompanied it, in chap. xxxi., was, as he says, "sweet unto him." It was a moment on "the holy hill" to him; for a light from the kingdom, or the glory, visited him. He had, likewise, revelations, and he could speak and write of them. But not only as thus refreshed and gifted in spirit—he was real and true in moral power. He testified against this "present world" unto suffering, and laid out his money, his expectations and labours, on "the world to come."

It was this which completed his character—and all would have been poor without it. We may speak of Christ, and teach about the kingdom—one's own soul knows it well: but to witness for Him against the world, and to be rich towards God—this is to fill out and realize our character as saints.

We may covet these elements of the Christian character. Some of us, if one may so speak, are but *half* Jeremiahs. We

can talk of Christ; but can we *suffer* for Him? We can teach about the kingdom; but can we *lay out our money* upon it?

All this may admonish us, beloved. But I have another word on my heart, just at present also.

The parable of the potter, in Jer. xviii. xix., was designed to let Israel know that, though brought into covenant, they were still within the range and reach of the Divine judgments, and that such judgments would overtake them because of their sins.

In John Baptist's time, Israel is found in the like character of self-confidence. If in Jeremiah's day they would say, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these?"—in the Baptist's day they said, "We have Abraham to our father." But John, like Jeremiah, would again teach them that, though in covenant, judgment could reach them.

In the Lord's ministry we find the same. Israel still boasted. They talked of Abraham being their father, and of God being their Father (John viii); but we know how the Lord, again and again, warned them of the coming judgment.

All this has a lesson for our learning.

Christendom, or Babylon, has taken this ancient place of Israel. *She trusts in security in spite of unfaithfulness.* She boasts in the Lord, though her moral condition be vile. She says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow;" though blood and pride and all abominations stain her. (Rev. xviii. 7.) But Rev. xviii. is another action, like that of the prophet in the potter's house. It teaches the unfaithful one, that the doom of the broken vessel, or of the millstone cast into the sea awaits her.

This is for our learning.

God never sanctions disobedience. He did not go into the Garden of Eden to accredit Adam's sin, but to bring relief, in the way of grace, for it. So, in the Gospel; He utterly condemns sin, while delivering the sinner.

Nor does he ever commit himself to His stewards. He commits Himself to His own gifts and calling (Rom. xi. 29), but never to His stewards. They are always held responsible to Him, and disobedience works forfeiture. Christ is the only Steward that ever stood and answered for himself, in the *conditional* place: and in this respect, as in every other.

He is the moral contradiction of man. In the temptation (Matt. iv.), the devil sought to inspire the Lord with confidence in spite of disobedience. He partially cited Psalm xci., quoting the *promised security*, omitting the *required obedience*. But he was utterly defeated. The Lord, in answer, cited Deut. vi., and acted accordingly; for, in that chapter, obedience is declared to be Israel's ground of security.

In this way did Jesus keep His own blessings under Psalm xci., and His Israel's blessings under Deut. vi. But all other stewards, in their several turn and season, have failed; and Babylon's boast, which we have already listened to, is a lie.

All this may, now-a-days, be had in our remembrance seasonably: for we live at a time when Babylon is filling herself afresh with this boast, just before her overthrow, when she is to meet the doom of the millstone. (Rev. xviii. 21.)

For the boast of "the eternal city," as she calls herself, only the more awfully signalizes her for the judgment of God. It is a favorite thought with her, that, while other churches tremble for their safety, she is above such fears—she is God's city, and has His walls around her.

This is imposing. But when considered by the teaching of the word, it only the more distinctly declares what she is, and witnesses her more advanced ripeness for the judgment of God. Because this boast is defiance. It is not faith in God, but disavowal of His rights and authority. It is the denial of her subjection to Him—of her stewardship, or place of being answerable to Him and His judgment. This boast of being "the eternal city," so far identifies her with the Babylon that says, "I sit as a queen, and am no widow;" and it leaves her for the doom of the potter's vessel in the valley of the son of Hinnom, or of the millstone in the hand of the angel.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again." (Jer. xix. 11.)

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

A WORD TO THE WEARY.

ISAIAH I. 4, 5, 6.

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary : He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

Nothing can be more touching, more wonderful, than the manner in which the person and the first coming of the Lord are presented in this remarkable chapter, which requires not interpretation, but study.

Jehovah, who disposes of the heavens and the earth at His pleasure, has learnt how to speak a word in season to the weary and heavy-laden, taking the place Himself of lowliness and humiliation. We see Him, the Lord Jesus, here speaking out His heart, full of tenderness and deep sympathy. Meditating on these verses, I turn to you who are weary of life's duties and cares, and would ask you—Does it cheer you to read of such love? Have you entered, in some little measure, into the depth of these words? Shall we look at them together? They are very sweet! Are you weary? The Lord has a *special* care for *you*. Do you wake in the morning burdened? The Lord Jesus stands by your side. *He* wakes you to your day's service of work or suffering! See His look of love. See in *that* eye all that *He* is feeling for you. What a look to greet you with on first awaking! He knows all that each day will bring with it. He says : "Poor weary one, lay thy head upon My breast; be not discouraged; I will be with thee to-day; thou hast sorrows, I know them, and *I only* know all that is in them; but put Me in charge of all, and go and care for others; forget *thyself*, and think of those who are also burdened and as weary as thou art." Surely you cannot resist that look, that voice of love. Surely you will lay all which troubles *you* upon the shoulders of Him who waits to bear the whole: then, with a light step and a light heart you go to your duties, not thinking of *your trials*, but praising all the way, and you are seen in your office or your shop, or in the midst of your family, lighting the paths of *others* like a sunbeam, and bearing the burdens of *others* because you know that yours are borne for you. It is not *much* the Lord looks for; but *that*, however little, which is done to Him and for Him among His tried ones. One look, one word given by us when walking in communion with the Lord, is much to the poor wounded heart. Have we not all known how it has cheered our hearts,

when cast down, to receive even the grasp of the hand, though without a word. Some cannot *speak*; but all can show fellow-feelings. The *look* of sympathy! who has not known its power when the heart has felt sore and tried? Ye weary ones, pray to forget self, to lend your ear to the sorrows of others. Study well the Lord's ways when on earth; see what His heart was then; and thus you will learn how to reach the hearts of His tried saints. Get more acquainted with them. Speak to Him as a *friend*, learn of Him. How willing, how ready He was to give His sympathy, though He had to say, "I looked for comforters and found none."

"The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back," &c. Perhaps this may be read by some of you who are restless, wishing to go out of the path you are in, the path in which God has put you. If so, see in the verses just quoted the contrast between this perfect man and yourself. Remember that the Lord's path on earth was not one of ease before His three years of public ministry. He probably worked as a carpenter,—“Is not this the carpenter?” (Mark, vi. 3.) Think of this! It is very striking, and wondrously beautiful. He willingly did the work His Father gave him to do; and all this is recorded for our instruction and encouragement. Does it try you to be in business? Try you, perhaps, because you must come in contact with ungodly men? Do you think that He who was on earth, the Holy One, the spotless Lamb of God, knows not your sorrow in this? He smiles in the midst of a scene where *all* was contrary to Him. Must it not grieve Him to see you so unwilling to bear the trials of the path which God has marked out for you; grieve Him to see you daily shrinking from your little difficulties, and not quite willing to take up your cross, when He patiently bore “the contradiction of sinners against Himself?” Is it not that you are occupied with your own comfort, desiring ease for yourself, disturbed by that which inconveniences *you*? Instead of wishing to be *out* of your path of trial, would it not be better to look to the Lord for power and blessing *in* it? Live Christ there; and whether in your business or your home let it be seen by those who are “of the world” that you have something which they have not: a sustainment, a peace of which they know nothing. But if they see you burdened, looking sad, they will have reason to think little of your profession—of the happiness you *say* you enjoy. They will

think the Master you serve is a hard task-master, the religion you talk about a very burdensome one. Have you ever thought of this—thought that, instead of giving the world a favorable impression of Christianity, you are misrepresenting it? You do so—nay more—you dishonor Christ when the world sees you so depressed. Blessed be His name! in spite of all our failure, He has given us Himself. He calls us friends. He tells us the secrets of His heart. May we answer to this love—"Let us aim," as one has said, "at getting the near place, leaning on His breast." He will wash our feet, and He will make us fit for His service; only let us see to it that we are empty vessels, "ready for the Master's use." The time is short; soon the Lord will come. There will be no more opportunities then for serving Him amidst painful circumstances. Let us prize the present moment of wilderness service, of sharing "in . . . tribulation" and "in . . . patience." He *will* come and gather all His weary ones to Himself. He *will* give us rest. "There remaineth a rest." We *shall* cease from "our work;" but in that day shall we have the reward of "the works," especially of the "labor of love." Will any recognize us as those who helped to cheer them when fellow-pilgrims? Let no opportunity of showing love pass unimproved. Many come burdened to the meetings. Do we know what it is to care for them? Bearing them upon our hearts before the Lord when we see the trace of care; or comforting them if able with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. We own Christ as the Head of the Body, and all fulness in Him; also that from Him "the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which *every* joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Thus does Christ minister to the members of His body through the members. He has given us the living water, *in* us "a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" and He has also said, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall *flow* rivers of living water." May He grant it to us, that there shall be no hindrance in our ways, no hindrance in our hearts, to this living ministry by the Holy Ghost.

"LET NOT THE SUN GO DOWN ON THY WRATH."

HARRY GREEN and William Baker had been good friends; but it came to pass that they one day disagreed, and their disagreement rose so high that they quarrelled.

Now, as it wants two to make a quarrel, they were probably *both* a little in the wrong. There is no doubt that the dispute began by a hasty word or two spoken by Green, which did not receive from Baker "the soft answer which turneth away wrath," but rather a sharp, stinging reply which made Green wince. Then he retorted, and Baker became angry. A little gentle, quiet *explanation* would most likely have set everything straight again; but neither of the friends was in a mood to explain.

"So this is to be the end of our friendship, is it?" said William Baker bitterly, after a long-worded contention.

"That's just as it happens to suit you," answered Harry Green. "If you can't bear being spoken to, you had better find somebody else to go along with; that's all."

"I can bear being spoken to as well as you can, Green," said Baker; "but I don't like being crowed over, and I don't mean to be crowed over." And so they parted.

The worst of it was, that Green and Baker were *Christian* men. They had gone to the house of God in company, had taken "sweet counsel" together, and had shared in one another's joys and troubles. The next worst thing was, that their quarrel had been overheard by their fellow-workmen who were not Christians, and it had been good sport to them to see these two "brothers in Christ" in high dudgeon with each other.

"It is a bad job," said William Baker to himself, as he went home from work; "I never could have thought that Green would have used me so badly."

Singularly enough, these were just Harry Green's thoughts as he took his way home. "It is a bad job," thought he; "I never could have thought that Baker would have used me so badly."

Harry Green was walking in his little garden in an uncomfortable frame of mind, as he would have said. Somehow or other he could not settle himself to any thing; he could think of nothing else but this dismal quarrel. "I cannot help it," said he to himself; "I would have given any thing for it not to have happened. But if a man is so touchy, what is to be done?"

At that moment a dark cloud passed between the earth and the sun, casting its shadow and its chill over Harry's garden, causing him to look up. In a moment or two, however, the cloud had passed away, and the sun was as bright as before. It was very near setting time.

It was a happy circumstance which made Harry Green look up at the sun, for it brought a text to his mind; or rather, I should say, God's good Spirit made use of the sun and the cloud for this purpose. The text was, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil." Eph. iv. 26, 27.

The next minute, with his hat firmly fixed on his head, Harry Green was striding toward William Baker's cottage.

William Baker was sitting in his cottage, telling his wife all about the quarrel; how Green had begun it, and how ill Green had used him, and what injurious things Green had said, and how their friendship was broken to pieces; when, looking out of his window, what should meet his astonished eyes but Harry Green himself, coming right up the garden path.

"Did you ever see anything like that now, Mary?" said William to his wife. "If this does not beat everything I ever heard of! Harry has not had quarrelling enough, but must be coming to drag me into it again," groaned he, in bitterness of spirit.

"Don't quarrel with him, William," pleaded Mary, "I would not if I were you. Just tell him you don't mean to have any more words. Remember, William, what the Bible says: 'Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil.'"

Mary had not time to say more before the door opened, and in came Harry Green, holding out his hand too.

"The sun is almost down, William," said he.

In another minute they were confessing their fault one to another, and to God in humble prayer.

"And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

Thus happily ended William Baker's and Harry Green's first quarrel, and their last.

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. iv. 32.—*Selected.*

TWOFOLD REST.

"COME unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will *give* you rest." Matt. xi. 28. It is perfect grace: no restriction; no setting the Jew in the foremost seat of honour. But "Come unto Me, *all* ye that labour." Jew or Gentile, it matters not; do you labour? Are you miserable? Can you find no comfort? "Come unto Me, all ye that labour . . . and I will *give* you rest." It is without condition or qualification; if the needy but go to Him. "Come unto Me." This is the proof of the Father's drawing—that I go to Jesus. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37. "Take My *yoke* upon you and *learn* of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Matt. xi. 29, 30. Grace does not leave men to do as they list, but makes its objects desire to do the will of God. So immediately after saying "I will give you rest," He, our Lord, adds, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Mark the difference. In verse 28 it is "Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest." There it is pure, absolute grace; but, "take My *yoke* upon you . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He is saying, as it were, Now you have to *obey* Me, to be subject to Me, and the effect will be, finding rest to your souls. When the sinner goes in his wretchedness to Jesus, the Saviour gives him rest—yea, "without money, and without price." But if that soul does not *follow* on in the ways of Christ, he becomes miserable, and loses the comfort he had at first. Why? He has not taken Christ's yoke upon him. The terms on which the Lord gives rest to the sinner are, "Come unto Me," just as you are, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden." The terms on which the believer finds rest are, "Take My yoke upon you, and *learn* of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." The Lord thus secures His dignity, and keeps up His moral government over His people. They are more disturbed than any, if not subject to Christ, they can neither enjoy him nor the world. If I have got Christ, and yet am not bearing His yoke, God does not intend that I should be happy. All else is false happiness. The only true enjoyment for our souls, now that we have got Christ, depends on taking His yoke upon us, and learning of Him, bound to Him as one that we have evermore to serve and to worship.—W. K.

AN INCIDENT.

THE little four-year-old son of a clergyman in G—, strayed far away from home one summer afternoon. For about half the way he trudged happily on through the streets of the village, being diverted by the houses, carriages, and people; but, after having turned into an unfrequented road with scarcely a house for a long distance, the little fellow began to be afraid. He went on and on till the occupants of a farm house, hearing sounds of distress, looked out and saw the little wanderer coming up the yard, his hat hanging from the back of his head, the big tears rolling down his cheeks, and he crying between his sobs, "I want *somebody to take hold of my hand!*" They ran in haste to meet and comfort the frightened boy, and assured him they would take him to his home, but, while they made ready to do so, the anxious father arrived, and, too glad of heart to chide his child, conducted him back. As they went home hand in hand, the father enforced the bitter lesson of his wandering upon the dear boy, and he, penitent *enough*, could not repress his joy at such *deliverance*, and went prattling along in "*safety, certainty and enjoyment*" because his father held his hand.

Dear fellow-pilgrim, do we not see herein a picture of ourselves, when having, in an evil moment, turned our back upon our Father's house on high, we have strayed away, easily forgetting, in the busy scenes through which we passed, that we *were* straying, till by and by the loneliness and strangeness of the way began to appal us, and we longed for our Father's voice and our Saviour's presence, crying out in our fear for some one to take us by the hand? Perchance our feet have been arrested at the abode of those in sympathy with our grief and the Father's yearning love, who have proposed to help us back, but, ere it was possible, the *Father Himself*, with a void in His own heart which only *we* (amazing grace!) could fill, has come out after us, and, as He has gently led us back, has graciously enforced the bitter lessons of our wandering, while we have listened with tearful penitence, and grasped more tightly and with delight the hand which was "stretched out" for our deliverance.

God grant, that, not so much to call us to *retrace* our steps, as to *lead* us on in one undeviating course to glory, we may hear Him say, "I the Lord thy God will *hold* thy right hand, saying unto thee, *Fear not*, I will *help* thee!"—S. E. P.

THE VOICE IN THE TWILIGHT.

I was sitting alone towards the twilight,
 With spirit troubled and vexed,
 With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
 And faith that was sadly perplexed.

Some homely work I was doing
 For the child of my love and care,
 Some stitches half wearily setting,
 In the endless need of repair.

But my thoughts were about the "building,"
 The work some day to be tried ;
 And that only the gold and the silver,
 And the precious stones, should abide.

And remembering my own poor efforts,
 The wretched work I had done,
 And, even when trying most truly,
 The meagre success I had won :

"It is nothing but 'wood, hay, and stubble,'"
 I said : "it will all be burned"—
 This useless fruit of the talents
 One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
 And sometimes I *know* I have tried ;
 But I'm sure when He sees *such* building,
 He will never let it abide."

Just then, as I turned the garment,
 That no rent should be left behind,
 My eye caught an odd little bungle
 Of mending and patch-work combined.

My heart grew suddenly tender,
 And something blinded my eyes,
 With one of those sweet intuitions
 That sometimes make us so wise.

Dear child ! She wanted to help me,
 I knew 't was the best she could do ;
 But oh, what a botch she had made it—
 The gray mismatching the blue !

And yet—can you understand it?—
 With a tender smile and a tear,
 And a half-compassionate yearning,
 I felt she had grown more dear.

Then a sweet voice broke the silence,
 And the dear Lord said to me,
 "Art thou tenderer for the little child
 Than I am tender for thee?"

Then straightway I knew His meaning,
 So full of compassion and love,
 And my faith came back to its Refuge
 Like the glad returning dove.

For I thought, when the Master-Builder
 Comes down His temple to view,
 To see what rents must be mended
 And what must be builded anew,

Perhaps as He looks o'er the building
 He will bring my work to the light,
 And seeing the marring and bungling,
 And how far it all is from right,

He will feel as I felt for my darling,
 And will say, as I said for her,
 "Dear child! She wanted to help me,
 And love for me was the spur.

"And, for the true love that is in it,
 The work shall seem perfect as mine,
 And because it was willing service,
 I will crown it with plaudit divine."

And there in the deepening twilight
 I seemed to be clasping a hand,
 And to feel a great love constraining me,
 Stronger than any command.

Then I knew by the thrill of sweetness,
 'Twas the hand of the Blessed One,
 That would tenderly guide and hold me
 Till all the labor is done.

So my thoughts are nevermore gloomy,
 My faith no longer is dim,
 But my heart is strong and restful,
 And mine eyes are unto Him.

THERE IS NOTHING LIKE THE CROSS.

I LOOK around. What can I see? Heathenism, men worshipping stocks and stones; Christendom that would often disgrace a heathen; yet goodness and wisdom evidenced in the midst of it all. What can I think? All is confusion. The goodness and wisdom I see lead me in spite of me to God, and the thoughts of God confound me when I see all the evil; philosophy, poor philosophy, would justify the evil to justify God. But when I see Christ, the riddle is gone. I see perfect good in the midst of the evil, occupied with it and then suffering under it. My heart rests. I find one object that satisfies all its wants—rises above all its cravings. I have what is good in goodness itself. I see what is above evil, which was pressing on me. My heart has got rest in good, and a good which is such in the midst of and above evil, and that is what I want; and I have got relief, because I have found in that One what is power over it. But I go a little further and I get a great deal more. I follow this Blessed One from whom all have received good, and who has wrought it with unwearied patience, and I hear the shouts of a giddy multitude, and I trace the dark plans of jealous enemies, man who cannot bear good; I see high judges who cannot occupy themselves with what is despised in the world, and would quiet malice by letting it have its way, and goodness the victim of it. But a little thought leads me to see in a nearer view what man is: hatred against God and good. Oh, what a display! The truest friend denies, the nearest betrays, the weaker ones who are honest flee. Priests set to have compassion on ignorant failure, plead furiously against innocence. The judge washing his hands of condemned innocence. Goodness absolutely alone, and the world, all men, enmity, universal enmity, against it. Perfect light has brought out the darkness. Perfect love jealous hatred. Self would have its way and not have God, and the cross closes the scene as far as man is concerned. The carnal mind is enmity against God. But oh! here is what I want. Oh! where can I turn from myself? Can I set up to be better than my neighbours? No, it is myself. The sight of a rejected Christ has discovered myself to myself, the deepest recesses of my heart are laid bare, and self, horrible self, is there. But not on the cross. There is none. And the infinite love of God rises and shines in its own perfection above it all.

"IN THEE DO I PUT MY TRUST."

"ALL THE DAY LONG."

DAWNING.

"I prevented the *dawning* of the morning, and cried; I hoped in Thy word." Ps. cxix. 147.

MORNING.

"My voice shalt Thou hear in the *morning*, O Lord; in the *morning* will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Ps. v. 3.

NOON.

"Evening, morning, and at *noon*, will I pray, and cry aloud; and He shall hear my voice." Ps. lv. 17.

"ALL THE DAY."

"My tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness *all the day* long. Ps. lxxi. 24.

EVENING.

"Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the *evening* sacrifice." Ps. cxli. 2.

NIGHT.

"In the *night* His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." Ps. xlii. 8.

MIDNIGHT.

"At *midnight* I will rise to give thanks unto Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments." Ps. cxix. 62.

"From the *rising* of the sun, unto the *going down* of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised." Ps. cxiii. 3.

"REST IN THE LORD."

Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
 Peaceful be ;
 When a chastening hand restrains thee,
 It is He.
 Know His love, in full completeness,
 Fills the measure of thy weakness ;
 If He wound thy spirit sore,
 Trust Him more.

Without murmur, uncomplaining,
 In His hand
 Lay whatever things thou canst not
 Understand ;
 Though the world thy folly spurneth,
 From thy faith in pity turneth,
 Peace thy inmost soul shall fill,
 Lying still.

Like an infant, if thou thinkest
 Thou canst stand,
 Childlike, proudly pushing back
 The offered hand,
 Courage soon is changed to fear,
 Strength doth feebleness appear ;
 In His love if thou abide,
 He will guide.

Fearest sometimes that thy Father
 Hath forgot ?
 When the clouds around thee gather,
 Doubt Him not.
 Always hath the daylight broken,—
 Always hath He comfort spoken :—
 Better hath He been for years,
 Than thy fears.

Therefore, whatso'er betideth,
 Night or day,—
 Know His love for thee provideth
 Good alway.
 Crown of sorrow gladly take,
 Grateful wear it for His sake,
 Sweetly bending to His will,
 Lying still.

To His own thy Saviour giveth
 Daily strength;
 To each troubled soul that liveth,
 Peace at length.
 Weakest lambs have largest share
 Of this tender Shepherd's care;
 Ask Him not, then, 'When?' or 'How?'
 Only bow.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—JOK. xiii. 15.

BREADTH, LENGTH, DEPTH, AND HEIGHT.

(Eph. iii.)

This does not refer to the love of God, because that "*passeth* knowledge," holding us by that fact with a *closer* embrace. The other four we *may* be able to comprehend.

"*Breadth*" takes in the wonderful scope contained in the truth of the union of manhood with Deity, linking all creaturehood to God, even angels having a new and abiding link with Him for that presence in a creature's form.

"*Length*" shows the *purposes* of God, from eternity to eternity.

"*Depth*" is the cross, humility and obedience even unto *death* which this alone can measure.

"*Height*" is a risen Christ and our place in Him, showing out the whole heart of God pent up, until the eternal outflow of love could thus bear up the happy objects of it."

F. W. G.

GOD WITH HIS PEOPLE.

"Thou art with me."—PSA. xxiii. 4.

It was not the green pastures and the still waters, the rod and the staff—the prepared table, the anointed head, the overflowing cup—that caused David to sing this song of triumph, and to fear no evil when he walked through the valley of the shadow of death. These were all *gifts* of his God, good and precious, as coming from His hand in token of His love; but *God Himself* is better than all His gifts, and David's cup ran over, and his heart ran over still more when he said, "Thou art with me." The comforts of God are good, but "the God of all comfort" Himself is far more to the soul than anything that He gives or that He takes away. And to teach His people this, God often does take away earthly comforts from them—health or wealth, friends or home—and when they can no longer thank Him for these outward blessings, He draws near to them Himself, and makes them feel that they can never thank Him or praise Him enough. This was often the experience of David, and more often when he was in trouble than when he was on the throne. "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee." "How excellent is thy *loving-kindness*, O God!" "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him!" "In His favor is life."

Words like these reveal the source of the Psalmist's highest joy; the same which had strengthened his father Abraham when the Lord came unto him and said—"Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;" the same of which the Son of David Himself spoke when He said, they "shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the *Father* is with me."

Let us not rest content with hearing of this joy, and knowing that others have possessed it, not only in ancient days, but in every age of the Church. "Lo! I am with you always" is Christ's promise—a promise of inexhaustible duration—to be claimed by His Church forever, and therefore now, by ourselves, as well as by holy men of old. Let us seek to make it our own by living faith in the Promiser: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him;" and when you, my dear reader, have found out for yourself the truth of these words, you will say, like the Queen of Sheba, "Behold, the half was not told me!"

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—JOB. xiii. 15.

EIGHT.

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F. W. G.

THE SHADOW OF THE APPLE TREE.

"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."—Sons Sol. li. 3, 4.

The attitude of soul set forth in this lovely passage is one of perfect repose and complacency. It is not the attitude of one who has found a partial rest—rest for a day, a month, or a year. The soul that has really found rest in Christ has found a rest which is *divine* in its character, and *eternal* in its duration. "I sat down." Precious attitude! There is no more toil for the *sinner*. Plenty of toil for the *saint*—plenty of toil for the *servant*. There is no more labour in the brick-kilns of Pharaoh, but abundance of labour in the vineyard of Christ. The believer's labor comes *after* rest, not before it.

And, observe, it is "under His *shadow*." It is not under the shadow of my doings, my feelings, my frames, my experiences. Neither is it the shadow of ordinances, however valuable; nor of doctrines, however true; nor of institutions, however important. All these things have their proper place, and their proper value; but we had better not venture to sit down under their shadow; for, if we do, they will prove no better than Jonah's gourd, which sprang up in a night, and perished in a night. No, my reader, it must be CHRIST HIMSELF—Christ *only*—Christ *always*. It must be "I," my very self, "sat down," found my sweet repose and resting place, my shade and satisfaction, "under His shadow." Then all is right—right *now*—right *for ever*.

And, let me ask, how much shade does a soul enjoy that is resting simply in Christ? Just as much as Christ can afford. If I sit down under the shadow of a tree or a rock, I enjoy just that amount of shade which the tree or the rock can afford me. So, when the soul reposes, by faith, in the shadow of Christ, the whole question is, how much shade can HE furnish? FAITH knows the answer.

It is the happy privilege of the believer to be continually in the shade, and yet never out of the sunshine.

TREE.

NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME.

"I HAVE been wishing, yesterday and to-day, that I might see you, being cast down a little by a matter that has happened to us, and I want to be really able to say—" *that none of these things move me.*" So said a dear child of God, upon whom two of us called one evening to enquire of her welfare, and then she went on to relate the circumstances of their trouble: their horse having run away and broken the waggon, and somewhat hurt her husband, who, being an unconverted man, was feeling it hard, "just as they were getting able to pay off some of their debts," as she told us. We sought to turn our sister where we often needed turning ourselves—to "HIM who *comforteth* those that are *cast down*," and who gives the assurance that in ALL things "*He careth for us.*" "Was she assured that it had not come by chance?" as men say, was the enquiry made of her, and to this she responded brightly—"O yes indeed," "but *then*," and her face shaded with sorrow as she further said, "to think after all the Lord has done for me, that one should be put about by these things, when we know that *His hand* is ordering all for us." And so we "talked together of these things that had happened," and as we did, the "Lord Himself drew near," and gave the cheer and comfort of His love, as well as rebuke for the unbelief that doubts Him.

And now beloved, may not we enquire how is it with us, as to *these* things? Trials and difficulties beset our pathway—part of our heritage below (and how *great* a part as to "things seen") is sorrow and travail. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "All that will live godly . . . shall suffer *persecution.*" "It is given to us on the behalf of Christ, . . . to *suffer for His sake.* There is the fiery trial to try us, which we are not to count strange. Divers temptations we fall into by the way—yea, as to "*these afflictions*," we are to know that "we are *appointed thereto.*" Surely then, in view of it all, we may exclaim, who is sufficient for these things? realizing as Elijah of old, "that the journey is *too great* for us." But herein is a marvellous thing, a man of like passions with us—saved by the same grace—journeying to the same rest—learning the same lessons by the way—one in a special way partaker of afflictions—the Holy Ghost witnessing in every city that bonds and afflictions waited for him; and yet saying—"None of *these things move me.*" And now, he would take us by the hand, and lead us upon the same happy ground. "And now, brethren, I commend you to *God*, and the *word of His grace*, which is able to build you up." Acts xx. 32. May we richly realize it so for the glory of His name! AMEN.

B. C. G.

(199)

"I KNOW THEIR SORROWS."

Exodus iii. 7.

THESE words were addressed to Moses when the Lord called him from the burning bush to go and lead His people out of Egyptian bondage. "They cried," and "God heard their groaning," and "remembered His covenant." He knew their sorrows, and though at first He did not appear to hear their cry, in His own good time He sent them a deliverer.

May not we also draw comfort from these words? Suffering child of God, your Father knows *your* sorrows; and though you may think He hides His face for a season, the sun is but "behind the cloud," and thy Saviour is still the same: He changeth not.

The disciples "feared as they entered into the cloud," and so often do we. We fear and tremble at the thought of suffering for Christ; but what else are we to expect? "In the world ye shall have tribulation." And shall we tremble at a little suffering for Him who gave His life for us? *No*; rather let us "*rejoice* that we are counted worthy to suffer for His name." Unto you it is given to suffer for His sake." (Phil. i. 29.)

"Given?" By whom? By *our Father*. And "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Am I to escape the cross and gain the crown? The Lord Jesus Himself was made perfect through suffering; and shall His servants escape it? Has He not told us that the servant is not greater than His lord?

We are at *school* here; this is not our home. Our Father is training us by these very trials for our place in heaven. He sits watching over us like the refiner. "When He has tried me," says *Job*, "I shall come forth as gold." "Thou hast tried us as silver is tried." "I have refined thee," our Lord says, "but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

Suffering saint, is your heart ready to sink within you? Do you ask, Why am I called upon to pass through such *deep* waters? "Whom the Lord *loatheth* He chasteneth." He *knows* your sorrows. "He doth not afflict *from the heart*, or grieve the children of men." "His compassions fail not." He is touched with the feeling of your infirmities. Oh, what a tender heart our Jesus has!

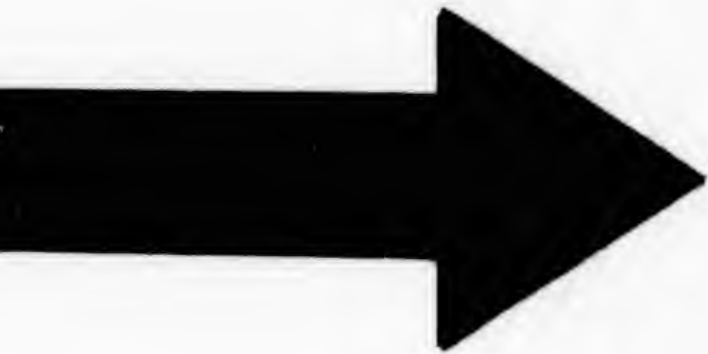
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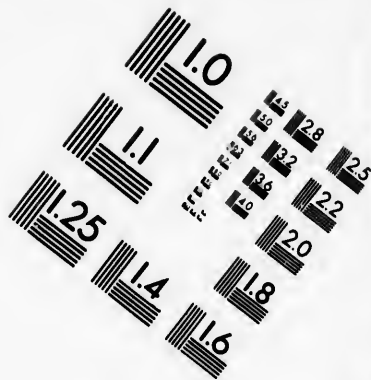
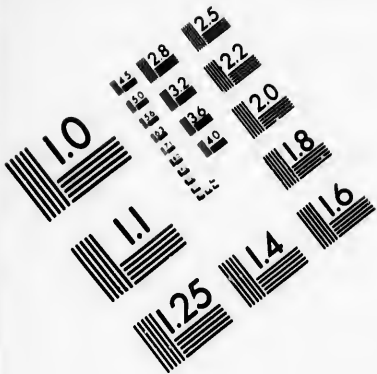
ELIJAH (2).

(I. KINGS, xviii.)

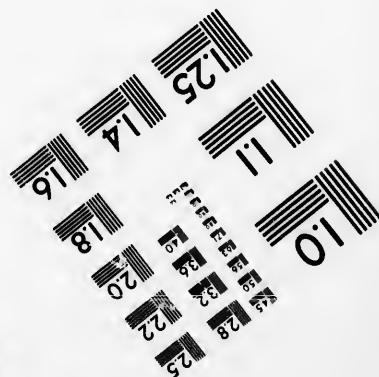
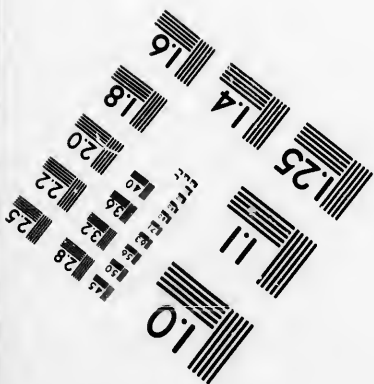
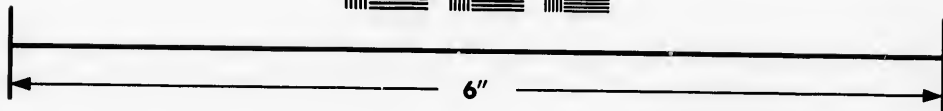
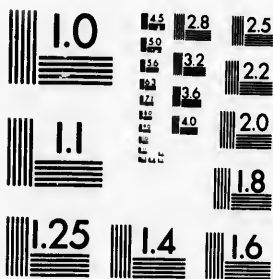
The special subject now before us is our relationship to the *world* around us,—how God wishes His people to order *their ways* with regard to the world in which they are placed. In chapter xvii. we viewed the relations of the Lord's people to the *Lord Himself*; now we are to learn the lessons suited to keep us in the path of *separation from the world* to Him. Then we viewed Elijah "*hiding himself*," now we have him "*showing himself*;"—then, in the presence of *God*,—now before *men*, and the effects of the lesson learned in that presence. We have had the *internal*, now, the *external*. There are two sides to this also,—our relations to the *world* at large, and, in a more special way, to the *people of God*. The first of these will engage our attention now. "Go, *show thyself* unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." (vs. 1). "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he *prayed* earnestly that it *would not rain*; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he *prayed again*, and the heaven gave *rain*, and the earth brought forth her fruit." Jas. v. 17, 18. I would notice that this last text comes in before Elijah had had his communications from God given him in ch. xvii. 1, and here. He had been behind the scenes with God, and viewed all in communion with Him, and so "he prayed that it might not rain." "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He *revealeth His secret* unto His servants the prophets."—Amos iii. 7. We might think it a serious thing to pray thus, but this man's heart was established in the knowledge of God's will, and right with Him, and so could do so with confidence of heart, fearless as to the results. He knew how God viewed matters, and he viewed them in exactly the same way; the language of his heart's fervent desire and the end of all his actings were "that this people may *know* that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast *turned their heart back again*." Thus he prayed *for* them in praying *against* them, and his song was of *judgment* as well as *mercy*, and yet how truly of "*mercy rejoicing against judgment*." It is a great thing when we learn to prefer *God's* feelings to our own. What we most of all need to learn is the time to *keep* and the time to *cast away*—to *embrace* and







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to *refrain* from embracing; to *love* and to *hate*, etc. If we examine our lives in the light of God's presence we shall find that we are often *sparing* many things which we ought to cut off with an unsparing hand, just as Saul with the Amalekites. (1 Sam. xv.) Elijah, having then the *secret* of his God, and in the intelligence of His mind by His word (Deut. xi. 16, 17), shuts heaven over the heads of His people till they *repent*. May God save us from this extreme discipline, giving us "to keep His commandments that our *peace* may be as a river, and our *righteousness* as the waves of the sea!"

Elijah is thus behind the scenes in chap. xvii., calling down *judgment*; in chap. xviii., calling down *blessing*. Think of a man with all the weakness of ourselves, beset with every infirmity that we know, yet who could thus prevail with God. What a man that must be! All the resources of heaven are at the command of a soul that is thus in communion with God. Does He not say that "if we ask *anything* according to His will He *heareth* us?" Does not this show that we are often out of tune with God's heart, and thus ask in vain?

Now, with all this before us, I want to draw a most solemn contrast to it. Let us view the matter closely and see whose picture it is that the inspired writer draws here. We have two distinct ones before us; one, that of a man in God's presence wielding all the power of God; another, that of a man out of communion with Him and His testimony in that hour, and thoroughly athwart the true current of the Divine will. Have we not often seen one (perhaps *oneself*) in the presence of another more spiritual, and observed that there was but little fellowship between them? Thus it is here. We find good photographs of ourselves in the Bible. We have two men before us here: Elijah, who had been in the secret training place with God, and Obadiah, in unhappy contrast with him, holding the best place in Alab's court,—a man who was trying to accommodate the name of Jehovah to the court of an idolatrous king. Such are to be found everywhere to-day; alas! if we be among them. "All these things are written for our ensamples . . . wherefore let him that *thinketh* he standeth *take heed* lest he fall." Let us seriously enquire *which* of these two men we are most like? The first three verses of our chapter give us the pictures graphically, clear cut, and well defined, and in what vivid contrast—little wonder if we say as to the one

in the sense of our own half-heartedness, "*Lord, is it I?*" The man who had been told to "*hide himself*" is now told to "*show himself.*" There is a time for each,—to be in the secret place of the Lord, and to stand out boldly for Him. Have you ever thought of the circumstances of that man when he was told to do this? Every kingdom and nation was searched for him to take his life, and now he is told to go straight to the throne that commanded it, and deliver a message from God. True it is a message of *grace*, not of judgment this time, but the last communication he had made to the king was a most solemn judgment, and this Ahab has not forgotten. But he goes in the first instance at God's bidding, without a murmur, to pronounce His *judgment*, and now he goes with the smart of that judgment still fresh to tell the king that "God is waiting to be *gracious*" notwithstanding all his failure. We like to pick and choose our spheres of service; some we like to be with and minister to, simply *because* we like them, not because they are *needed* ones, but that it is agreeable for ourselves. Not so with Elijah;—he is not seeking to feather his nest when he goes to Ahab at either time. With Elijah "*God says so*" is his *guide*, and his *stay* as well. It must be so with us also, if our ministry is to do any lasting good.

"And Ahab called Obadiah which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.)" Now the man who has got the favor of this idolatrous king is a man whom the Scripture declares "*feared the Lord greatly.*" Is this possible? Yes. Though it is indeed true that the saint is said to be "*brought up out of the horrible pit and miry clay,*" yet it is astonishing how much of the clay still sticks to us. We have a God of infinite grace and patience to do with, and it is "*of His mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.*" We see in 1 Kings how the very best of the people failed—they never kept the *Passover* for generations, neglected this and that, and worshipped at high places, and yet despite all, God blessed them. Our hearts, if we know Him at all, will proclaim Him to be the "*God of all grace.*" Let us see a similar thing in 2 Kings, xvii. 24. We read, "And the King of Assyria brought men from Babylon, etc., and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof." From verses 27, 28 we learn that they were taught to *fear the Lord.*" But *how* did they do so? We read further, "Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, . . . so they *feared*"

the Lord and served their own gods, etc." Here we see the origin of *Samaritanism*,—the religion of the poor woman who said to our Lord, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." It shows a solemn amalgamation of divine things with what is contrary to God and of the world. It shows how people who mingle things in this way swamp all their testimony as to representing God aright. He says "I am God, and there is none beside me." There is no more terrible bugbear to the world than to be *exclusive*, yet the only God whom the Bible reveals is an *exclusive God*. He says "I am *the Lord*," and that excludes every other. So if we find "Love **THE** brotherhood" in the Bible, it denies the right to the christian to belong to any other brotherhood, and yet alas! how many do. Beloved friends, let us face this matter. It has the trail of the serpent connected with it, yet this principle of mixing things everywhere obtains. This is what people call *charity*. They will give you the privilege of doing with your Master's goods what you have only a right to do with your own. If a man injures *me* personally, I have the right to forgive him, but when the *truth* of God is in question, I have no right to swerve a hair's breadth from the track He has laid down, and woe unto me if I do!

When the little captive remnant came back from Babylon they were offered help by the Samaritans. They said "We will give you a helping hand." "No," they replied, "we will serve our God *alone*." Had the Samaritans no connection with the God of Israel? They had this bond we have seen—had been taught to fear Him, but had they told the truth upon themselves they would have said they did not fear Him *enough* to give up things opposed to Him. There are many alas! like them, who want religion enough to scare away the lions, to get clear of the fear of judgment, and then be left free to enjoy the world. Such is Samaritanism. They would like to know relief from their sins, and then they would try and enjoy the world out of which our Saviour died to redeem us. May God deliver us if we have that kind of religion for ours! (Gal. i. 4; Titus ii. 14.) Thus here we have a man who puts together two things that are most incongruous—the service of wicked Ahab and the fear of God. To make up for his want of *fidelity* to God, he is a generous man, kind, amiable, and gracious. He would pay back some little interest for what he has got from God—"he feeds the prophets by

fifty in a cave." Will we say that that is not *good*? No, yet in view thereof, how pertinent are the words "To OBEY is better than sacrifice and to HEARKEN than the fat of rams." At the judgment seat of Christ all *that* will go into smoke compared with what is our simple duty. "Obey" is the first lesson of a soldier. How strikingly is this enforced in Numbers. "God says," "Number my people," *i.e.*, get them ready, and so it was. All christians are there represented in a threefold way,—*priests, Levites, and men of war, i.e.*, all christians alike have *title* to draw near into the presence of God. In Christianity there is no select priesthood. When those who may be really God's children slip into the idea of having people to do their religion for them, and that there must be a certain class to baptize and administer the sacrament, as it is called, they slip back into *Judaism*, for Peter addressing all christians says, "YE are a holy priesthood." Passing further, christians are not only priests, but Levites also to serve the tabernacle—God's interests in the world. And they are also men of war—each in his own place—the christian in three aspects. What is the next thing? We have the strange trial of *jealousy*. If we are God's priests, Levites, and men of war, we must have the bitter cup of the cross put to our lips to find us out,—self denial. Can we take up the path which requires this? I tremble as I view it, and yet I think I can truly say I earnestly desire it.

How vividly in contrast with all this is Obadiah! We can hardly tell the color or texture of his coat,—speaking in Old Testament language, where a man was commanded not to wear two sorts of thread in his clothes. The vineyard was not to be sowed with mingled *seed*, nor *garments* to be worn mingled of woollen and linen, nor *ploughing* to be done with an ox and an ass together. Lev. xix. 19. Dent. xxii. 9-11. Is God so particular about what people wear, etc.? We may depend that this is "written for *our* sakes" to arrest us by its strangeness, just as God did not first speak to Moses direct from heaven, but kindled a fire in a bush to arrest his attention, and Moses said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight." Have you ever turned aside to see what *this* means about the garment of woollen and linen, etc.? Is it not that we must not be in Ahab's court and on the Lord's side too. If we are for the Lord, let it be so plainly seen, so that none will have to puzzle himself to know whether we are or not. First, we need

to beware of mingled *seed*. What a lot of mixed seed is sown, how much more cockle than wheat—principles that govern men and reproduce their kind. Then the same lesson is enforced as to our work. “Ploughing with an ox and an ass together” is positively forbidden, and surely its lesson is not hard to read, yet all kinds of societies now mingle the Church and the world to carry on divine work. Then as to “woollen and linen” not being mixed in the garments worn, how little distinctness is now seen in the christian’s character and testimony—his life and ways! Why, we may ask, are the people of God everywhere without *assurance* of salvation? They are at the very threshold of divine blessing, and you hardly know why they are not clearly saved. Is not the reason to be found in this mingled *sowing, ploughing, and clothing*? Systems are set up everywhere on the acknowledged basis that Christianity and the world may go together hand in hand. There may be a time to wear *woollen*, but there is a distinct one in which to wear *linen*. The priest is not to wear “anything that causeth sweat”—his garments are to be “wholly of *linen* in the *inner court*.” Ezek. xlv. 17-19. Such are the Lord’s statutes for His own.

Viewing this matter *typically*, now may we see it illustrated *historically*: “And it came to pass in the third year that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel, and the king of Israel said unto his servants, ‘Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hands of the king of Syria?’ And he said to Jehoshaphat, ‘Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead?’ And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel: ‘*I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.*’” 1 Kings xxii. 2-4. What, Jehoshaphat! do you really believe that that wicked man Ahab is the same as you are? Jehoshaphat learns afterwards, under the smart of God’s rod, that he has got the mixed garment on now. He is not entirely without exercise of conscience, however, and he asks the man of God to enquire for him whether they should go against Ramoth-gilead to battle. He has given himself away, so to speak, and now he has to say a little prayer over the matter to make himself more comfortable as to it. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” is God’s command. And he is going to yoke the ox with the ass—that which should be offered to the Lord along with the unclean beast, Ahab. But it may be said, was not that a *good* work, rescuing one of the cities of refuge? Yes, but the *wrong* thing was in making alliance with a wicked king to do it. So closing up saloons, etc., may be a good work, but we should not join affinity with the unconverted for that object. What Christian would not help to get a man’s cart out of the rut, but he could not rightly join a society, yoke with the world for doing so. Where the christian is yoke with the unbeliever he always

comes off short. He may put in a feeble protest against this or that, but he has often to sit by and see the blessed name of the Lord outraged. This dear man of God, Jehoshaphat, had to see his faithful brother, Micaiah, smitten on the cheek and sent back to prison, and he could not say a word against it.—In 2 Chron. xviii. we have the same scene related, and in xix. 2, what God thought of it. “Jehu said to Jehoshaphat, shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord, therefore *wrath* is upon thee from *before the Lord*.” He has to get God’s solemn rebuke for going about it, yet what *better* object could there be than recovering a city of refuge? That Jesuitism that is to be found among Protestants says “the *end* sanctifies the *means*.” Though Jehoshaphat returned to his house in *peace*, he has to learn a little more yet. He joined with Ahaziah and made ships, and they were broken by the Lord. It may be said that he should not have joined Ahab in a professedly *religious* object, but here is a man proposing a *commercial* one. Ahab’s son proposes a good *speculation*, yet God by the prophet says to him, “Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the *Lord has broken thy works*.” 2 Chron. xx. 37. Who cares anything about this principle in business to-day? Most never think whether the man with whom they enter into a speculation is a christian or not. God will break our works if we defile His holy name by *alliance* with the world. Then we have a third thing (2 Kings iii.). He joins himself with Ahab’s grandson; this time it is not a *religious* nor a *commercial* yoke, but a *political* one. He joins with Jehoram and the king of Edom against the king of Moab, and but for the Lord’s mercy to him would have lost his life. Solemn testimony! First, he wanted to help Ahab in what he considers the work of the Lord, just as people now think it does not matter about having unconverted Sunday-school teachers, etc., when it is solemn iniquity in the sight of God. May God open our eyes to its seriousness, and give us to abhor evil from our inmost souls! It is thoroughly athwart the mind of God for His people to be thus.—He has given us more light than Israel had, and if in the days of Judaism it was wrong, so in the days of Christianity. “Be ye not *unequally yoked* together with unbelievers.” 2 Cor. vi. 14. These words speak with the voice of God to us. Should we take the sharp edge off them? We will find spiritual lawyers who will explain that the passage does not refer simply to *unconverted* people. Judas must be allowed at the Lord’s table even when manifested as the traitor,” the tares and the wheat grow together till the harvest. And true, the Scripture says they may, but *where?* in the *Church* or in the *world*? In the latter plainly as our Lord shows. A man suffers in his *field* what he would not suffer in his *house*, and so the Lord acts as to the world and the Church. The Scripture says “The time has come when judgment must begin at *the house* of God.” The doctrine is clear

then that no unequal yokes can be allowed in *Christianity*. How easily people let themselves down about this matter. They say it refers only to people coming out of heathenism, and then complain that they cannot understand the Bible. God says "*Come out*" and He will be a Father to us if we obey Him, while He is the Father of us ere He presents these chimas.—Every man then in Ahab's court is tinged with all this. Unhappy Obadiah! Hearing Ahab's voice, doing Ahab's will, and espousing Ahab's interests, searching to find water for the beasts he comes across Elijah, rather "Elijah met him." True, he "is *In the way*," but it is not the way of God's commandments, and if he meets Elijah, it is not that they seek one path, walk together as *agreed*, but a mere chance of circumstances, as it were. Do they *embrace*? Elijah tests him, and leads to great searching of heart, and it drives him to tell in vindication of himself what he has been doing. Obadiah, though the Scripture says he *knew* him, asks "Art thou that my lord Elijah?" Shows him great respect at least, we would think, but mark the withering words of Elijah in reply, "I am, go tell *thy lord*, behold Elijah is here!" He is one in such a position as regards God's testimony and interests, whom Elijah can scarcely own,—and he administers in season this solemn rebuke,—thy Lord is Ahab, the troubler of Israel, and the defier of Jehovah's claims. His reply betokens how along with "the friendship of the world, which is enmity against God"—spiritual adultery, true brotherly love and confidence in the family of God cannot exist. His heart is uneasy, and he fears Elijah's message will disturb his present easy relations with the king, and endanger his life. "Did you not hear how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave and fed them?" which, though a praiseworthy act, to Elijah meant, did you not hear that I lived at court when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord? He might have said in reply, I did not hear that you have *left* that court where Jezebel triumphed—I did not hear that you had *protested* against the iniquities practised there, which forced the Lord to feed me by ravens, while you were eating the fat of the land. You were safely sheltered there, while we had "no certain dwelling place" on account of fidelity to the truth of God. You enjoyed the king's favor, while "we both laboured and suffered reproach." But no, Elijah, in the quiet dignity that a faithful life imparts, did not reproach his failing brother, save to lay the seriousness of his position upon his soul, and leave it with God to give it effect. He assures him of personal safety, and of the living God as his own confidence in meeting Ahab that day. Beautiful exponent of the words:

*Fear Him, ye saints, and ye shall then
Have nothing else to fear,
Make you His service your delight
He'll make your wants His care.*

Beloved brethren, which path will we choose? Will we be as Obadiah or Elijah? The God of Elijah still liveth. B.C.G.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS.

1. Make it a *special* point (if possible) always to be in the place of meeting in due time. Better to be a few minutes before the time, and to spend them in secret prayer, praise, or meditation; as coming in late tends to distract the minds of those gathered. (Luke xxii. 14; 1 Cor. xiv. 40.)
2. Be occupied with "Jesus only," as He who died and rose again from the dead, who ascended, and who is coming again. Do not speak to each other except it is really needful; do not turn over the leaves of your Bible or Hymn-Book except when necessary. (1 Cor. xi. 23-26.)
3. Remember that *each* one gathered at the table either helps or hinders in blessing; therefore the need that *each* saint there be in realized fellowship with God. (1 Cor. x. 17; xi. 28.)
4. Remember that the Holy Spirit is present to guide in worship and ministry. Let the brethren see, when leading in worship and ministry, that they are in the Spirit; for only as worship and ministry are in the Spirit can they be pleasing to God, and profitable to those gathered. (John iv. 23, 24; 1 Cor. xii. 3-13; xiv. 15; Rom. viii. 8.)
5. Remember that all gathered together are in the same position as worshippers, blood-bought sinners saved by the sovereign grace of God (Eph. ii. 4, 5); but not so with regard to ministry. Some are special gifts given by Christ, the living head, for the edifying of the body; but there is also a general ministry, in which all members of the body have their place. (Eph. iv. 11-16.)
6. Any brother leading in worship or ministry should read and speak so loudly and distinctly that all present can hear well, and give due time to those gathered to find the hymn, or portion to be read, before beginning. (1 Cor. xiv. 9-12.) "Let all things be done unto edifying." (1 Cor. xiv. 26.)
7. When you miss any from the meeting, visit them if you can, and learn the reason; if in trouble, help them if possible. (1 Cor. xii. 26; Gal. vi. 1-3)
8. Take heed not to condemn or hinder a weak or young brother in the exercise of his gift, however small. Try rather to encourage and help him; but do not show love at the expense of truth: both are to be exercised together; and each member in the body has its own special place. (Rom. xiv. 10-19.)

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ath. B.C.G.

9. When gathered around the Lord's table, remember that the special object in gathering thus is to show forth the Lord's death till He come. Just in proportion as this is kept in mind will the praise, teaching, or exhortation be profitable; therefore the breaking of the bread ought not to be kept in the background, as it sometimes is. Though there is no special time appointed for the dividing of the bread and wine, yet we have the example of the Lord Himself; for He gave it a prominent place, as the special teaching in John (chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16) appears to be after the breaking of bread. (Acts ii. 42; xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 23-31.)

10. Be kind and courteous to strangers who come amongst you. Bear and forbear one with another. Love each saint for Jesus' sake. If the flesh be manifested in any one, pray for that one, speak lovingly to that one, and remember that the flesh is also in you. (Heb. xiii. 1-3; Rom. xii. 9, 10.)

11. Do not be angry if others do not show love to you; let this rather lead you to show love to them. Manifesting thus the mind of Jesus, you will enjoy His love, and draw out their love. (Rom. xii. 21; Eph. iv. 20-32.)

12. If any one offend you, be sure to take the scriptural way of dealing with that one; speak to that one personally first; go in the spirit of prayer and forgiveness; pray together over the point first, if possible. (Matt. xviii. 15-35.)

13. If you find your interest in Gospel work abating, be sure that something is wrong; go to God at once about it in prayer and supplication. (1 Tim. vi. 10, 11; 2 Tim. iv. 10; Phil. iv. 7, 7.)

14. Remember that each saint has an individual responsibility to God, and that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. (Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10.)

15. Keep the coming of the Lord Jesus continually upon your hearts. (1 Thess. iv. 14-18; Tit. ii. 13, 14; Rev. xxii. 20.)

16. Let none be brought into fellowship except with the full approval of all gathered; and, if any has not full confidence in the one proposed, mention it at the time, or to those who have the rule, and who watch for souls. (Acts ix. 26; Heb. xiii. 17.)

"NEVER LONELY."

"LONELY and weary? No, I am never lonely; Jesus is always with me, and He makes me so happy that I seldom feel weary."

Such was the reply of a poor afflicted Christian, on being asked if she were not often very lonely and very weary.

"I know but little truth," she added, "I cannot search into the deep things of God, but *Jesus* is with me, *JESUS HIMSELF*. He talks to me, He feeds me *Himself* a few words at a time as I am able to bear it, and He makes me so peaceful, so happy."

On being asked if it had been always thus with her, she replied, "Oh, no; I was very fretful when first laid on this bed; I was His child *then*, but I had not learnt to make Jesus my Friend and Companion; I tried to bear the pain myself, and used to get so lonely and wretched; but now I have Himself, *Himself!* His company, *His* presence.

Dear fellow-Christians, is there not a word for us here? Have we thus learnt to delight in *Jesus Himself!* Are we not very prone to neglect personal intercourse with Him? And is not this oftentimes one of the Lord's chief objects in laying His children by?

He desires to draw us *nearer* to Himself; to teach us to delight in *Himself* personally. Not so much in what He *has*, as in what He *is*. Not so much in the riches of grace and glory which He has bestowed upon us, as in His *own* deep and personal love to us.

Seasons of great weakness and suffering may not be seasons of much prayer or exercise of soul, but they are seasons in which we may blessedly prove the sustaining, cheering, soothing power of the love and smile of Jesus. There may be no power to read, or pray, or think; no energy for self-examination, or self-judgment, or humiliation before the Lord. This may not be *His* object in the affliction, and therefore we are incapable of such exertion, and languor and weariness oppress both mind and body, and long and weary hours roll by.

And why these hours of suffering? They *seem* but wasted time; and yet we know our Father's hand will never cause one needless tear. They *seem* so profitless. Our wonted service is neglected; our purposed schemes all come to nought; while our own souls, far from being sown or weeded, are left untended and uncared for.

But is it wasted time? Ah, no. 'Tis thus we learn our utter emptiness: our natural powers are all dried up, and worn and weary of ourselves, our very wretchedness obliges us to seek a rest in Christ Himself. 'Tis thus our Father seeks to teach us what the blessed Jesus is, and how He can sustain and cheer His weary ones.

What suffering child of God has not experienced the mighty power of His sustaining arms in times of special weakness? How heavily the time drags on, unless we have His manifested presence. But let His presence be enjoyed, His smile be felt, and quiet rests the soul.

"So safe, so calm, so satisfied,
The soul that clings to Thee."

He loves to see us nestling beneath His feathers, covered with His own Almighty warm and loving wing, satisfied with His presence, content to be soothed, and comforted and loved, nourished and cherished by Him.

It is thus we learn the exceeding tenderness of our Beloved, and prove for ourselves that if *He* is with us, cheering us with His love, even a bed of weakness and weariness may be a place of peace and joy.

May we thus learn to cleave to Jesus, not only on the couch of suffering, but amid the daily bustle and turmoil of life. We forget those precious words, "*Without me ye can do nothing,*" and therefore try to bear the burden or do the work ourselves, instead of making HIM our Friend, our Helper, our Companion.

We have no strength in ourselves. We cannot bring forth fruit alone. The Lord knows our weakness: He tells us of it, and entreats us to *abide* in Him, that His strength may be perfected in us. The flesh may be very active doing this or that, but fellowship, close personal fellowship with Christ *alone* can really make us fruitful in His ways. He knows our need, and in His rich and precious grace, He not only presents Himself to us as our Saviour, our Redeemer, but also offers to be our Guide, our Guard, our Strength.

Such is His wonderful love, that He delights to hear our voice, and loves to see our face. Such is His tender pity, that instead of being wearied and vexed with our folly and weakness, He is always ready and willing to give us a helping hand in all He bids us do. He knows our poverty and emptiness, and far from gathering where He has not straws, or demanding from us what we have no strength to do, He is always waiting with bounteous open hand to give us full supplies.

"Our never falling treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

SOON TO BE WITH JESUS.

Oh! soon to be with Jesus,
 When every pang shall cease,
 And nature's pain and weakness
 Give place to sweetest peace.

Yes, *soon* to be with Jesus,
 In you bright home of day;
 Oh! how my spirit yearneth
 To leave this house of clay.

This house so full of weakness,
 So broken down with pain—
 But *soon* no pang nor sorrow
 Shall ever come again.

Oh! soon to be with Jesus—
 Him whom my soul adores,
 Far more than earth's poor pleasures,
 Or its unbounded stores.

My strength when health is failing,
 My joy in time of grief;
 And when in trouble sinking,
 He gives me sweet relief.

My lips may lose their power
 His preciousness to tell;
 But ah! my heart is happy
 As on his grace I dwell.

Oh! soon to be with Jesus,
 Who suffered in my place;
 When I shall know the fulness
 Of His unfailing grace.

Adorable Lord Jesus,
 Who answer'd every claim,
 I know of nothing sweeter
 Than Thy most precious name.

By day when pain is racking,
 By night when sleep has flown,
 I think upon the goodness
 And grace that Thou hast shown :—

The love and sweet compassion
 Extended unto me,
 When in my wayward folly
 I wandered far from Thee.

In thankful adoration,
 My Lord, on Thee I gaze,
 And whilst I bow in worship
 My heart is filled with praise.

Through Jordan's deep dark waters
 My Lord has passed before,
 And in the path He opened
 I pass to Canaan's shore.

Oh ! soon to be with Jesus,
 The lowly one who trod
 This desert-scene, declaring
 The wondrous love of God !

In Him my soul is happy
 And *by Him* I am blest ;
 And freed from nature's weakness,
With Him I soon shall rest.

Oh ! precious Jesus, keep me,
 Still dwelling on Thy love,
 Until the happy moment
 Thou callest me above.

G. C.

Found in the wallet of a beloved brother (E. A. H.) after his
 death.
 (214)

MIGHT OF NOTHINGNESS.

"God looks for might now, not in doing, but in suffering, as one of our poets has said in prose, "*The irresistible might of nothingness*," to take scorn in a day when not only man, but Christendom has departed from God. There is no triumph so great as that of suffering, when it is God's own people who have departed. Nothing gives such power to do and to suffer, as the certainty of what the will of the Lord is. We have all, as children of God, as bright and brighter opportunities still for victory as had any who have gone before us. Oh, may we win victories! The only victory He values is one won under the shadow, and in the power of His cross." J. N. D.

"Our business is to be with Christ that our life should be *Himself*. The springs of life then in the soul are then deep—deep as God Himself; it is fed by what is pure, by what binds it so directly to Himself that everything acquires a strength which it is impossible to have otherwise. A well-nourished life thus becomes a well-filled life."

"The Christian is like a lantern; the light is *within*, but for the purpose of shining out; but dim glasses (the flesh if it interferes) will prevent the light from shining forth as it should. The treasure is in an earthen vessel, and this must be only a vessel; we must be dead, in order that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body." J. N. D.

A Christian parent was speaking "*evil* of another" in the presence of her children, who were unconverted, when one of them turned to her, and said, "And those are the people you want me to be one of?" "Oh," replied the mother, "I ought not to have spoken before you, I take that all back." "No, you cannot, Mother, you have *said* it."

Verily, "If any man offend not in *word*, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."
—Jas. iii. 2.

THE BELIEVER'S IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST.

- 1.—Crucified with Him. Gal. ii. 20.
 - 2.—Dead with Christ. Col. ii. 20.
 - 3.—Buried with Him. Rom. vi. 4.
 - 4.—Quickened together with Him. Eph. ii. 5.
 - 5.—Risen with Him. Col. iii. 1.
 - 6.—Joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17.
 - 7.—Suffer with Him (2 Tim. ii. 12.) “ “
 - 8.—Glorified together. “ “
 - 9.—Reign with Him 2 Tim. ii. 12.
 - 10.—Caught up together with Him. 1 Thess. iv. 17.
 - 11.—Ever with the Lord. “ “
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Thus God identifies the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ with Him, first at the Cross and forever afterwards—never parting company with Him! So, likewise, he is no more identified with the first Adam, having parted his company for time and eternity!—(GAL. vi. 14.)

"THOU REMAINEST."

"Thou *remainest*." Oh! how precious
 Are those words in this dark day:
 All things here are changing, fleeting,
 Bear the stamp of sad decay—
 Strangers coming—friends departing—
Thou dost ever with us stay.

Ah! how slow our hearts in learning
 That with Thee no changes are,
 That no sins of ours, nor failure,
 Thy set purposes can mar;
 But *Thy* thoughts than ours are higher
 As the heaven from earth is far.

Man's brief days will soon be numbered,
 Ended as a tale that's told,
 Earth's fair landscapes, heaven's sweet azure,
 Like a scroll together rolled—
 "They shall perish—*Thou* remainest"
 Whose outgoings are of old.

We should perish likewise, only
 We in Thee have found our part;
 And our names are graven deeply
 On Thy changeless loving heart.
Yesterday—to-day—for ever—
 Jesus!—still the same Thou art.

"*Thou remainest*." Lord, we thank Thee,
 All Thy promises are sure;
 We who know Thee, we who trust Thee,
 Find Thy mercies aye endure.
 Thou, Thyself, unmoved, abidest
 Gracious, holy, just, and pure.

"*Thou remainest*." Lord, we know Thee,
 Whom heaven's hosts adorning own
 (Once on earth the meek and lowly),
 Seated on the Father's throne;
 Thou are still the same, Lord Jesus,
 Thou the *only* changeless One! [A. E. A. S.]

CHRIST.

i. 20.

i. 20.

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"THOU REMAINEST."

"*Thou remainest*" in the turmoil,
 In the daily din and strife;
 Comes the thought like leaves of healing,
 He my *way*, my *truth*, my *life*;
 Turn we to Thee in our sorrow,
 Find in Thee relief and peace,
 Yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
 Never can resources cease.

We may mourn, Thou wilt not chide us,
 Thou hast still abundant aid;
 Well we know what'er betide us
 Is but richest blessing made.
 When the *props* we long had leant on
 Leave us, taken up by Thee,
 Nothing cheereth like remembrance,
 "*Thou remainest*" true for me.

J. M. F.

FIVE "LOOKS."

An aged Christian once said he found it necessary for his spiritual good to be constantly taking five looks . . . The first look was, "*Inward*," to "humble and prove him," and show him the evil of his heart. The second was "*Downward*," to the judgment which his sins deserved. The third, "*Upward*" to God, who alone could help or deliver, and who loved him so well that He gave His Son to die for him. The fourth, "*Backward*" to the sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary, to his own long course of unbelief, and the grace which bore with him until he was led at last to accept the offer of salvation. The fifth, "*Forward*" to the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and the presence of Jesus for ever.

Dear readers, what say you to all this?

(220)

—Labor of Love.

THE ONE SACRIFICE.

"Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."—Heb. ix. 26.

For what did Christ appear? What was the purpose of it? There were various objects in the Divine purposes to be served by Christ "coming in the flesh." But the one mentioned in the text was so immeasurably the most important, that it alone is specified. And thus it is often above every other object of Christ's advent distinguished, as when the apostle said he was determined to know, among the Corinthians, nothing save "Christ and Him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. Christ appeared for other ends; He came to declare and reveal the will of the Father; He was a great Prophet; and He came to set a holy *example* that we should follow in His steps. To these ends there are some who would confuse the coming of Christ, or make them the chief object of His appearing. But to such views the text is directly opposed, for it declares the chief purpose of Christ's appearing to be to *put away sin* by the *sacrifice* of Himself.

"To put away *sin*." By sin is here meant the *whole evil* in the world through the fall; both the nature and the consequences of sin, root and fruits, the guilt and the power; the first by the sacrifice on the cross, the second by the power of His Spirit.

He appeared to put away the *curse* of sin from the world. The world was once all glorious, as it came from the hands of the Creator, and was declared to be very good. It was sin which marred its beauty and darkened its glory. By sin death entered, and sorrow and pain and woes unnumbered—all those things included under the curse of God. Christ came to remove this curse, and already He has begun to effect it. As yet we see not all things put under Him. Sin still reigns, and death reigns. "The whole creation still groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." But as surely as Christ rose triumphant from the grave, having conquered death, so sure will be His return with mighty power, to banish the curse forever from the redeemed and glorified earth. "We, according to God's promise," (which cannot fail,) "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter iii. 13.

He appeared to put away the *condemnation* of sin also from the souls of men. All men have sinned, and upon every soul the sentence of condemnation rests. Christ came to

take away this curse, and "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 1.

He appeared to put away sin in the power of it, also, as well as its *penal consequences*. He came to destroy the *law of sin*, the *love of sin*, as well as the *consequences of sin*, its binding over to punishment. For this purpose was Christ "manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil;" his works in men's hearts, as well as in the world.

And it is here that the personal and practical end of His appearing is to be looked for by self-examination. Christ appeared to put away sin—the *practice of it in the life*, the *love of it in the heart*. If that object is being effected, then we may conclude that the condemnation and guilt of sin have also been removed; and we have assured hope of that blessedness of the "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The way by which Christ appeared to put away sin was by the *sacrifice of Himself*. It was by His becoming a curse, and bearing the wrath of God for us, that from us the curse was removed. He satisfied the claims of the law of God. He made full atonement and expiation by the sacrifice of Himself. He redeemed us by His own precious blood; His suffering, His humiliation, His death. This was the price of our ransom. And the price was of infinite value, because of His Divine nature—it was suited to our case, and satisfied justice because He was also the man; in the "likeness of sinful flesh," that sinned was satisfaction made. He was "made sin for us." "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree"—and by the shedding of His blood He offered forgiveness and mercy to sinners.

The whole Scripture is full of this truth of Christ's vicarious suffering; His dying in the room of sinners. The sacrifices slain, the scape-goat and the living bird let free while corresponding victims were killed, and multitudes of types and symbols represent this as well as the direct declaration of Scripture. "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; with His stripes we are healed." "He was made sin for us." "He suffered for our sins, to bring us to God." "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

The death of Christ, the sacrifice of Himself, is also the great motive and effectual power unto holiness, or the putting away of sin from the heart and life. Nothing but the view of Christ crucified, and that for us, can avail to over-master the tendencies of our corrupt and fallen nature. It is only when we are enabled by faith to realize, and to live in the remembrance of Christ's having appeared in the world, and for what, and how He effected His object—it is only then that we are led to walk in the fear and the love of God, "living by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us." Gal. ii. 20. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation teach us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus ii. 11-13.

ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARCTERS.—5.

ELIJAH (3).

(1 KING8 XVIII, 17-40.)

We have now to consider in *Elijah's* history what sets forth the Christian's relation to his *brethren*, having already had before us his relations to *God*, and to the *world*. The secret of God's presence we have seen is the place of the Christian's strength. The man hidden away *with God* was the man who could stand *for God*, and act out Divine principles in a world that is *away from Him*, and now we shall see him espousing God's interests among His people. "The Lord *loved* His people" and "His *faithfulness* toward them endured unto all generations" despite all their failure, and this Elijah would now bear witness to; but God had a *controversy* with them also because of their ways, and He would have them "*hear the rod* and who had appointed it," and must also openly vindicate His dealings with them for their sins, and thus, when they were humbled and cast upon His mercy, be free to display His goodness once more toward them. All this Elijah takes up on this memorable day and bears witness to; His testimony is of *mercy* and of *judgment*, "mercy that *rejoiceth* against judgment," sparing wherever it is really trusted in, and "judgment that *slumbers not*" for those who despise mercy—"judgment without mercy," which although His *strange* work and act *must* be brought to pass. First, Elijah allows the perverters of God's testimony (the prophets of Baal) to have their turn, and display their weakness, and that God is not with them, nor they with Him, and when they are wearied out with their vanities and vain appeals to a god that cannot hear nor answer, and God says "*act*," he rises in the dignity of faith to do as God has bidden, and in the confidence that "if we ask anything according to His will, He *heareth* us." Happy man! Until then he "hides his time," and "in patience possesses his soul," knowing that the battle is the Lord's, not his, and that all the issues of it are in His hand. This over, Elijah invites the people near him, to which they respond, and in the most touching and significant act witnesses "*God's* thoughts of His people," though fallen through their iniquity, and his own simple faith in regarding them thus according to *His* mind, rather than in the low estate into which they were sunken. "He *repaired* the

ALTAR of the Lord that was *broken down*, of which He had said "where I record my name I will *come* unto thee, and I will *bless* thee." Ex. xx. 24. Further, we read he "took *twelve* stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob," etc., (1 Kings, xviii. 31.) The moral bearing of this act, the principles it expressed, and the divinely given intelligence it manifested let us now consider in turning to a number of passages elsewhere. In Ex. xxviii. 9-12, 15, 21, 29, 30, we see that Aaron the High Priest stood before God as the *representative* of the people of Israel; the *whole* nation was continually before God in *two* positions: 1. Upon the *ouches* on the *shoulders* of the ephod, "engraven with the names of the children of Israel;" 2. On the *breastplate*, where were the same names of the same people, "*the beloved of the Lord.*" How suggestive of the place that God's people have still, and in a higher way, *our* representative in heaven bearing our names upon His *shoulders* and upon His *heart*! The shoulder expressing the place of *power*, "The *government* shall be upon His shoulder." Is. ix. 6. The heart, the seat of the *affections*, "Set me as a seal upon thine *heart.*" Song Sol. viii. 6. There all the saints of God are seen before Him according to all the perfection of what Christ is. And it is not once only presented to us thus in Scripture. Here were the people's names *graven* on the *ouches* and *breastplate* of the High Priest of God, and nothing could erase them from their place. To separate these from the ephod or robe that the High Priest wore was impossible without destroying the robe itself, for they were to be made as of one piece, "the two *shoulder* pieces thereof *joined* at the two edges thereof, and so it shall be *joined together.*" And two chains of pure gold at the ends (of the *ouches*) to *fasten* the wreathen chains to the *ouches*. "And they shall bind the *breastplate* by the rings thereof . . . that the *breastplate* be not *loosed* from the ephod." And the *robe* of the ephod . . . shall have a *binding* of woven work round about the hole of it . . . that it be not *rent.*" The point to which I wish to call attention is this: God has placed indissolubly the names of His people on the *shoulders* and *heart* of our High Priest, and so linked us with the *strength* and *affections* of Christ. Be it noted, He has placed *everyone* of His people there—to the very feeblest of his own, and no malice of Satan, no weakness nor failure on our part can take us from the place where He has set us. *That is where God sees us.* Next, Lev. xxiv 5 9. The *twelve* loaves of shewbread that

were "*before the Lord continually*," over which was poured "pure frankincense," were placed there afresh "Sabbath after Sabbath," expressing the abiding place the people of God had before His eyes—seen in all the value (fragrance) of what Jesus is and has done. So here again are found the same blessed truths. Can we not find a counterpart to this in the New Testament? I believe we can. By the sovereign grace of God His people are now made "one body in Christ and members one of another." Eph. iv. opens thus: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the *vocation* wherewith *ye are called*." If a man has a calling, he should be a worthy representative of that calling. Let us see what *our* calling is. "Endavouring to keep the *unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace. There is one *body* and one *Spirit*, even as ye are called in one *hope* of your calling. One *Lord*, one *faith*, one *baptism*, one *God and Father* of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. iv. 3-6.

Here are *seven* distinct unites, and *three* distinct circles. First, there is the sphere into which a man cannot possibly be introduced unless he is a *saved* person. The Spirit of God makes no mistakes. What does He do? Saves people's souls—works on them to produce repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus,—then forms us as members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones, baptizes into one body. This is independent of what man has to do. It is a work wrought *in* us, but by a power *outside* of us. True, we are responsible to Divine grace, but it is Divine grace that we receive. The Spirit of God puts us into a place that it is impossible to get out of. The Bible does not say that Christians *should be* one body,—it says that they *are*. The Spirit's taking the scattered children of God and forming them into one body is based on the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ died that they might be one. (John xi. 52; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.) Let any Christian read this honestly, and ask himself could it be that the Spirit of God, to carry out the Divine commission, should take a few of us and form into one separate company, and a few more and form them into another,—make you one kind of a Christian, and me another kind. It is a moral impossibility. Just so far as we are not led by the Spirit of God—as we love to "indulge our own sweet wills," just *so far* will we be separated from each other, and give a practical denial to the fact that God says His people are *one*. Did God make Paul one kind of

a Christian and Peter another kind? No, when the question of circumcision came up through teachers from Jerusalem, they went to *Jerusalem* to settle it. Any such thing as *independency* in the Church of God is an absolute denial of the truth of God about it. If, when the nation of Israel was ruled over by one king, God could not allow any such thought as independency, however remote,—could allow no rival to him from Dan to Beersheba; no more can God allow any such thing as the Church keeping human *testimonies*, regulated by human *principles*, and owning human *authorities*, and thus carried on without a thought of there being Divine ones, when He has laid down so clearly what He would have us do. Eph. iv. 4, states the *fact* of the one body formed by the one Spirit, and the earlier verses what *conduct* is consistent with that fact.

Again, there is a wider sphere,—“*one Lord, etc.*,” where people call Him Lord—where they profess His name, are marked off by *baptism* and a common creed—the *faith* of Christianity. Into *this* sphere a man is introduced, not by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, but by his own *profession*, which may be real or false. He can by profession put himself there, and water baptism is the outward sign or mark of it.

There is still another circle—“*all men*” connected with the universal Fatherhood of God as *Creator* and *Preserver* of all. (Compare Mal. ii. 10; Acts xvii. 29; 1 Tim. iv. 10.) Into the first circle the *Spirit* of God puts a man,—into the second he puts himself by profession, and into the third he is *born*.

It is of the first circle I wish to speak more particularly now. Christians are to *express* this fact. 1 Cor. x 16, 17. It is not to be to us as a mere cobweb of our minds, but a thing we have to *act* out. If it is to be worth a straw to us, it has to *cost* us something. “One Bread, and one Body.” In Scripture we find this Divine fact that cannot be controverted, that God Himself, based on the death and resurrection of His beloved Son, has formed, by the Spirit of God descended at Pentecost, this marvellous fact that is the wonder of angels—God forming a Church for His Son, His body and His bride—a temple for the Spirit of God to dwell in—a place to be marked by holiness in the midst of men. Is this to be something *invisible*? Men speak of the Church visible and invisible. There is no truth given by God that is not to be acted out in our daily lives. What is

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the value of having things in our heads that we have not in our hearts, and yet alas! how much it is so? God has told us to "*buy* the truth and *sell* it not." This means that we should *get* it at any cost, and that it will cost us something to *keep* it. If it costs us nothing we may question whether we are Christians at all. In John xvii. the Lord puts Himself and His disciples on one side, and the world on the other. Will we, then, in face of the facts that Jesus *died* to make us "one"—that He spent His last hours on earth *praying* that we might be "one," and shed forth His Spirit to form us into "one," deny that He ever intended such a thing? Yet people do tell us that division is of God,—that it gives an impulse to Christian work, and spurs Christians on to more zeal. It does, doubtless, the later, but to the wrong kind of zeal,—a zeal often not for *God* as much as for "*our cause*." The Apostle appeals to his brethren by the *Lord's Supper* as an emblem of the one body. "We being many are one bread and one body: *for* we are all *partakers* of that one bread" Does the Christian act this out who thinks he has *no* responsibility as to the one who sits next him at the Lord's table? Men say that Judas was at the last Supper (though that we may rightly question), and that such must be allowed there now. But were it proven, I take it that the Lord allowed the traitor to keep his place till "his sin had found him out," and made his course manifest to all,—a valuable lesson for our souls. If we allow that the Lord Jesus thus established the *principle* that it is a matter of indifference whether we sit down with His friends or His enemies, then good-bye to all attempts at true Divine order and discipline. We must make no distinction,—we must welcome demons and traitors, and not only allow them at the Lord's table but desire them there, if it is a Divine principle that it matters not with whom we sit down. There is not a vestige of truth in such a doctrine being based upon these facts. What *did* Christ do? He found a people professing His name—He finds them still. He chose from the ranks of these *disciples* twelve, and appointed them to the special place of *apostles*. He entrusted them with greater truths and gave them more distinct honors than the rest. He thus takes people upon the ground on which they put themselves. If they profess to be His *servants*, he takes them as such, and will judge them out of their own mouths. Theirs must be a deeper doom if they are found unfaithful and wicked, when He has entrusted them, and would have

been their *Saviour* as well as *Lord*. We have no right to judge of a person till *facts* prove what he is. The Lord took Judas on the ground he professed. The disciples did not suspect him as a traitor, nor was his character fairly out till the Lord Jesus banished him as "the son of perdition" to *his own place*. Thus He does not demand that we should purge out evil until we know it. Our condition is often so low that people are left among us to be as thorns in our sides, to discipline us, when if we walked nearer the Lord He would sift out the hypocrites at a very early stage, if they got among us at all. The Lord's Supper then is a practical expression of the oneness of His body. At His table, where He presides, can it be tolerated for a moment that His friends and enemies should sit there in common. Evil men may creep in *unawares*, but let us not throw the doors open to them. But "breaking the bread we break, and drinking the cup we drink" is not to affect us merely when sitting at the table, but all through the week. Those sitting at the *Lord's* table should be characterized as linked with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you there express identification with the Lord Jesus, you are thus linked with all His brethren, hence the Church of God is one, and its members must go out into the world as men and women stamped with the reality of this truth, and marked by nothing inconsistent with it. See how the truth was to affect the people of God long ago. (Reads Deut. xiii. 1-3.) What did God allow these false prophets for? To find out how much reality there was in His people's hearts. Why does He allow seducers now to "wax worse and worse"? To test people still. Let us not be discouraged on account of the difficulties. If God puts a stone in our way it is only to find out our spiritual energy. The man is not worth anything that has not *overcome* anything. The Psalmist said, "By my God have I run through a troop." Walls are nothing to the man of faith, they only *find out* what is in him. We often blame the walls as if God had not power to take us over them. Thus if a man arose to draw the people of Israel away to other gods, they were not to hearken to him. Why? Because God is an *exclusive* God. God Himself being exclusive, that is why we are to be such. When the Lion, king of the forest, speaks, let the little animals hush their voices. The people were directed to "stone with stones that he die" any one who enticed them to serve *other* gods. Now people read this, that, and the other thing—give

ear to other voices than the shepherd's, and tell us there is good in it. Who says there is *no* good in it? But did Satan ever tell a lie, in which there was not *some* truth? The hiss of the serpent never comes out, but to weaken our sense of the verity of God's blessed truth, and of the preciousness of His infinite love. See his first lie in Eden. He said to the woman, "Yea, *hath* God said, Ye shall not eat of *every* tree of the garden." He did not at first openly deny what God had said, but at last he says it would not come to pass. And thus still does he work to seduce us "from the simplicity that is in Christ." We may read about God's people as "partakers of the *heavenly calling*," and say it is a thing that cannot be realized until they get to heaven; about the *unity* of the body of Christ, and explain all that away. If we follow this plan how many truths will soon have no effect upon our souls, and we bid good-bye, then, to all realizing of the thoughts of God's heart. There are two further things to be noted in Deut. xiii. 12-16, and as to each Elijah raises a question this solemn day. It teaches us first how to treat false *teachers*. They are not to be listened to. If a man comes to your house and does not bring the *doctrine of Christ*, hold him *at the door*. But now a man may deny the eternal Sonship of Christ, His Godhead glory and Himself as the eternal fountain of all blessing for all His *people* in all *times* and *places*, and *who* cares or troubles himself about it? All these things are stabs at the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ, "wounding Him over again in the house of His friends." Are we holding as with a tight grip what God has committed to us? That is what God here laid on the hearts of His people Israel. Let not your *brother* or your *wife*—the one having your dearest affections—or your bosom friend—entice you to serve other gods. If he does so "thou shalt stone him with stones that he die." By and bye I will speak of how Christian *charity* comes in, but this is not its place. God established the principle in Israel that His people should consist of *twelve* tribes, His people, and now this principle had to be carried out with reference to a false *prophet*, an ordinary *person*, or a *city* in Israel. If God could not allow such a thought as independency in the nation of Israel, how could it be thought of in the Church of God? Yet thousands of Christians discuss it, as if it were an open question whether God's principle is independency or unity in separation from evil. Joshua vii. gives a practical instance in which this princi-

ple comes before us. God was leading His people into Canaan, and Jericho was devoted wholly to the Lord. No man was to touch a particle of it. (Josh. vi. 18.) Achan did, but was he alone wrong? No, but God had a controversy with *all* Israel. God said, "*Israel* hath sinned." Though we may not know what is wrong among us, God holds us responsible for the low moral condition that allows it there. In Acts v. we see that evil did not get in,—the power of the presence of the Lord in the midst of His people kept it out. Now how often our consciences have to be stirred up to "*put away*" the evildoer. But not only must there be the *exclusion* of positive wickedness, but also the recognition of the feeblest child of God as a member of Christ's body. We must not put up a single barrier that will exclude the feeblest child of God that is seeking to walk in holiness. Who can say that God has formed all the various associations in which His people are now found, in view of such truths as these?

Let us look at a principle of the *palmy* days of Israel—the reign of Solomon. (Reads 1 Kings viii. 22-26, 33-48). This shows us that then and even if in a far country the people of Israel were still to regard Jerusalem as their *centre*. Now may we see how a man acted in one of the *darkest* times—a time when we might expect every Divine principle to be set aside. I refer to Daniel and his conduct in relation to this very matter. (Daniel vi. 10.) The people sought some charge against him and said they could not find any,—except as regards *his God*. The king made a decree that no one should present any petition to God or man, except to himself. Daniel "*prayed as a wontime*." A Divine *principle* is established under Solomon, and now here is a man who is determined, if it is a Divine principle, to carry it out, and he looks toward the blackened ruins of Jerusalem.

(2 Chron. xv. 9, xxx. 5.) From this last passage we learn that Hezekiah was about to "*keep the passover*" which had been neglected for ages, and the proclamation was sent throughout *all* Israel, summoning the people to keep it at Jerusalem. Posts were sent with letters and "*divers of Asher, Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves*" and came there. Earlier when Judah and Benjamin wished to *fight* against the ten tribes to bring the kingdom back to Rehoboam, God said, "*No, this thing is from me*." Not of Him as its source, but *from* him in discipline. Yet what does *faith* do in the case of Hezekiah?

Holds to the fact that there are still *twelve* tribes, and sends a message to *all* Israel, inviting them to come up where God had set His name,—back to the only spot where God had authorized His people to gather. Could he confine his invitation to a small circle? No, the message must be sent to *all* Israel. His messengers may be laughed to scorn, but he can take no account of this. Israel had twelve sons, and the posts must be sent to all Israel. Later still, the prophet (Ezek. xxxvii. 15-22,) was told to take two sticks (answering doubtless to the two staves Beauty and Bands, picturing Israel's *blessing* and *union*, Zech xi. 7-14), and they were to become *one* in his hand,—Israel's hope of future restoration and blessing in their land. Paul standing before Agrippa said. "Unto which promise *our twelve tribes*, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come," Acts xxvi. 7. Who could find them but God, and the eye of faith that sees with Him? It is as if Paul had said that is God's thought about them, and I stand identified with it. James addressed "the *twelve tribes* which are scattered abroad," greeting. Thus tracing from *Eccodus* to *James* the thought of Israel consisting of twelve tribes,—when we see the prophet setting up *twelve* stones and declaring that God is "*one* and there is none beside Him," and *that* God, the God of Israel, it does not need that we have much spiritual discernment to see in it the oneness of God's people, but it does need that we have a little *heart* to walk in fidelity to the truth of it. Are there not things now that answer to Baal and Ashtaroth? The world has a thousand snares, and no snares are so subtle as those that come under the name of the Lord Himself. This is the day when "men call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter," but "what is *highly esteemed* among men is abomination in the sight of God." It is better to stand *by* God, though it forces us to stand *against* the whole world.

Now, I would give a *practical* bearing to all this, and may God help us not to shirk the truth! We have seen that *principles* established in palmy days were carried out in the darkest ones, and may the lessons for our hearts be learned by us! 1 Timothy pictures the Church of God in *order*. The first chapter gives God's *library*,—the *law*, the *gospel*, and the *faith*; second, part of the *furnishing* of the house of God,—prayers, intercessions, etc., and regulations with regard to the conduct of Christian men and women; third, the *officers* of the house of God, bishops to oversee

their spiritual wants, and deacons their temporal ones, and so on. In chapter iii. 15, Paul says, "If I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to *behave thyself* in the house of God, which is the Church, of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." How suggestive is that verse! Paul writes Timothy a book to supply the gap. How significant that it should be passed on to us! Now that the apostles are gone we are wholly dependent on the *word of God*, and by it we can stand just where Timothy stood. We have got all that is needed for our *behaviour* in "the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth," "*all Scripture, thoroughly furnishing to every good work.*" In the first epistle *some* departed from the faith in this way and that, but still the house of God itself was left unchanged. In this second epistle, of the very man who was the messenger of the Divine testimony, it is said, "all they which are in Asia be turned away from me," (i. 15.) He only tells of one man,—Onesiphorus—who was "not ashamed of his chain." Happy Onesiphorus! He was not ashamed to stand by the truth of God, though found in poor old decrepit Paul with a chain on his wrist. It is not much to stand for God in palmy days, but I tell you, brethren, it means something to be identified with God's testimony when its minister has a chain upon its wrist. Some have owned with thankfulness to God the recovery to us of the precious truths of His word which had been lost bit by bit. They owned it, and owned it heartily, and did not shrink from the absolute separation it involved. God *honored* them and thus gave them back their precious Bibles once more. When God raised up such some fifty years ago they found, so to speak, the word of God over again. True, people had it in their houses before, but how little in their hearts, as "the joy and rejoicing" of them—*the word of God's grace!* Now what are we to do? If Elijah said, "I will not recognize division, I say before you and before God that God is one and Israel are *twelve*," and stood by it, should *we* not do the same? It is wonderful to see this grasp of faith in that day. Poor idolatrous, scattered Israel! What but the eye of faith could see that they were still one to the eye and heart of God?

What do we find now? Nigh to a thousand elashing and conflicting voices all claiming to be alike right, and people would vindicate the whole of them to get along comfortably with that with which they are connected. The

Spirit of God can only make us Christians and nothing else. He does not want us to be inventing *new carts* like David. He says—back to my *word*, to my *Spirit*, and the *name* of my Son. We see that in the first days Christians had but one centre. No matter what they believed about days and meats, they gathered to the *person* of Christ. So if a person made a question of fellowship as to what I believe about baptism or the Lord's coming, I would purposely say nothing about it. They are not the centre. Suppose we take this solemn ordinance or the precious truth of the Lord's coming, and put it as our centre, requiring every person having a place in our fellowship to believe as we do about it, what have we done? Taken an ordinance or doctrine of Scripture, and put it where the Lord Jesus Christ ought to be. Suppose the Israelites had taken *any* of the cities of Israel, except Jerusalem, and made that their centre, they would have stepped down from Divine principle, wronged themselves, and dishonored God. God says "Seek not Bethel nor enter into Gilgal," etc., but "Seek ye Me and ye shall live." What can we do! Men say do you ever expect to get people to see eye to eye? I say, never, but I can mend the world by one,—I can seek the true path for myself and walk in it. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I say it is high treason against the Head of the Church to own any other name or authority but His to govern us, and yet how true of us, "*Other lords* have had *dominion* over us." There may be difficulties, but they will be such as Scripture recognizes, and the grace of God provides for. If we own the Lord Jesus as our only rallying point God will stand by us, like the people gathered to Jerusalem in the time of Haggai. Thank God for the precious sustaining of Scripture! Whenever we pass from *it*, we get into all kinds of difficulty. We see God's order broken down, but mark this too, "Nevertheless the *foundation* of God standeth sure," and "The Lord knoweth them that are His." It is not said here that *we* are to decide who are Christians and who are not. It brings the matter close home to ourselves, "Let *every one* that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19.) We thus find that Elijah's vindicating the fact of Jehovah's being the sovereign Lord of Israel is connected with the present state of things. We find now human dogmas and decrees, human anything and everything set up in defiance of the claims of our Lord Jesus Christ, all sorts of things set on foot to supplement

the presence and power of the blessed Spirit. All sorts of names are taken by God's people, as though we could find a better name than He has given us. As God has a Church on earth, then we need His help to own *it* and link with *all* His people, and not help to form any other. Let us not be trying to form a second unity. Have I to make a unity out of my five fingers? I might tie them together, but that would be *union* not unity. Suppose I object to one of them being longer than the others forming the hand. Then I would be seeking *uniformity*, and either of these principles in Divine things is but losing sight of *God's unity*. The fingers are *one* because the hand that holds them is one. God did not set us forming unities, but endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit which He has formed, and thus to stand by His truth. May we do it humbly, simply, and earnestly! God is on our side, dear brethren, if we will but be on His, and He will stand by us in whatever weakness we may be. May we own, as we never have before, that which he has given back to us of His precious word, and yield *obedience* to it more and more! May we prove worthy successors of those of whom we have read in days of old, whose stand for the truth of God involved cost and suffering, and of such known to ourselves with whom it has been likewise! "Whose *faith* follow" is Scripture's blessed and well-balanced charge as to like zeal, but such zeal as calls none "*Rabbi*," but Him who is alone our one and rightful Lord. God has a path written down for us, and we can find it if we truly *want* it, but He wants us *tested* as to *how much* it is so with us. May we disclaim all that is not of God, and take our steps humbly and firmly, content to say in view of no approval being given us by others, "Yet surely my *work* is with the Lord, and my *judgment* with my God!" And the issue of all how blessed, the man who this day in Israel *stood* for God and *honored* Him is now in turn *honored* by Him, for faith that *acts* for God *takes hold* of Him for blessing! Thus it ever is, and thus alone can "we *assure* our hearts before Him." At first, God's answer may be to us but "the *little* cloud out of the sea like a man's *hand*," yet when we have "gone again 'seven' times,"—"let *patience* have her *perfect work*," how surely will we realize "the abundance of rain" and "the hand of the Lord upon us," *guiding* us with strength, and making *our way perfect*." May the God of Elijah be realized as ours for His name's sake!

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.—Psalm xxxii. 8, 9.

UNDER the blessedness of transgression forgiven, sin covered, and iniquity not imputed, comes in a new order of guidance—the *guidance of the eye*; even the eye of Him who has "justified us freely by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus."

When it pleased Jehovah to redeem Israel out of Egypt, He Himself became their *guide*. Israel needed guidance; and Jehovah went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. He thus went before them to search out a resting place for them in the wilderness. This surely was blessed guidance—in strict keeping with the character of redemption then manifested—a shadow of far deeper reality—but it was not *intelligent* guidance. There was no communion of soul with Jehovah needed to apprehend this guidance: "The cloud of the Lord was *in the sight* of Israel throughout all their journeys."

But now the very end of redemption is to bring us into communion with the thoughts and ways of God, and such a guidance as that of Israel could not be suitable to our standing. "The servant knoweth not what his master doeth." He goes and comes at his bidding, but he knows not the reason of either. Such a character of obedience would not suit those who know the blessedness of transgression forgiven, and are thereby admitted into the very thoughts and counsels of God. "We have the mind of Christ." The obedience now suitable to the saints is *intelligent obedience*, "understanding what the will of the Lord is"—"proving His good, and perfect, and acceptable will."

How needed is communion with God, to guide the conduct of a saint! And it is for neglect of this communion that we bring much discipline on ourselves. *God will have His way with us*. But we are as the horse or mule, which have no understanding: we do not understand the will of God because we study not the guidance of His eye; we are led by circumstances, and not by the Spirit. Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. We walk in a large place, when we walk before the Lord. But how often do we turn each one his own way, and then God has His bit

and bridle for us. This He is wont to use for his *enemies*:—"Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my *bridle* in thy lips, and I will *turn thee back* by the way which thou camest." Alas! how constantly do we as His saints, to our shame be it spoken, need the bit and bridle to turn us back by the way we have come. Who is there that has not to confess, that the *right* path, which would have been readily found, had heed been given to the guidance of the eye, has been reached after much painful and humbling discipline? Amidst the manifold proofs of present conscious weakness, this appears very prominent—the little confidence which saints have of spiritual guidance in their several paths. They walk not as those consciously led of the Spirit. Among many, indeed, such guidance is not acknowledged even as a principle; *providential* guidance (if so it may be called, for providential control over circumstances, or our own waywardness, can hardly be called guidance) is alone regarded. But even where the principle of intelligent spiritual guidance is maintained as the privilege of the saint, how readily do we take hold of providential ordering as our ground of action! Hence we tread uncertainly, or we follow the steps of others: but this is walking *by sight* and *not by faith*, and arises from the habit of using our blessedness only as a shelter, and not as that which introduces us into the presence of God. It is a beautiful description of the Thessalonians, that their "work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ," was "*in the sight of God and our Father.*"

EVERY work of God is good—the Holy One in the midst of us will do no iniquity—and "all things shall work together for good to them that love Him"—even those things which at "present are not joyous but grievous," only His *time* is to be waited for, and His *way* submitted unto—that we seem not in our hearts to be displeased that He is *Lord* over us.

J. O.

"Is it any harm to let my daughters dance?" said an indulgent mother. "Take care of your daughters' *hearts*, and their *feet* will take care of themselves," was the reply, and the Scripture saith, "Keep thy *heart* with all diligence, for out of *it* are the *issues of life.*"

"CONSIDER HIM."

Art thou of the desert weary ?
 Weary of the "little while—"
 Weary of the darkness round thee,
 Weary of the night of toil ?
 Look up—consider HIM.

Art thou weary of thy sinning
 Against Him who loves thee so ?
 Weary of the ceaseless struggle
 With the flesh which drags thee low ?
 E'en then, remember HIM.

Remember Him, God's wrath enduring,
 Paying the price which thou didst owe ;
 And thus by death, thy life procuring—
 Thy joy—the purchase of His woe :
 Oh then, remember HIM.

What beauty do they see in Jesus,
 As "sitting down they watched Him there ?"
 Do they consider His perfection ?
 Alas, *they* knew not *He is fair*.
 Let *us* consider HIM.

Ah ! let us sit, and see Him bleeding,
 And as we watch, think what we were ;
 And what we are, by grace that saved us,
 And still continue watching there—
 And thus consider HIM.

Consider Him—His body broken—
 His precious blood poured out for thee ;
 Consider, in that wondrous token,
 His love—His deep, deep love for thee.
 Amazed ! consider HIM.

Consider Him—until beholding
 "Him as He is," and face to face,
 We'll learn to know His deep perfection,
 And all the fulness of His grace ;
 And *still* consider HIM

THE STAY UNSEEN.

Oh, Holy Saviour, Friend unseen !
The faint, the weak, on Thee may lean,
Help me throughout life's varying scene,
By faith to cling to Thee.

Blest with communion so divine,
Take what Thou wilt shall I repine,
When, as the branches to the vine,
My soul may cling to Thee ?

Far from her home, fatigued, oppressed,
There she has found a place of rest ;
An exile still, yet not unblest,
While she can cling to Thee.

Without a murmur I dismiss
My former dreams of earthly bliss ;
My joy, my recompense be this,
Each hour to cling to Thee.

What though the world deceitful prove,
And earthly friends and joys remove,
With patient, uncomplaining love,
Still would I cling to Thee.

Of when I seem to tread alone
Some barren waste with thorns o'ergrown,
A voice of love in gentlest tone
Whispers, "Still cling to Me."

Though faith and hope awhile be tried
I ask not, need not aught beside :
How safe, how calm, how satisfied,
The soul that clings to Thee ?

They fear not life's rough storm to brave,
Since Thou art near, and strong to save ;
Nor shudder e'en at death's dark wave,
Because they cling to Thee.

Blest is my lot, whate'er befall,
What can disturb me, who appall,
While, as my strength, my rock, my all,
Saviour, I cling to Thee ?

THE sanctification of the Church is of a very peculiar order. I read the Lord saying, "for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." This is full of meaning. He was separating Himself altogether from the world. He was leaving the earth for heaven. In that sense He was sanctifying Himself. He had always been "holy," even in the mother's womb, "the holy thing"—as holy then as He now is holy in the highest heaven. But when He said "I sanctify myself," He meant, that He was about to take a new relationship to us, to sit in heaven and draw His saints *there* to Himself.

And this constitutes the high and peculiar order of the Church's sanctification.

I ask then, can the Church help the world in its purposes and expectations? Can the Church join in schemes that set the advancement, and the beauty, and the cultivation of the world as their *end* and *hope*? How is that possible?—How could that be consistent with *her* peculiar sanctification? The saint is to labor in the earth for daily bread.—He is to learn honest trades for necessary uses—He is to befriend others in their need—do good as he is able to all, and to be ready to every good work. But how can he purpose to cultivate and advance the world? or join in the expectations of those who make the world's desirableness and beauty *their object*?

Christians may be holy in their behaviour and in their personal habits, and in the moral order and keeping of their thoughts and words, and without watchfulness in such matters we cannot be right—but Christians are not sanctified with *that peculiar sanctification that is properly theirs*, and for which Jesus laid Himself out when He said "for their sakes I sanctify myself," if they are *worldly*, or seek the cultivation and advancement of this present scene of human action.

The law demanded holiness in desires and thoughts. To be sure it did. The rules of society demand rectitude in a thousand given cases. Conscience imperiously exacts moral conduct of us. But Christ not only does all this, but looks for a sanctification in His saints of a high and peculiar order—*separation from the world because HE is in heaven.*

"I FIND a beautiful party on Mount Zion in Rev. xiv. 1. In the midst of the corruptions which in the day there anticipated are to cover the earth, that elect company are distinguished by their being *with the Lamb.*"



THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Lord Jesus, I have nought to plead
In earth beneath, or heaven above ;
But just my own exceeding *need*,
And Thy exceeding *love*.

The need will soon be past and gone,
Exceeding great, but quickly o'er,
The love unbought is all Thine own,
And lasts for evermore.



“MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE.”

O for a finely-tuned ear,
The Shepherd's voice to hear and know,
Both when it speaks distinct and clear,
And when it whispers soft and low.

O for an ear to list its calls,
When sounds it in the stormy hour;
And when its accents gently fall,
Like dew upon the fainting flower.

An ear to hear each warning word;
To hearken for each gracious tone,
And when the “stranger's” voice is heard,
To know it from the Shepherd's own.

But O! when doubts and fears shall dim
The pathway of the Shepherd's choice,
'Tis they who walk most close to Him,
Who best *can hear His guiding voice.*

'Tis they, whose path is safe from harm,
'Tis they who know the good from ill;
And strengthened by His mighty arm,
Are strong to do His holy will.

Then grant me, Lord, the listening ear,
And grant the Heaven-directed eye,—
The *faith* that waits *Thy* voice to hear,
The *love* that keeps me ever nigh.

“Oh little heart of mine! shall pain
Or sorrow make thee moan,
When all this, *God* is all for thee,
A *Father*, all thine own.”

SINCE I BELONG TO THEE.

Since I belong to Thee, my Saviour-God,
 All *must* be well, however rough my road ;
 However dark my way or prospects be,
 All, all is right, since overruled by Thee.

Feeblest of all Thy flock, Thou know'st me, Lord ;
 Helpless and weak, I stay upon Thy *word* :
 In all my weakness this is still my plea—
 That *Thou* art mine, and *I* belong to Thee.

Then come whatever may, I am secure ;
 Thy love unchanged shall to the end endure :
 Frail though I am, Thine everlasting arm
 Shall shield Thy child from every breath of harm.

Thy loving eye shall guide where'er I roam,
 Thy Holy Spirit lead me to my home ;
 Thou wilt not let Thy feeble frail one stray,
 Though dark temptations oft may crowd my way.

In sorrow's saddest hour, Thy strength my stay,
 My darkest night, Lord, Thou canst turn to day ;
 The most loved here may sometimes changeful be ;
 "Thou changest not," and "I belong to Thee."

Then may the life which now on earth I live
 Be spent for HIM who His for me did give ;
 O, make me, Lord, in all I will and do,
 Ever to keep Thy glory in my view !

And when my course is run, and fought the fight,
 Life's struggles o'er, and faith is changed to sight,
 Then all triumphant, I shall ever be
 Safe in Thy home, for I belong to Thee.

"FULNESS OF JOY," with all Thy ransom'd there,
 In Thy loved presence I shall ever share ;
 With them I'll sing the love that made us free,
 The grace that taught us we belong'd to Thee.

THE CROSS.

I.—ON MAN'S PART.

1. It was a *refusal*, and the *end* of all remedial measures, by the rejection of Christ.
2. The *close*, therefore, of the *moral* government of God, as established under the law.
3. Man taking the place of the *betray*er and murderer of Christ.
4. The *outlet* of human enmity against God.
5. The *closing* up of all *relations* with God, by death.
6. The *proof* of the world's rebellion.
7. The *new centre* on which *the issue* of all things must be tried in righteousness.
8. God forced at the cross into the place of *Judge*. The act of man has done this.

II.—ON SATAN'S PART.

1. The *masterpiece* of the devil's craft, to get Christ out of the world and put an end to Him.
2. The *concentration* of the usurper's hate against God and man.
3. The *heading up* of earthly revolt under its ring-leader, the prince of this world.
4. The *crisis* of the ways of God, with the devil.
5. The measure and *limit* of Satan's power, except to deceive the nations, and head up all things for the Antichrist.

III.—ON CHRIST'S PART.

1. The place where He *glorified* God, when He offered Himself up, through the eternal Spirit.
2. The place where He "*put away sin*" by the sacrifice of Himself.
3. By the blood of His cross He made *peace*.
4. The cross was the measure of His perfect "*obedience unto death*."
5. It was there that He brought *mercy* and *truth* together, and *righteousness* and *peace* kissed each other.
6. It *cleared* the way of all the obstructions to God's coming down in grace and blessing to sinners.
7. The place of the Son of Man's *glory*; for it was He who wrought this for God and men, and for the overthrow of Satan.
8. The fire of God's *holiness* fed there upon the fat of the sacrifice.
9. It was there the *righteous judgment* of God spent itself upon Christ as the sin offering.

IV.—ON GOD'S PART.

1. The *inlet* of Divine love to the world.
2. The *wisdom* of God, and the *power* of God to salvation, to every one that believeth.
3. The declaration that God is *just*, and the *justifier* of the ungodly, who believeth in Jesus.
4. *Righteousness* has there a near claim on God, by which *grace* can reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.
5. There God "*condemned sin in the flesh*," and by death brought it down to death, and left it in ashes.
6. It is the new "*meeting place*" between God and the believer, where sin and death and judgment are no more.
7. On the cross Christ gave up the ghost, and correspondingly God "*rent the veil*" that hid Him.
8. There, by the death of His Son, God *reconciles* us to Himself.

V.—THE CROSS BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE.

1. It was there that man was *reconciled* to his fellow, and Jew and Gentile made one.
2. It broke down the middle wall of *partition*; Christ having abolished in His flesh the enmity.
3. He made in Himself of twain *one new man*, so making peace.
4. He reconciled both unto God, in *one body*.
5. Them which were afar off, and them that were nigh, have (both) through Him *access* by one Spirit unto the Father.

VI.—THE CROSS AND THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS.

1. There the hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us, was *blotted out*.
2. He took all that was contrary to us *out of the way*, nailing it to His cross, and triumphing over them in it.
3. The shadows of things to come were superseded, and the body is of Christ.

VII.—THE CROSS OF CHRIST TO A DISCIPLE AND HIS LORD.

1. It is the only way by which he can *follow* Christ.
2. It is the power by which he *denies* himself, and goes after Him who made the path.

VIII.—THE CROSS OF CHRIST BETWEEN THE BELIEVER AND THE WORLD.

1. It is that by which *he* is separated from the world, by its own crucifixion *to him*.
2. He maintains, by his own death to the world, his part with the Christ whom the world rejected, and becomes a living witness in it to the fact of the judgment of God to be poured out upon the world which did it.—*Words of Truth*.

ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.—6.

ELIJAH (4).

(1 KINGS XIX.)

How sweet to every Christian's heart that there is not only such a thing as *saving*, but also *restoring* grace, that of the "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls," as well as of the "Saviour of the lost." Nothing we have done, or can do, can change the love of Christ! It is "everlasting love;" Jesus, having loved His own which were in the world, loved them *unto the end*." Many do not understand this, they look upon what they have already received from Him, as if they were stewards of a certain stewardship to ensure their being *finally* saved. I need not say to any well-instructed Christian that the Scripture teaches no such thing, but the contrary, that "having received abundance of *grace* and the gift of *righteousness*," we now have "access by faith into this *grace wherein we stand*." True, the word of God teaches us that *sin* is sin, and that it is *worse* in the believer than in the sinner, and will bring God's chastening hand upon him, because the former has sinned against *light* as will as *love*, that love of Christ which should "constrain us to live to Him." But if God takes me up to show me all that is *in* me, as well as all that I have *done*, His grace can only be *grace*, as He goes on from day to day to teach us, thus dealing with us on the ground of what *He* is, and not of what *we* are.

Many seem to think that God receives them according to the prayer of the prodigal, as "*hired servants*." His *first* prayer was a prayer of *self-will*; it was, let me have my fling in the world, I "desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." We will not take God's verdict of it,—will not believe Him when He tells us that "the world *passeth away* and the lust thereof," and so off we go, thinking that we can do better than our forefathers, and that we can find some lasting satisfaction where they found none. We think the *aged*, who warn us that we will become weary and disappointed with it all, have had their day, and it will be better for us.

But the *second* prayer of the prodigal is not a prayer of self-will, but *legality*, after he had "spent all," after seeking in the far country to fill the vacuum in his heart, sent into the fields to feed swine, his heart turns toward God and he

says "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: *make me as one of Thy hired servants.*'" The *practical* religion of many a Christian is *just that*. They believe that God takes them on the proposal they made *while yet* in the far country,—that they should stand in his favor on their good behaviour. Is *that* the thought we have? If so, it is plain we have never "known the *Father*" yet. Many of us were thus for years. Practically, and as to our soul's enjoyment, somewhere midway between the far country and the place where the Father said, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." Now mark! The Father goes on to say: "This my *son*"—not *servant*. If what I have just referred to is your religion, you will understand little of what we are to take up and look at now. This prayer of the prodigal is NOT *Christianity*, but the prayer of a *legal* conscience,—of an *anxious* heart,—"Take me back on any terms whatever, I will be a *hired servant*, if only I can get back." But after the Father ran and fell on our necks, would He take us back as *hired servants*? Would He have us stand on the ground of what *we* are? Though we did not get back to the Father's house on the ground of what we did, do we now help to save ourselves by what we do? We know that we do not. Do we *keep* ourselves on that ground? No. Solely through the agonies of the Son of God on the cross are we saved, and on that basis and by His power alone are we *kept*. The same grace that saved us at the *start* of our journey, now keeps us by the *way*, and that same grace will soon *present* us to Christ "glorious, without spot or wrinkle," and then, if not before, we will accord Him *all* the praise, forever. It is grace *all the way* through, and "grace begun shall *end* in glory." "The Lord will give *grace* and *glory*: no *good thing* will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. lxxxiv. 11. If the child of God sets out with a thorough consciousness of this,—that God saved him, when he was a poor, lost sinner, a sinner by nature and practice, in thought, word, and deed,—deep heartfelt repentance toward God, it is well for him and saves much painful learning of ourselves afterward. God saved me as a *lost sinner*. He took me up with the full consciousness of all that *I am*, and if for years past He has been teaching *me* lessons of my own heart which I did not know before, it has only been what *He* knew long ago, and despite which, nay, because of which, He bestowed

His grace upon me. He says, as it were, My child I have set you this lesson of learning what *you are*, and as you learn it and find yourself to be just what my Word reveals, remember, it can never undo "the riches of *My grace*." People seem to think that God has taken us up as a sort of *investment*, as if He had to find us out, instead of, as it is, that we have to find Him out, and prove that "*great* is His *faithfulness*." We turn away with thorough disgust of all that we are, as we learn it along the way; and yet *He* knew it all from the beginning ere ever He set His love upon us. All that I have to learn about myself thus tends to deepen in my soul the sense of His *infinite grace*. *Why* did He save me? Because I *needed* it, not *deserved* it, and thus God always meets me *where I am*, has *now* to meet me, as once He did when a sinner, in the same way, alone as *needing* Him, and nothing can ever touch the blessedness of His grace.

Do you remember the statement of the Psalmist, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Many do not grasp the significance of that. The ark (God's throne in Israel) represents Christ; shittimwood, His *humanity*; overlaid with gold, pictures Christ in His *Divinity*. Other things connected with it are identified with Christ. The *manna* typifies Him as "the true bread from heaven;" the tables of the law, His holy life of obedience, "I delight to do Thy will, O God." And Aaron's rod, the dead stick that brought forth almonds in a night, indicates Christ, who trod alone His path of sorrow for three and thirty years, then took upon Him the weight of our sins, suffered and died for them, and is now risen from the dead, and gone up to the right hand of God. Further, the *lid* of the ark was precisely the same *size* as the ark itself, fitted it exactly, and this was the *mercy seat*, all saying "Christ is all and in all." How many people have the *mercy-seat* too *large*, have it for everybody, even Satan himself, at last! How many again, too *small*, and they doubt and fear and hope and wonder if they ever will get to heaven, and sometimes sing with wounded spirits,

"Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I His, or am I not?"

Shame on us to be thus, when God has proclaimed "*eternal redemption*" through His beloved Son! Let us then put the lid upon the ark, fellow-Christian, of God's size and

see what it indicates! If we lift it off all is *judgment*; the manna, laid up as a witness that they had "despised angels' food;" the tables of the covenant, God's broken laws; and Aaron's rod, that they had despised God's leadership. What can be done but cover up those sins with the golden lid, the "mercy seat" and "blood of sprinkling"? Whenever that lid was lifted, curses issued forth, and thousands of the people died. What are many doing now? Taking the lid off the ark and peering in, or else raking over as with a muck-rake the wretchedness of their own hearts, trying to find a jewel where God cannot find it. Let us believe God's verdict about it all—"No good thing," and thank God, there is another place to look. If our hearts can never be trusted, *where* can we turn? We can turn to Christ and say, "Lord Jesus, we rest in what *Thou art*, not in what *we are*."

Linking all this with our Scripture, we can see the blessed basis of God's ways with His servant Elijah. Having already seen, in him, our true path in relation to the world at large and to the people of God, we have now to learn what is alas! true of every soul of us, who has ever turned from Christ, and who of us alas! has not—that "no flesh" can glory in God's presence, and "he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." How often have we forfeited our sweet place on the bosom of our Saviour, and put our heads on the lap of this poor Delilah world! As God now sees us, we are each, either enjoying sweet *communion* with Him, or departing from His ways. Oh, let us rather believe Him as to ourselves and the world around us, and take the infinite comfort He offers us, instead of thus "piercing ourselves through with many sorrows"! If you, reader, do not know what this word means, alas, I can say for one, I do, and as one who has known a little of it, I present it to save others from the agony caused by wandering from the Lord Jesus Christ. We could scarcely conceive that Elijah, who had faced 450 prophets of Baal and all the people, and their wicked king, and *the whole nation*, a lone man in the name and might of Jehovah His God, *could* thus fail. But there is never a day so dangerous as the day of *victory*. The lesson we have to learn is, "Take unto you the *whole* armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having *done all, to stand*." How many a one who has truly stood for God in the most trying circumstances, has heard Satan saying to him the next moment—How well you did it! So off go the breastplate of righteousness, and the

shield of faith; and the same Christian, who had stood unflinchingly face to face with the enemy amid severest trials, falls a prey to the smallest temptation that comes along. *With Christ we are strong to overcome all things,—without Christ we are weaker than “water spilled upon the ground that cannot be gathered up again.”*

Very pleasant was the scene on the Mount of *transfiguration*. It was a wonderful, though strange thing to a Jew to see men going right into the full blaze of the Lord's glory, and so Peter proposed that they should tabernacle that glory, and so always keep it. So we often put our arms around our joy and blessing, and hug *it* instead of our Saviour. Then He has to take things from us to get us back to *Himself*. Blessing thus is often proved dangerous to the soul.

So with *Jonah* and his *gourd*; selfishly enjoying *it*, he was waiting to see a whole city cut off, even wished it might be done, would rather see it so and save his credit, than have God's grace displayed in saving a repentant city!

Let us learn our lessons *at Thy feet*, Lord Jesus, rather than have them taught us before the world in *wandering* from Thee! be our constant prayer. We have to learn that “no *flesh*” can glory in God's presence, and that, in the *saint*, it is as hateful to God as in the *sinner*. Many Christians think that when they are born again the eradication of their evil nature commences. True, they get a *new nature* then, but how is it that evil still exists in them and to the very end, if conversion were the eradication of evil from their old nature, or of it from them? Scripture never tells us so, but shows that when a true child of God had been taken up to the third heaven, he needed a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble afterward, and if Paul needed such, how much more we? Such is the *flesh*. It crucified the Son of God, and will be proud of being in the third heaven when it has come out of it. The only thing to do with it is to have *no confidence* in it. Lord, teach us well this needed lesson!

Some German theologians have a word about the *flesh* that I do not believe at all. It means some little bit of good in it, that the gospel hooks on to and brings man up to God. Trying to improve the *flesh* is like a farmer going round his field, and expecting by going round it to improve it, instead of by tilling it. “Circumcise your *hearts*,” “Break up your fallow-ground,” the Lord says, and until His plough-share of truth goes into the soul, and the precious seed of the Word enters it, there can be absolutely nothing of fruit

for Him. When we are begotten unto a new life, there are two diverse and opposite things found in us, two entirely distinct and opposite natures—like the clean and unclean in Noah's ark. Noah was a *saved* man, but he had clean and unclean beasts in the ark with him. He has to learn to distinguish things that differ—"to discern both good and evil"—to take forth the precious from the vile, to learn to keep the *raven* in, and let the *dove* out alone. How often we do as Noah did—let out the wrong bird! The raven (our old nature) can be quite content without Christ. We never read that Noah's raven came back to the ark, but the dove did again and again. We can safely let our new nature out,—it will always come back to Christ.

Elijah had gained a victory, but now he unbuckles his armour, becomes unwatchful, loses sight of God being for him, sees danger and he flees for his life.

So we read of David that he slew his tens of thousands, but after all he says, "I will surely perish one day," and he runs off to the Philistines for protection from Saul.

There are no depths to which a Christian cannot descend if he gets away from Christ. We are not told that Elijah did go to grievous depths,—but he went away from the place where God had placed him. He left the place where he had learned his lesson of dependence upon God, and the sphere of his testimony in idolatrous Israel. He wishes to die and have done with it—would rather die than have his will broken. It is often so with us. But God says, as then to him, that He will keep us here a little longer to learn further lessons of His grace, be more to His glory, and that we may receive more honors at His gracious hands, and then will receive us home. Before whom does Elijah stand to-day? Not before the living God, as previously, but before Jezebel. "When he saw *that* (Jezebel's threat,) he arose, etc." Show me a child of God in the presence of God, and you show me one that can stand before and against the whole world,—but out of that presence who will stumble over a straw. He may have overcome the Wicked One yesterday, but this morning he has no appetite for the word of God, and he goes forth to take his chances against the enemy, and poor chances alas! we each know they are. Satan keeps a sharp look out for those prayerless mornings of ours. That was his first subtilty with Elijah? Change your circumstances, He says, and would you not like to have that crook taken out of your lot? You did not thank God for those trials

that were the best thing for you. You think that if you had a little better house or business, better servants or easier circumstances, you could serve God better. Satan tells Elijah to go over to Beersheba, a place of hallowed memories truly, but not the place of God's will for Elijah at this time. Off I have gone thus—many a time. You think that if you could just get out of this trouble, what blessing you would have. Elijah leaves Israel, the land of idolatry, and goes to *Judah*, and of *Judah* we read "he yet ruleth with God and is faithful with the saints." Hosea xi. 12. This presents happier or more desirable circumstances to surround one. He thinks he can be happier if things were different. But no, he carries the secret of his trouble with him,—he is out of communion with God. You may change your circumstances, but unless your soul is in communion with the Lord, the root that bears gall and wormwood goes along wherever you may go. Satan's desire was to take Elijah away from where he was a little candle of the Lord's grace, amid the darkness surrounding him in Israel. Where is the best place for a street lamp to be but on the dark street corner? Not much credit to us if we can shine in meetings, but God wants Christians that are like street lamps. The city fathers know that the best place to put them is not all together in the city square—so God knows best where to put His lamps, and He wants us to be as friendly beacon lights to show others the way to heaven.

But what about this place to which Elijah went? *Beersheba* is in the extreme south of *Judah*. Abraham, his father, had lived there,—so also Isaac and Jacob. Its origin we read in Genesis xxi 31-33. How I longed, when a young Christian, to go to the land of Palestine, that land of hallowed spots and memories of by-gone days, and too often for less than that! But I can have it all a good deal nearer, and in a better way by having the presence of the Saviour with me *where I am*. Just as I am, if where God has placed me, the Lord Jesus can change the darkest things on earth to the brightest beauties of heaven. Isaac was not troubled with the Philistines when he went to Beersheba. (Genesis xxvi. 23, 25.) Jacob had lived there too. (Genesis xxviii. 10.) Doubtless Elijah thought comfort would flow to him there also. God knowing His people's tendencies has said, "Pass not to *Beersheba*, but seek ye ME. (Amos, v. 5.) Often when a Christian hears of one whom the Lord has blessed in preaching the Gospel, he thinks how he would like

to be a preacher too. But the "ministry of the Word" is a thing that needs a wonderful balance to keep a man's soul right with God. Don't envy preachers, but thank God that you are *where* you are, and *what* you are, and that He has said "His grace is sufficient for you." If God has set you in Israel, don't go to Beersheba, (Amos v. 5, 8.) Elijah's mistake was that he sought easier circumstances,—he left Israel for more favored Judah that yet was faithful with God, but alas! to what result? I never loved the Word of God so much as when I got all that I could of it with my pocket Testament placed under my breakfast plate. I then thought that if I had *hours* of leisure I would use every moment in studying the Word. But I found that I needed grace to use those hours whenever possessed, or else they would be of no use to me, but rather be used of Satan to lead me *from*, not *to* it. But this was not Elijah's only mistake. He has been like the mariners in *Acts*. We read there that "the south wind blew softly after they left Crete, and thinking they had obtained their purpose, they loosed thence and left harbor." The south wind blew softly after Elijah. If the Lord had asked him, Elijah, are you any happier now, what would have been his answer? No, Lord! Next, he leaves his servant, seeks isolation, to get away from everyone, quit of all but himself. Have you not found it so? You have thought that if you could get away from everybody, you would be happier, but you have found your mistake, and that you would have to get away from *yourself* to be so, for that is the most trouble to us. But Divine grace meets us *where* we are. If we do not realize it sufficiently to walk, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," with the most trying of our brethren, we have yet to learn one of the most serious lessons of our lives. Not only do we need to know that Christ is our "light and salvation," but "the *strength* of our life." May He grant us to know Him so!

Elijah walks over thirty miles, "a *day's* journey into the wilderness," to get away from everybody, and what is the result? That "he requested for himself that he might *die*." It would seem from his words that he had some intimation of his being *translated*, as in asking it he gives as a reason, "for I am *not better* than my fathers." He will give up the blessedness of going home to heaven without dying in order to miss a little of the roughness of the road, ere it be fulfilled! So, our Lord is coming, and would we not like to be found among those that are "*alive and remain*" when he does,—

looking for Him as those that watch for the morning? Yet, how many of us at times, though knowing this "blessed hope" would rather die and go home, being "discouraged because of the way." So Elijah will rather die and have done with it than have his stubborn will broken, and then be taken away without "tasting death." Poor, disconsolate servant of God, more bitter in soul than the juniper tree whose shadow He sits beneath! Alas! may we not say, "what is *man* that Thou (Lord) art mindful of Him?" A servant of the Lord once said to me, God wants to bless you, to get at your heart and fill it with Himself, but to do so, He has to break down your *will*, and then he can fill you to eternal satisfaction with His Son. *I have proved it thus.* We may fight against it almost every step of the way, and when some trial befalls us, begin to fret and chafe, and wish we were out of it, and yet all the while God is waiting patiently with His hand full of blessing for us, but we alas! like pert children are questioning our Father's ways, and thus so little realize His love. Sometimes, after half a life-time, He gives us blessings, which He would have given us long before, if we had only been ready to receive them. But the Lord is not an idle spectator of His people's sorrows. "In all *their* afflictions, *He* is afflicted." As Elijah lay there, "sleeping for sorrow," an angel touched him and said unto him, "*Arise and eat.*" God says, as it were, "Elijah, I have been mindful of you, caring for you, and providing for your need—you have walked so far to get away from all, how much better, my child, to walk along *with me!* Thus is it we have the choice of walking *with him* in *His* path, or having Him go after us in *ours*. He will have us back to His side again in communion with Himself if it costs us the breaking of our bones, or the cutting off of our lives. As His word shows, He has one thought in His heart concerning us, that "we should be *conformed* to the image of His Son," and nothing can turn Him from it.

Elijah eats his cake and drinks the water (strength and refreshment), and lies down again, apparently unblessed; sulky and out of sorts with all *around* because unhappy *within*, he yields no response to the grace that thus ministers to him. But the Lord, by His angel, comes *again*—He *means* the love that He expresses, and *must* "win the day," for once His mighty love had won the *rebel's* heart, and now must again the *wunderer's*. He says, My child, I am thinking of all you need, trust me, and be happy,—"*Arise and eat, because the*

journey is too great for thee. Elijah is trying to carry all the load himself, and forgetting that he is not sent on a "journey at his *own cost*, or a warfare at his *own charges*." We have each to learn that we can no more carry our daily *cares*, than we could once the whole weight of all our *sins*. Our Lord says to us, The journey is too great for *you*, trust *me* when you learn you cannot trust yourself, and "all is well."

Next Elijah sets right off, forty day's journey, (about 1400 miles) is *tested* fully by the path as the number *forty* would suggest to us, but alas! *whither bound?* Straight from the presence of the blessed God, and the enjoyment of His sweet and soul restoring *grace*, the tender love that took account of his need and weakness,—off to Horeb. "The mount of *God*," 'tis true, but not as the "God of all grace," but as a "consuming fire." But just *so far* God goes to get him back again. Horeb is one of the names of Mount Sinai, the place where *law* was given. (Mal. iv 4.) There Elijah "child of grace," though he is, has strayed, and how sad the picture—"fall *u* from *grace*," "entangled again with the yoke of *bondage*"! So a Christian may "fall from grace" as to his heart's *enjoyment* of that grace,—his *state*, though NEVER as to God's heart,—his *standing*; that he abides in forever, for the "*gifts* and *calling* of God are *without repentance*." It never means in the Word of God such a thing as a Christian being *lost*, but that he has stepped down from communion with God and the enjoyment of His grace, to the ground of what he can do himself, and thus "the yoke of *bondage*," as to his daily path and walking with the Son. One need not commit any grievous sin to "fall from grace," but simply neglect communion and "standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." But the man who has done so is not a *lost* sinner, but a Christian who does not *enjoy* God's grace wherein he stands.

Well, here Elijah is found, and the mountain (Sinai) thunders over again, and there is "the great and strong *wind*, the *earthquake* and *fire*." But after all these, "the still small voice," and therein, the tender pleadings of the "God of all grace," saying, as were, "Welcome back to me, my child." "*What doest thou here?*" My child, come back to my side again, nothing will suit you but *My grace*, here is no place for you. Elijah then wraps his face in his mantle, and tells his sad plaint of "They," "I," and "My," but nought of "*Thou*, Lord." We have the whole thing gone over in Rom. vii., the practical experience of the badness of self; and many alas! may talk glibly of being through and

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out of it, who have never bottomed its depths yet. Elijah says to the Lord, "*Even I only* am left" and sad enough for his heart, and ours as well, when the whole vision before our souls has fallen down to that. Nobody left but he, he says, and he is going to blot out his little light and testimony for God at the Mount of *bowlage*. May God deliver us from this spirit! None are in more danger of it than we are, to whom God has committed so much in His grace; may He keep us from saying in our hearts and lives, "We are the *people*, and *wisdom* shall die with us;" "The temple of the Lord are we." God has His children, equally dear to Him as we are, all round us everywhere, and many of them far more devoted to Him, and less "uplifted in heart." Let us not forget that these are His estimates, whose "eyes are like flames of fire, and tries the reins and heart:"—"The rest in Thyatira," and "I have a few names in Sardis that have *not defiled* their garments." Let us not trust being in a right *path* to keep us in a right *state*, but see that our *practice* as well as *position* is cared for, and suited to God, for both are needed. Gideon in his last days, while caring for union in Israel, went back to idolatry; he did not watch and keep right in his state, and our case will be like his unless we do so. Nothing but abiding personal confidence with God will keep us safely.

The Lord restores His servant, and says, as it were, Elijah, I will *trust* you still, and lift you up and comfort your heart, surpassing your hopes and disappointing all your fears—I have yet a little work for you to do ere I call you hence, "Go and anoint Hazeel, &c." Wonder-working gracious God! If "glorious in holiness and fearful in praises," yet is He "very *pitiful* and full of *tender mercy*." "Meting out the heavens with a span, and holding the waters in the hollow of His hand," yet "He gathers the lambs in his *bosom* and *gently* leads those that are with young." (Isaiah xl.) How beautifully the Psalmist tells it (Ps. xxxvi.): "Thy *mercy*, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy *faithfulness* reacheth unto the clouds. Thy *righteousness* is like the great mountains; Thy *judgments* are a great deep: O Lord, Thou *preservest* man and beast. How excellent is Thy *loving kindness*, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly *satisfied* with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light. And well may we pray the close of it, "O continue Thy *loving kindness* unto them that know Thee, and Thy *righteousness* to the upright in heart."

But it was little Elijah realized all this at Horeb and elsewhere, and how often so with us,—our changed circumstances have not bettered us. We have tried Beersheba, the wilderness, and the shadow of the juniper tree, and lastly Horeb, and all in vain. There is but *one* thing left for us, and to that our dire necessity forces us,—*back to His presence again*, we will find a welcome there. “*Return unto thy rest, O my soul,*” our hearts respond, and grace, “*exceeding abundant,*” wins the day. Elijah’s soul revives, his drooping spirit is encouraged, the love of his heart burns warmer, the feeble remains of his light of testimony brighten, and he girds his loins afresh to do God’s bidding. Blessed soul inspiring word it was for frail man to hear from Him “*who charges His angels with folly,*” “*Elijah, I will trust you still!*” Well may we learn the lesson from our all-gracious, though withal ever faithful Lord! True, He *rebukes*, but not “*in His anger to bring us to nothing,*” and the hand that applies the rod of chastening wipes away the tears He must needs force from our wayward hearts. How often have we acted otherwise, and would put a “*D*” on the back of such an one, and brand him as unfaithful, and think, now we will have to watch him every step. But nothing sets one up on his feet, and encourages his heart after failure, more than to *trust* him. Let us not cast our eyes askance at them, but learn of Jesus who was meek and lowly of heart and “*go and do likewise*” remembering His word, “*If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*” (Jno. xiii.) Thus God restores Elijah’s soul, and marvellous is the manner of it, for Divine love has a way about it peculiarly its own, and “*His gentleness it is that maketh great.*” (Ps. xviii, 35.) Thus first, He “*restores to us the joy of His salvation,*” and *then* He entrusts us “*to teach transgressors His ways,*”—allows us to serve Him as those He honors and confides in. So I once heard of a man who was a professional thief being converted to God; one who knew him intimately tried the most risky thing possible, as we would judge, to test the reality of it—got him a situation as night-watchman in a jewelry store. Soon one of his old chums, as he termed them, came along and urged him to join in robbing the place, and that if he did not he would inform his master of his old habits. “*No,*” he replied, “*I am trusted, and you may tell the very worst, he knows it all and ye the trusts me, and I cannot violate his trust.*” May it be so with us! Our God increase in our souls their confidence in Himself alone, and the realization that He who knows us altogether has yet entrusted us that we may thus be found “*good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*” Once more, may the Lord God of Elijah be realized as our God, and in all the nearness of His blessed relationship to us as *Father* for His name’s sake! Amen.

B. C. G.

THE BREAKDOWN OF CONSCIENCE.

"God made man upright." His first steps in *apostasy* were in the direction of doubt, disobedience, concealment, evasion, and deception. These are the characteristics which mark the course of man's apostasy from God. But when he turns his feet more into the testimonies of the Lord, who desireth "*truth* in the inward parts," and who writes His law in their hearts and minds, He then turns from craft, guile, deception, and sin, and becomes blameless, upright, honest, truthful, sincere. A change so radical as this sets men out of harmony with a crooked and perverse generation, and prepares them to "shine as lights in the world, being blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke,"

But the work thus begun is not always carried on to perfection, and one of the sad features in the Christian life is the facility with which people are sometimes drawn away from their first fidelity, and their first love, and entangled in the snares and deceptions of the adversary. The processes by which this is accomplished are very numerous. The instrumentalities used are not confined to worldly circles, nor are they always nominally irreligious. There are spots in the feasts of charity; there are thieves, who, like Judas, carry the bag; and there are lying prophets who sometimes pervert the consciences of the young and inexperienced, and by falsehood turn them away from God.

The breaking down of conscience is a gradual process. A young Christian finds himself cast into the company of older men who do things in which he would not for a moment think of indulging. He watches their proceedings, he observes their craft, he notices their petty dishonesties, he listens to the specious arguments by which they justify themselves in things which he believes to be wrong; a nameless horror sometimes creeps over his soul, and then he thinks, "Perhaps I am uncharitable, perhaps I am too strict." Sometimes he feels as if he would denounce and rebuke the wrongs which he perceives; but he may be led to believe that this will not be the most effectual way to right them, while it will certainly blight all his prospects, and ruin his influence; so he stands still and says nothing while others tell falsehoods; he quietly serves on committees where he knows that truth is concealed, and error is proclaimed; he makes mild protests, but they are ineffectual; he signs reports which he *knows* are not true; he yields to the force

of circumstances which he knows not how to change; he conceals official iniquities which should be exposed from the housetops; and he learns to take the easy course, until in the end he comes to allow, and participate in, things which he once abhorred and scorned. He thus learns to speak with a double tongue, and to do and say in the name of God, things for which he has neither warrant nor authority; and at last he goes, as many have gone, in the path of an easy formality, far from "the way of righteousness," in which he was taught to walk.

What terrible revelations await such men in the great day, when conscience that is now silenced shall speak, and when the voice of God shall proclaim righteousness and truth; and when those who have consented to wrong-doing shall find that they have acted utterly inconsistently with the conduct of the one who has been redeemed by precious blood from all the vanities and falsities which men delight in, but which God abhors.—*The Armory*.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

THE injunction is—"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." It was alleged against the priests of old, as the head and front of their offending, that they "put no difference between the unclean and clean," (Ezek. xxii. 26.) And Christians are now treading in their very footsteps, saying "all the congregation are holy," and we have no right to "sit in the seat of judgment" and say who are entitled to be called Christians and who are not; or, in other words, to put a difference between the clean and unclean. In confirmation of this, the parable of the wheat and the tares, in Matt. xiii, are quoted. These were to "grow together till the harvest," and therefore it is urged that no separation between the righteous and the wicked is to be attempted until that time; but one most important point in the parable is overlooked when this view is taken. The parable says, "Let both grow together till the harvest." But where were they to grow? It was *in the field*—and what is the field? "The field is the world," said the Saviour. The parable then tells us that there are to be righteous and wicked in the world till the harvest, and that the righteous are not to seek to extirpate the wicked out of the world—that the Lord will judge them at the harvest. But the directions to the Church were, "Put away *from among yourselves* that wicked person," "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." 1 Cor. v. 6-13.

"THE SUNSHINE OF HIS PRESENCE."

OH, "the sunshine of *His* presence," how it cheers me
on my road ;
Lightening every grievous burden as I bow beneath
the load.

'Tis a bright and glorious halo, circling round earth's
toilsome way ;
And it speeds me ever onward, while I'm nearing
home each day.

In "the *sunshine* of His presence" would I live from
day to day ;
Ever know Him, *close* beside me, as I tread life's
changeful way ;
Ever feel His arm upholding, when my falt'ring
footsteps fail ;
When temptations round me gather, doubts and fears
my heart assail.

Sweet "the sunshine of His presence," without which
I dare not live ;
For it yields me peace and comfort that *this world*
could never give.
Not a transient fading brightness of some cloudless
summer's day ;
But a *sure* and *firm* possession, nevermore to pass
away.

'Tis "the sunshine of His presence," and His faithful
changeless love,
Gladen weary waiting-hours, till He call me up
above.
But I'm longing, daily longing, for the time when I
shall share
All the fulness of its glory, in His own bright home
up there.

Glenvar,

"WITH ME."

MATTHEW xxvi. 40.

THE shadows lay so deep on Olivet,
 And silent midnight was on all the land,
 One watcher only in the darkness craved
 A thought of love, a touch from human hand.

He came at last to seek it, but in vain,
 And sadly through the darkness went away :
 One tender word, one look of love that night
 Had been how sweet to Jesus none may say.

But once again He comes, and comes to thee,
 His busy worker in the harvest-fie'ld ;
 Can'st thou not watch with Me one silent hour ?
 I crave for more than busy hands can yield.

"I want the fervent love that tells itself
 In deep sweet breathings of a *heart at rest*
 Beneath the shadow of Eternal wings,
 Like the belov'd disciple on My breast."

Then in the silence let Him speak to thee,
 And in the reverent hush look up and tell
 The love that He hath kindled in thine heart,
 And seek in that blest Presence thus to dwell.

Yea, "tell it out,"—unto thy Father tell
 The preciousness of Christ to thine own heart,
 Then wait, and listen till *He* speaks again :
 Thou hast in wondrous fellowship a part.

And He hath need of thee, thy love is dear,—
 Thine *uttered* love,—told waiting at His feet ;
 And hurry not to service till prepared
 By quiet waiting in His presence sweet.

—C. W. ASHBY.

THE LORD JESUS HIMSELF.

MAY the Lord Himself be more personally with and before us! a nearer and more real object than ever!

Truth that gives *thoughts* is not fully the right thing; but truth that gives *Himself*—that is the thing.

Jesus once here—now in the heavens—*again to be here and we with Him for ever*—the same Jesus throughout—known for eternity as He was known in His track through the cities and villages of Israel—this is the mystery that gives us *Himself*. And it is the business of *faith* to reach *Himself*. The centurion pierced the cloud, the thick cloud, of His humiliation, and got at the *Divine glories*, which lay on the other side of it, or under it. The poor sinner of the city pierced the cloud, the dark cloud, of her own sin and misery, and got at the *Divine love* that could heal it all. Faith may thus find various excellencies in Him, but it is *Himself* it reaches.

Faith acts and sings—

"All human beauties, all Divine,
In my Beloved meet and shine."

Let not this evangelic age give you the *work* of Christ alone. It tends that way. Without His work, I know, all would be nothing. But let not doctrinal acquaintance with His work turn you from personal acquaintance with Himself.—*Bible Herald*.

THE BEAUTY OF THE REJECTED JESUS.

I HAVE been just asking myself, how far I really see "form and comeliness" in the rejected and despised Jesus; and I am assured that while the soul is under the power of things seen, this cannot be; because the marred visage, the thorny crown, the carpenter's son, the penniless, homeless stranger, the One spit upon, the patient sufferer of wrongs and reproaches daily heaped upon Him, is no object of "form or comeliness" before the eye of mere man. If the soul, therefore, be under the power or presence of things seen, what is Jesus to it? It is *faith* alone that can admire Him. It is the eye trained and practised by the Holy Ghost that alone can see the beauty of the smitten form of the low-estated Galilean.

This tells loudly against the constant currents of our hearts. May we be more and more lifted above the admiration of, or delight in, the things seen, the fair shows of the flesh. Such glances of our hearts, of which they are so guilty, weaken our power to perceive this only real "form and comeliness."

So, where is there the *ear* for the Shepherd's voice? Surely only in that which the Spirit has, in like manner, opened. And if the flesh and the world be practising it with its music and soft words, its readiness and skill to catch that unearthly voice will, in like manner, decline and be impaired.

LIVE AS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

"Thou God *seest* me."

"Endure as *seeing* Him who is invisible."

THIS is what Enoch did :—he walked **WITH** God.—*Gen. v. 24.*

"*They do no iniquity: they walk in His ways.*"—*Psaln cxix. 3.*

THIS is what Abraham did :—he walked **BEFORE** God.

—*Gen. xxiv. 40.*

"*I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect.*"

—*Gen. xvii. 1.*

THIS is what Paul did :—"as of sincerity, but . . . as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."—*2 Cor. ii. 17.*

THIS is what the Thessalonians did :—"Work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in the *sight* of God and our Father."—*1 Thess. i. 3.*

THIS is what heaven will be :—the eternal **PRESENCE** of God. "*He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*"

—*Rev. vii. 15.*

DO nothing you would not like God to **SEE**.

"*Do all to the glory of God.*"—*1 Cor. x. 31.*

SING nothing that is not melodious in God's **EAR**.

"*Singing and making melody in your heart to the LORD.*"

—*Eph. v. 19.*

SAY nothing you would not like God to **HEAR**.

"*O Lord, keep the door of my lips.*"—*Psaln cxli. 3.*

WRITE nothing you would not like God to **READ**.

"*Thou understandest my thoughts afar off.*"—*Psaln cxxxix. 2.*

Go to no place where you would not like God to **FIND YOU**.

"*Thou art acquainted with all my ways.*"—*Psaln cxxxix. 3.*

READ no book of which you would not like God to say,

"**SHOW IT ME?**"

"*Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.*"—*Psaln cxix. 37.*

NEVER spend your time in such a way that you would not like God to say, "**WHAT ART THOU DOING?**"

"*A voice came to him, and said, What dost thou here?*"

—*1 Kings. xix. 12.*

"**WHO** is sufficient for these things?"—*2 Cor. ii. 16.*

"**MY GRACE** is sufficient for thee."—*2 Cor. xii. 9.*

HE KNOWETH ALL.

"But He knoweth the way that I take."—JOB xxxiii. 10.

The twilight falls, the night is near,
I fold my work away,
And kneel to One, who bends to hear
The story of the day.

The same old story, yet I kneel
To tell it, at Thy call;
And cares grow lighter as I feel
That Jesus knows them all.

Yes ALL! The morning and the night,
The joy, the grief, the loss;
The roughened path, the sunbeam bright,
The hourly thorn and cross.

Thou knowest *all*. I lean my head,
My weary eyelids close;
Content and glad a while to tread
This path, since Jesus knows!

And He has *loved* me! All my heart
With answering love is stirred,
And every anguished pain and smart
Finds healing in the word.

So, here I lay me down to rest,
As nightly shadows fall,
And lean confiding on His breast,
Who knows and pities all!

—S. S. Times.

“**THY WILL—NOT MINE.**”

I am not sent a pilgrim here,
 My heart with earth to fill ;
 But I am here God's *grace* to learn
 And serve God's sovereign *will*.

He leads me on through smiles and tears,
 Grief follows gladness still ;
 But let me welcome both alike,
 Since both work out His will.

The strong man's strength to toil for Christ,
 The fervent preacher's skill—
 I sometimes wish :—but better far,
 To be just what God will.

I know not how this languid life
 May life's vast ends fulfil ;
He knows, and *that* life is not lost
 That answers best His will.

No service in itself is small,
 None great, though earth it fill ;
 But that is small that “seeks its own,”
 And great that seeks God's will.

Then hold my hand, most gracious Lord,
 Guide all my doings still ;
 And let this be my life's one aim,
 To *do*, or *bear* Thy will.

T. D.

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THE BROOK WITH A BLESSING.

"Well, good-bye," said the Brook to the Spring; "I am in a great hurry to get to the river. It's a beautiful morning, and I shall run straight down the mountain. I have no time to go twisting and twirling about like my sister over there."

"The shortest way is not always the best," replied the Spring. "If you take a straight line through everything you will miss a great many pleasant places."

"Never mind; I want to get to the river. If I reach it safely and quickly, it does not signify what I miss."

"Yes, it does. You'll fall into the river without a blessing, and not a flower on the mountain will be sorry when you're gone."

The Brook only laughed, and rippled away in the sunshine.

"Come and bathe my roots," called a Daisy, as he ran past her like a thread of silver shining in the grass.

"What! lose a precious minute, and make a curve in my course for the sake of a little flower like you? Nonsense!" cried the Brook: "wait till the dew comes down to-night."

So the poor Daisy grew weaker and weaker, and when the dew came she was dead.

"Cool my leaves for me," said a young Birch tree. "I've been standing here in the sun for a long time."

"I cannot possibly take all that jump over those great rocks," replied the selfish Brook. "There is my sister not far off; ask her to come around your way."

But the sister brook had other leaves to cool, and she could not help all the thirsty trees.

Quickly down the mountain went the Brook, only caring for his own will and pleasure, and the flowers and leaves called to him in vain.

"I must get to the river," he said; "and I really have not any time to waste over my neighbors."

His sister did what she could, and her course was very winding; for whenever a flower spoke to her she turned aside to listen, and the grateful blossoms gathered dewdrops for her, and showered them over her as she passed by. The trees bent down to shade her from the sun, when she came near to bathe their roots and cool their hot leaves; and she flowed so quietly down into the river at last, that her brother never knew she was there until the River-spirit called her by her name.

"What have you done since you left the Spring?" he asked; and the little Brook answered that she was sorry she had been so long on the way, but that there were many thirsty flowers, and she could not bear to hear them crying. Then a beautiful sound came floating through the air like the very sweetest music, and the River-spirit said:

"Listen! The voices of the flowers are singing your praises, little Brook, because you waited and flowed slowly for their sakes.—*Selected.*

A NEVER-FAILING SPRING.

Quite near where I live there is a beautiful spring of water, and I have often gone, and drank of it, and been refreshed in my body. And what is remarkable about this spring is that it is always the *same*; for I have gone to it in all seasons of the year. In the warmest weather of summer, it is cool and refreshing; in the coldest weather of winter its waters do not freeze; its supply of water never fails, for there appears to be as much in the driest time of the year as in the wet season; and it is really "waters of quietness," for I never saw it disturbed by storm or wind. But to get to it one has to go *down*, and to drink of it, *stoop quite low*, for it lies at the foot of a hill.

One day, after having drunk of this spring and been refreshed in my body, I sat beside it for a few moments, and was refreshed in my soul, as I saw in it such a picture of the One who never changeth, "Jesus Christ the *same* yesterday, and to-day, and forever" (Heb. xiii. 8). In the heat of conflict and strife, in the most trying times, turning to Him, we find a "cooling spring," and our souls are refreshed. When all around us there are coldness and indifference, in Him we find the warmth of an unchanging love. In the time of spiritual drought, when all around appears to be drying up, and no blessing to be seen, He is the never-failing spring, the supply as great as when there is blessing flowing everywhere. And when storms of trouble and difficulty arise, He is the "waters of quietness" to be led beside, for He is not disturbed by any of them. (Mark iv. 38.) And how true it is, also, that to get where He is, there must be that going down, (Luke xviii. 9-14), and to receive of Him, to be in that lowly position, (1 Peter v. 5).

And now, dear fellow-believer in the Lord Jesus, have you and I proved Him to be *all* this to our souls? Let us not be content with knowing Him only as the One who saves our souls, but the One who can meet all our need, at *all* times; the never failing and all-satisfying spring, (John iv. 14).

Often have I gone to that spring of water and drank of it when I did not *feel* thirsty, but because I *liked* to go, and could drink of it any time.

And may this be true of us, as Christians, finding our *delight* to be where He is, and to receive of Him, and not merely when we *feel* our need pressing us to do so.

L. S.

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ADDRESSES ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.—7

ELIJAH (5).

(1 KINGS XIX. 15-21 ; XXI. 15-20, 25-20 ; 2 KINGS I. 1-17 ; II. 1-15 ; ECCLES. III. 1-15.)

These Scriptures give us lessons that few of us have learned, but when a Christian has learned them, he has attained perfection as far as it is possible here below. "Let *patience* have her perfect work, that ye may be *perfect* and *entire*, wanting nothing," James i. 4. 2 Cor. xii. 12 shows us that *patience* is not only the mark of a perfect *Christian*, but also one of the signs of an *Apostle*, and from chap. vi. 4, we learn that it is also one of the marks of the *ministers* of God. It is a sign that one such has taken out his degree—not in a human college, however, but in a divine one. If this test were to be applied, how many a so-called minister, and even those who really seek to serve Christ, would have to go to college over again. Linking these last three Scriptures together, we find that the "perfect and entire" Christian is one that has a broken will—subjection of the soul to God. While he knows that he carries the *flesh* within him, incorrigibly bad—hopelessly evil,—that the *world* around him has not changed its character one whit,—and that he has an *enemy* seeking day and night to harm him, yet bowing to the blessed will of God he may walk unscathed through all these evils. How few of us have reached this point, if any! Paul, in giving to the Corinthians the proofs of his apostleship (2 Cor. xii. 12) does not speak first of the wonderful miracles he had wrought, but tells them that he had been able to rule his spirit—"in all *patience*." So when giving the distinct marks of the minister of God, note with that he heads the list,—"*much patience*."

In the portion read from *Ecclesiastes* we find how needful it is to know how to do a thing in the *right time*, and for this we need often "in *patience* to possess our souls." Many of us have much truth,—but it is in a chaotic state,—so to speak, in this corner and that. It is like a man with a house full of good furniture, but the painting and papering still requiring to be done. Many children of God are in that condition. We may have much Scripture truth, but our *wills* may never have been broken, and every truth that we have that has not taken hold of our souls is a dead weight,

upon us. Truth will either make me top-heavy, or more like the Son of God, as one "taking His yoke and learning of Him who was meek and lowly in heart." The truth that has not taken hold of a man's soul—"truth in the inward parts," and that he holds apart from the power of it, is a curse, instead of a blessing, to him. It is that which has firm hold of a man that gives power to sustain him in the darkest day. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

We saw that Elijah in the days of his secret training had learned the double lesson of absolute *dependence* upon, and *obedience* to God, and this secret training was in the immediate presence of God before whom he stood. We then saw that the man, who has been behind the scenes *with* God, is the man who can stand before men *for* God. That we saw in a two-fold way,—in relation to Ahab and his Court, and to his brother, Obadiah, and the nation of Israel at large. Further, we saw alas! the man who had learned his lesson so well get his eye off the blessed God. He who had prayed in the 17th and 18th chapters forgot to pray in the 19th, and he was absolutely as nothing—weak "as water spilt upon the ground that cannot be gathered up again," when out of the presence of God. Alas! what a picture of us all! Let us not think that because our conversion has been a bright one,—that we have reached the right position with regard to the Church of God on earth,—and that we have recovered much blessed truth from under the rubbish that men have put over it, that therefore we can stand apart from *faith*. A happy conversion and a right path cannot *keep* us right,—this can only be in abiding *dependence* upon God. If we think so, we will have to learn that God will break the neck of our pride, and teach us that "*no flesh shall glory in His presence,*" and "*by faith we stand.*" If we try to take credit to ourselves—to glory in that hateful thing—the flesh,—God will stain the pride of all our glory—and teach our hearts the lesson "He that glorieth, let him glory in the *Lord.*"

Having seen Elijah's *training* and *testimony*, and *restoration* after failure, and how God follows this poor unworthy child of His from place to place, we shall see him once more in communion and service. He left Israel for Judea, then goes to the wilderness in isolation, thence forty days to Mount Horeb, where he tells the *bondage* of his soul, "*I, even*

"I"; everybody is lost sight of but *I*. It matters very little whether it is "*good I*" or "*bad I*," it will be misery for us if we are occupied with it. A brother once greeted a Christian friend, "Well, brother, how are you to-day?" "Fighting, fighting all the time, it is a hard time constantly," was the reply. "Well, I have found out this," responded the other, "that it makes no difference whether you *embrace* a chimney sweep, or *fight* with him, you get *black* either way. "So, whether by *indulging* or *fighting* the flesh, we only make ourselves miserable. "*Carnality* and *legality* are two great villains that harm the saints of God," as one has wisely said. God says to us, "I have '*condemned* sin in the flesh' in the person of Christ, My beloved Son, and your wisdom is to pass sentence upon it day by day, as I have done." The person whose condition is "*FI*" is morally at Horeb, and has "*fallen from grace*." He has dropped down from occupation with the blessed Saviour to that of a *good* self, or *bad* self, as the case may be. Though not like a man in the cess-pool of iniquity—delighting in it, yet he has gone back from the blessed liberty wherewith Christ had made him free, and is entangled again with the yoke of bondage. This lesson before us sets aside what we see all around us, for in all parts of Christendom we find some attenuated form of Judaism, Christians little knowing the place they are in. If they are not under law to *be* saved, they are to *keep* saved, thus in the bondage of it after conversion, and told that they may lose all, and be lost at the end. If not taken so far as that, that if they are to have any hope of keeping on the track at all, it must be by means of it. This is simply apostasy from the simplicity of Christianity, and a soul-withering blight upon the people of God! God has His own way of causing His people to "bring forth fruit" to Him, but it is not by "the law which gondereth to bondage," but by enjoying the liberty of *grace*. This is one reason why people do not understand their Bibles. Three reasons are given why the treasures of that blessed book are locked up. One is given in 2 Cor. iii., the return to LAW,—the ministration of *death, condemnation, and bondage*, when God has put us under the ministration of the SPIRIT,—*life, righteousness, and liberty*. The second, if a man prostitutes the *grace* of God to unhallowed ways,—if after he has known that God has judged the flesh by the same cross that brought him salvation from the *judgment* of sin, he returns to the world, and indulges the lusts of the flesh, and thus plays

fast and loose with God's grace, then the Lord says to such "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot *hear them now.*" Why were the Corinthians in such a condition? They had "envy, strife, divisions among them," were "*carnal, and walked as men.*" The third is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Apostle says, "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should *let them slip.*" (Ch. ii. 1.) In effect it is, "I am bidding you look to the state of your souls, and see that the truth does not *leak out.*" He occupies three or four chapters trying to awaken them to a better spiritual condition, because they were clinging to the religion of a day gone by,—still holding fast to the forms and ceremonies of Judaism.—And what has Christendom returned to but that? Where, in the *New Testament*, have we divine warrant for vestments, instrumental music in the worship of God, calling buildings in which Christians meet the House of God, having a select priesthood or class of men between God and His people to administer the sacrament (so-called), baptizing people, etc? Where do they go for them all? To the *Old Testament*, to pattern by the religion of a day gone by—"the *shadow* of good things to come"—"a *figure* for the time then present"—"which thing is *done away* in Christ." Here then is a third serious reason for people not understanding their Bibles. These things would bear more serious looking at, and if each of us were exercised as to the special way in which *we* may be hindered thus, the Word of God would become infinitely dearer to us, if we looked at them aright.

Retracing, Elijah has been *taught* happy lessons in the presence of God, been *sustained* by Him in the presence of men, been allowed to *wander* to learn the saddest lesson of all his life, "no confidence in the flesh," and then that all is grace from first to last. If you have never been brought back from Horeb, where failure puts us, you have the richest lesson of all your life yet ahead,—God's blessed *restoring* grace, "healing our back-sliding, loving us freely," and so we "render Him the calves of our lips in praise." So if we have a man *restored* to God in Psalm li., we have also one that has found in that "the joy of God's salvation," and that will "teach transgressors God's ways, and sinners will be converted to Him." What a marvel of transformation from Elijah sitting under the juniper tree,—a bitter shrub, and with a heart just as bitter, to being thus set in his old

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accustomed place restored and sustained by God, and ready to run His bidding! God takes him up and sets him on his feet once more and says to him, I have a little bit more work for you to do,—I am not going to let you *die*, but going to trust you still, and then call you home without it. We have before us thus a representation of Christ in a four-fold way,—the strength and joy of His people—"the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls"—the "Lord" and Master of our lives—"the Bright and Morning Star" before our hearts—giving us our *portion, power, path*, and *prospect* all secured. As it were, Christ the *one* blessed bright object before him, and all that his Saviour is *doing* forth the brighter because of the darkness through which he has passed, and now at last as the "Morning Star,"—before taking him to glory, for he is going up to heaven without *tasting death*. Do we understand Christianity in that way too,—resting in Christ our *Saviour*, feeding on Christ our *Portion*, following Christ our *Shepherd*, serving Christ our *Master*, looking for Christ our *Bridegroom*, eternal lover of our souls—"Christ" as "all" and in all"? Although there were never but *two* men from the time that our Lord went to heaven, who knew that they were going to die, yet most say, We must *all* die, and we hear it at wellnigh every funeral. Though the Bible says "We shall not all sleep (*die*)," yet that is all thrown overboard, and we are told we have all got to come to this (death.) What can it mean when we read our Bibles in such a way? Can we not take the Lord Jesus as simply at His word now as when He was a man here on earth? When He tells us that like Enoch and Elijah a whole generation (those "who remain unto the coming of the Lord,") shall go up to heaven without dying, shall we throw it all aside, say, what difference whether we go to the tomb, or are "caught up" to meet our Lord in the air, as those that are "alive and remain"! *Willing* to die, we should be, but earnestly *desiring* the Lord to come we should also be. Paul thus speaks of it. "I am willing to be absent from the body, present with the Lord," *unclothed*.—"Earnestly desiring to be *clothed upon* with our house which is from heaven . . . for we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be *unclothed*, but *clothed upon*, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." 2 Cor. v. 2-8.

Thus poor heart-weary Elijah, restored by the grace of God, is now a man with his eye turned toward heaven, with the expectation of going home soon, and the privilege of yet

-serving Him, who still enables and "counts him faithful," (1 Tim. i. 12) ere he is called away. Such is the true position of the Christian ; our Saviour is soon coming, let us go out to *meet Him* ; meanwhile, we have but one thing to do down here, *live for Him*. Lord Jesus ! soon coming to receive us to Thyself, may we realize it thus, but one thing to do for Thee,—*live for Thee, waiting for Thy return !*

Elijah receives several messages from the Lord, but one of which we read of him carrying out, but leaving his mantle and "the double portion of his spirit" upon Elisha, he fulfils them.

The Lord further tells him that He has reserved unto himself 7000 in Israel that had not bowed unto Baal, and yet Elijah had said, "I, even *I only*, am left." A man is plainly out of tune with the heart of God, when he says "*I, only I.*" Elijah thus *restored, assured, and sent*, comes to Elisha ploughing in a field, not the foremost, but *twelfth* one there, and casts his mantle upon him. This would seem (as to Elisha at least) premature, as he does not appear to have "followed fully" until later (ch ii.2). Elisha leaves the oxen, and says, There is one thing I would like to do first, "Let me, I pray thee, *kiss* my father and my mother!" We cannot think of anything more excusable, yea, even commendable, than this, giving one farewell embrace to his parents, what in itself could we deem more fitting? But had he yielded prompter obedience to the Divine call, he would doubtless have been sent to recognize these filial claims in bidding them farewell, for the God who thus claims our allegiance to Himself says also, "*Honor thy father and thy mother.*" (Compare with this, as "things that differ," our Lord's words to his mother in Jno. ii. 4 and xix. 26, 27.) But nothing but Himself must be *first* when he calls us after Him ; how needed and serious the lesson for us all !

The first mark of Elijah's restoration is seen in his casting his mantle on Elisha, and what follows :—he learns that there is "a time to *give*, and a time to *keep*, a time to *embrace*, and a time to *refrain* from embracing." If Elisha is not ready, his mantle must return unto him ; he says, as it were, you can go back again, God does not want "pressed" men in His service, all in His ranks must volunteer, and render the service of a "willing heart." He does not desire nor value the service that is rendered from fear of His wrath ; nothing is *Christian* service that does not emanate from the *grace* of God. The Divine call is thus,

Christ set upon the throne, claiming us by the love that saved us, to live for Him. "To me to live is Christ," is thus the first sound of Elijah's testimony to Elisha. The second is, "tho' love of Christ constraineth us, etc" (2 Cor. v 14). If the mantle is thrown on us we need to arise and follow our Lord and Master. What was the *secret* of Paul's devoted, untiring service? Let him reply, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who *loved* me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii.20.) He never worked a stroke to gain heaven, and he knew to begin with that his soul was saved, and that the Lord Jesus had cleansed him from all his sins. Then, "if Christ is for me, I must be for Christ; if I am saved," Paul says, "I must yield myself to Him, *live unto Him* who died for me and rose again." If the mantle is thrown upon our shoulders, and we are still "looking back" and hankering after the world, the Lord says, we had better go back to it, if we don't want to follow him we need not do it. True; the flesh will dispute every inch of the way, but God likes us to be in truth and reality what we are, out-and-out sinners or out-and-out Christians. He says of some, "I would thou wert *cold* or *hot*," not lukewarm. He would rather have us really sinners and conscious of that fact, than thus His grace may avail for us, than wishy-washy professors of His name that only put a stench and disgrace upon His dear name. If we don't want to follow Him, then we don't know what His love is, and had better go back to the ranks of sinners at once until He has saved and called us after Him. Can we say in the presence of our Lord, and of angels, men, and demons, I would not go back if Christ gave me liberty to do so; if He said, go back and have the world if you desire it, would we say humbly and meekly, but firmly, No, blessed Saviour, no, Thou art better than its best!

We had Elijah giving the word of command,—the Lord's call to the path of following Him, and further, the word of testing,—don't cross the line if you are not *ready* to go over it. Are *we* ready to follow Christ? Then, go forward,—if not, do not take a single step. God wants His men to be volunteers,—does not *draft* his soldiers.

Now we have a little on another side—the *thunders* of Divine judgment, and Elijah can rightly utter them, because he has listened to, and been led by, the "*still small voice*" of mercy. None but those who realize they are "*debtors to mercy alone*" can be safely entrusted to go on a mission such as this. Naboth of Jezreel had a vineyard, his heritage

from the Lord, never to pass from his family, because given to them of Him, and it joined the palace of the King. Ahab thinks it will be nice for him to possess it, and asks Naboth to exchange it for another, or sell it to him. Naboth replies, in effect, I possess this inheritance from the Lord, a stewardship from Him; I cannot trade it away, seeing the Lord has deeded it to me. What is the significance of that? "That good thing which was committed unto thee, *keep* by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." (2 Tim. i.14.) Oh, for a few Naboths in our day—men that would rather die than give up the inheritance of the Lord! May we be found among them, "*holding* the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience!" How many now trade on Christianity, "merchantmen in the house of the Lord,"—those that are haters of the Lord feigning submission to Him for unholy ends—"supposing that gain is godliness," and saying that is the way to make things move. It is solemn iniquity in the sight of the Lord thus to prostitute His blessed name to the world that cast Him out! It is as true as the Book of God has said it that *obedience* has gone out of date, "He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey!" Those who would cleave to the Word of God are counted out everywhere. But we are not to give up our communion with God to have a better business, or gain the public favor, nor even that of the king. No, Naboth says, the Lord having given me this property in trust for Him, hold it I must and will. Jezebel then plans that if it cannot be had by fair means it may by foul, and causes righteous Naboth to be foully murdered, and for this sin God pronounces the judgment on Ahab,— "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even *thine*." How men thus solemnly doom their souls to the depths of perdition for all eternity for a little gain, and because of the way they unjustly treat the truth and people of God! And even where God is professedly owned, there you will find Ahab and Jezebel on the train; among the so-called leaders of God's people how many such sad cases in all time in the "shedding of innocent blood," and casting out the names as evil of those who will not give up their inheritance from the Lord—put away a good conscience or yield it up to the stewardship of others, because of the fear of the Lord. Solemn indeed the lesson for us all, for if we may not reach this length, how many "*smite* with the fist of wickedness, and *exact* all labours" and yet think they do God service. May we, beloved brethren, hear

the word of the Lord, as coming home to *ourselves*. "Is not this the fast which I have chosen? to *loose* the bands of wickedness, to *undo* the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go *free*, and that ye *break* every yoke, etc." (Isaiah lviii. 6-14) A new and searching word for our hearts it is. I pray you, let us leave off this *usury*. (Neh. v. 10) On another side, how often, if one preaches the word of God simply and faithfully, many will say it will not do to have that man, and he loses the favor of the people; but you *cannot cook God's manna to suit worldly and corrupted tastes*.

Here, Naboth will not give up his vineyard, nor Elijah the word of the Lord—the *portion and testimony* of God for His people. What a sight of moral grandeur does Elijah present, declaring to Ahab God's solemn testimony, in view of the fact of his having fled from the threat of Jezebel. It is not likely to give Elijah more money in his pocket, nor increased favor at Court, but *what?* He is a man who has the word of the Lord and has spoken it faithfully, and can sleep with a good conscience, now that he has delivered his message. Happy Elijah! just as ready to deliver another message also, if God bids him do it. When God sees the idolatrous King humble himself, He says, "Elijah! I have another errand for you." Elijah is always near to him now, not as a short time before—he is right on the spot to *suffer, do, or serve* God's will. God is going to prove to Ahab that He is a God of mercy, and Elijah is just as ready to deliver the message of mercy as of judgment, to preach the *love* of God to a repentant one, as His judgement to one hardening his heart against Him. He knows "the time to embrace, and to refrain from embracing." Imagine him going to tell Ahab this message of mercy, when his past greeting was, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" He could tell him "there is a way that even *you* can have hope, Ahab," "forgiveness with God that He may be feared." Thus there is "a time to keep, a time to cast away, a time to love, and a time to hate." Elijah would not put his arms around Ahab's iniquity. No, he thunders judgment against his sin, but when that same man humbles himself, he goes to him with a message of *mercy*.

Next, we have Ahaziah, fallen through a lattice and sick, sending to enquire of the god of Ekron; he knows that the God of Israel will not answer him,—his conscience is not right with God, and he cannot assure his heart before Him.

When a man walks with a bad conscience, he is not much inclined to pray, and has not "confidence toward God" if he does. Paul says, "Pray for us, for we trust we have a *good conscience*, in all things willing to live *honestly*." Let us not ask prayers, if we do not seek to do what the answer to th'n will claim of us.—Now Elijah is right in the track where G. d wants him, there to give a message to Abaziah, and he not only gives his testimony clear and distinct—with "no uncertain sound," but withal a *pressing* message. He meets the messengers of the King, and directs them to tell him that he will *not* come off his bed again, but shall *surely die*." The King thinks he will soon settle that matter, and sends a captain and fifty men after the prophet. Elijah is on the mountain-top—his course is plain and open, because he fears God,—not man. The man who is walking with God does not need to hide behind a bush, neither does he need to look this way and that way as Moses once, or feign himself a madman, as David, but "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Elijah sits where everybody can see him,—not making a single effort to get away, for in the path of God's will he need not fear anything. Mark the calm, moral dignity of this restored, happy, fearless man! Here is an escort from the King to fetch him into his presence that he may learn that "the king's wrath is as messengers of death." (Prov. xvi. 14.) They came to order him there—a captain and his fifty, but Elijah has his orders from the King of Kings and will not go, and they are all consumed by fire from heaven. People may call these *hard lines*, but "Woe unto him that *striveth against his Maker!*" If we are not on God's side, by "repenting to give Him glory," then we must prove alas! that He cannot give His glory to another, and must be condemned to everlasting judgment, as a necessity of His holiness, by the very God that gave His Son to die for us. The same Bible that tells of the *love* of God, tells also of His righteous *judgment* upon all who receive not the truth in the love of it. No faithful servant of God can put the one before people and leave out the other. In these days of easy-going, men do not like to hear of the judgment of God which slumbers not, and that God has decreed that "*every* knee shall bow to Christ, and every tongue shall confess Him Lord to the glory of God the Father."

The second captain thinks he can startle Elijah by altering the message and adding a word, and says, "O man

of God, come down *quickly*." But instead thereof the *fire* comes down quickly, and in turn he and his fifty are destroyed. Next comes a man (the third captain) who has learned to measure himself by the divine standard, and owning his life as worth nothing, casts himself on God's mercy, and could say "I mercy *sought* and mercy *found*." So if we take our true place before God, and say "We must needs die, and be as water spilled upon the ground," unless God looks in His pity on us, then He will not judge us because we have judged ourselves—justifying Him, He justifies us. He goes on his knees a poor penitent—knowing the just judgment fallen upon the two previous captains, he pleads for mercy. *Will* God have mercy; *can* He have, and maintain the rights of His Throne? "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." He says "Go down with him, Elijah," and he goes down. *Whom* will God take to heaven? These very people who are thus self-condemned; those who judge themselves never will be judged. There are some who say, Why did Almighty God do this? He is Almighty, and He will prove His almightiness by pouring out His judgment on them, unless they bow to Him and seek His mercy. Elijah goes to the King's bedside, and again delivers the message that he shall die. Do you mean that God had no mercy for that sick man? No. He would have taken him to heaven, if he had only bowed to the grace of God, and owned His claims. How many a sick bed is sent to save a man's soul. In *Revelation* we find God saying to men, in effect, by all His judgments, *Will* you give in, will you repent?—But they will not,—they gnaw their tongues for pain, but they will not repent, they dare God to His face, and He has to send them to the pit. He would not do so, if He could *righteously* save them; but there can be no heaven for us, unless we submit to God on earth.

Next, we have *Jehoram* mentioned, and in 2 Chron. xxi. 12-15,—“There came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet”; he may have been no longer able to visit him in person, and writes him a letter announcing God's judgment upon him for his sin.

One last point, after all these messages of judgment, Elijah says: Now I am going to be translated, but I have one thing to do yet; Elisha, if you have never counted the cost of the Lord's path, I want to test you. He reaches Gilgal, where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away, Elisha

will not be shaken off. No, he says, I have set out to follow my master, and I am going to cleave to him until I see him go up. Next he comes to Bethel, house of God; will Elisha not stop there? No, he likes his master better than the brightest spot on earth. They come to Jericho, the city with the curse of God upon it—the ground barren and the waters naught, a picture of the world when all is done to improve it, with all its railways and telegraphs and wonderful facilities for transmitting sight and sound,—*the ground is still barren*. Poor sinners' souls ache yet,—there are still widows' tears and orphans' sighs,—the world is still a place needing jails and lunatic asylums. God says, thus far sin has wrought this havoc in this fair scene, and it never will be right until my Son comes back and sets it right. They reach the brink of the Jordan—what! will Elisha dare to cross over? *There* is a man who will go through death itself to follow his master. Elijah's mantle enables them to go through dry-shod; so if we have faith, we can ask anything in heaven or earth, and we will get it. God will say, Ask what you will my child, it is my good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Shall we ask Him for eternal life, redemption, fitness for heaven? These we have already.—“He hath made us *meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Then we say, We leave it to Thee, Lord. He interprets our desires.—What will we ask for? A double portion of our *Master's Spirit*. We can have that, but never unless we leave Gilgal,—leave Bethel,—leave Jericho,—and go through Jordan,—“reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Then* we can have it,—the Master says. Elisha asks Elijah for a double portion of his spirit; Elijah answers, you have asked a hard thing, but you can have it if you watch me as I go up,—you can have it, if you see me then. In a twinkling he is gone, and now the servant looks after him; and rends his clothes, expressing that his heart misses him. The power of the master comes upon him, his mantle drops down, and he goes back a man marked by the spirit of his master. The spirit of Elijah rests upon him. Have we gone down to Jordan in the death of Christ, and then looked up after Him into heaven; and as His mantle has fallen, the power of his Spirit, have we taken it up,—used it? Let us lay hold of the mantle of our Master now, and go through this evil world so that people will know that His Spirit rests upon us—instead of those who stumble at their souls,—of whom they will say, These people have been with Jesus,—they are like Him! God grant it to us!

THE LORD'S POCKET BOOK.

"Whose pocket-book is that you carry?" said a friend to a business man, as he drew a well-filled wallet from his pocket.

"Why, my own, of course. Whose else could it be?" was the prompt reply.

"To whom the pocket-book belongs depends on another question. If you belong to the Lord, I guess the purse is His also."

"Well," said the man thoughtfully, "I hope I do belong to the Lord; but your remark throws a new light on the subject. It never impressed me before, as it does just now, that I am to carry and use this pocket-book 'my pocket-book,' as my Lord directs. I must think this matter out, for I confess honestly I never have looked at it in the light in which you place it."

This pocket-book question in one which needs to be brought before men more frequently, more faithfully, and more fully than it has been heretofore. Is there not a work here for the pulpit and for the press, as well as for personal effort, which needs to be attended to at once. If Christian men and women can be induced to look to Christ for direction as to the use they shall make of their pocket-books every time they open them, the Church will soon be rescued from covetousness, and the world will feel the power of the gospel.

"OCCUPY TILL I COME,"

was the motto which the writer once saw in golden letters on the pocket-book of a well-known Christian merchant, whose name is in connection with Christ's work in other lands as well as our own.

We would suggest that such a pocket-book be called "The Christian Giver Pocket-book." When you open the book your eyes catch the words, "Honor the Lord with thy substance;" on the opposite side you read, "The silver and the gold is mine." As you open the inmost portion of the book your eyes catch the words of a loving disciple, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Here you find the mainspring of all real Christian effort. The outside motto "Occupy till I come," is only the outgrowth of this plant of love to Christ in the heart.

We shall close this by asking the question with which we started, "Whose pocket book is that which you carry?"—*The Christian Guide.*

THE LORD TRIETH THE RIGHTEOUS.

In this trial of the righteous, one must first think of God's own character and glory; this He vindicates and maintains in those near Him. (Lev. x. 3.)

But it is for the profit also of those who are tried; the precious proof of the constant watchful care of God. "He withdraws not His eyes from the righteous." (Job xxxvi. 7. Psalms xxxiv. 15.)

It is "*if needs be*," that ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations or trials. He humbles us and proves us, that we may know what is in our hearts—feeds us with the bread of faith, but it is to do us good in our latter end. (Deut. viii. 2, 16. Job xlii. 12.) When the trial is met in the truth and power of spiritual life, it developes and brings out much more softness and maturity of grace—a spirit more separated from the world to God, and more acquainted with God. Trial cannot, in itself, confer grace; but under God's hand, it can break the will, and detect hidden and unsuspected evils; so that the new life is more fully and largely developed. God has a larger place in the heart, there is more intelligence in His ways, more lowly dependence, more consciousness that the world is nothing, more distrust of flesh and self. The saint is more emptied of self and filled with the Lord. What is eternal and true, because divine, has a much larger place in the soul; what is false is detected and set aside. There is more ripeness in our relationship with God. We dwell more in the eternal scenes into which He has brought our souls. We can look back then and see the love which has brought us through it all, and bless God with dependent thanksgiving for every trial. Such only purge away the dross, and confirm us in brighter, fuller, and clearer hope; and increase our knowledge of God, self being proportionately destroyed.—From "*Practical Reflections on the Psalms.*"

J. N. D.

ORDINANCES.—An ordinance may be given by the Lord with power in it—as, for instance, the Brazen Serpent. (Num. xxi. 8, 9.) But when the power is gone, holding the "piece of brass," (2 Kings xviii. 4.) becomes a snare and a trap. It must have power in it, or it is worse than nothing. And so, let me say, of all ordinances and service. Like Mount Sinai or Horeb, it is but "Mount Sinai in Arabia," or it takes the dignity of "the Mount of God," according as the Lord adopts it or not. Likewise Jerusalem is but "a city of the Jebusites," if Jesus be not the life and glory of it; it is "the city of the Great King"—"the joy of the whole earth," if He be. The ordinances of the law were "shadows of good things to come," the furniture of God's "beautiful house," or mere "beggarly elements," as Christ used them or disowned them.

"CAREFUL FOR NOTHING."

"This little fellow," said Luther, of a bird going to roost, "has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep, without a care for to-morrow's lodgings, calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him."

Oh, do not be afraid
What the morrow may bring,
The God who has made
Commands me to sing.

He has fed me till now,
Each day dark or bright,
And found me this bough,
Already for night.

I'll soon go to sleep
On the twig of this tree ;
I know he will keep
Good watch over me.

And where I may be
Should the morrow appear,
Does not concern me,
I've nothing to fear.

I only do this—
Receive *all* from Him,
And find it *my* bliss
His goodness to sing.

Dost think all my care
Could do me much good ?
Or provide better fare ?
Or find me more food ?

And why should I fear,
Should aught make me shrink,
Or take to me care,
While He'll for me think ?

I've nought else to do
But to glorify Him ;
His mercies He'll strew,
And I'll sit and sing.—A. Z.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God ? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore ; ye are of more value than many sparrows."—LUKE xii. 6, 7.

SONG OF THE SPARROW.

I'm only a little sparrow,
 A bird of low degree ;
 My life is of little value,
 But the dear Lord cares for me.

He gives me a coat of feathers—
 It is very plain, I know ;
 Without a speck of crimson ;
 For it was not made for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter,
 And it shields me from the rain ;
 Were it bordered with gold and purple,
 Perhaps it would make me vain.

And now that the spring time cometh,
 I will build me a little nest,
 With many a chirp of pleasure—
 In the spot I like the best.

I have no barn nor storehouse,
 I neither sow nor reap ;
 God gives me a sparrow's portion,
 And never a seed to keep.

If my meat is sometimes scanty,
 Close pecking makes it sweet ;
 I have always enough to feed me,—
 And life is more than meat.

I know there are many sparrows :—
 All over the world they are found ;
 But our heavenly Father knoweth
 When *one* of us falls to the ground.

Tho' small, we are never forgotten,
 Tho' weak we are never afraid ;
 For we know that the dear Lord keepeth
 'The life of the creatures He made.

I can't see the thickest forest,
 I can't find on many a spray ;
 I have no chart nor compass,
 But I never lose my way.

I just fold my wings at nightfall,
 Wherever I happen to be ;
 For the Father is always watching,
 And no harm can happen to me.

I am only a little sparrow,
 A bird of low degree ;
 But I know that the Father loves me,
 DOST THOU KNOW HIS LOVE FOR THEE ?

THE LORD ADDED.

"And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved," Acts ii. 47,—or those that were to be saved, *i.e.*, the remnant of Israel whom God was sparing. To the "Assembly" the Lord added such as were being saved from the destructions about to fall on the nation of Israel. This is the force of this verse. It does not raise the question of their ultimate salvation; nor is it a description of their state as saved ones, but it is rather the characteristic or technical name for a class of persons (the three thousand, for instance, on that day) which were being saved from the judgments about to fall on the nation. They were all Jews. See also Luke xiii. 22, 23.

The "Temple" in Jerusalem was an empty house, (Matt. xxiii. 38,) and Israel an untoward generation. "The Assembly" was now the "city of refuge" for the "slayer of blood," where those who bowed to the guilt of their Messiah's blood could flee.

Thus the "Assembly of God" is ever since the "city of refuge" for the poor Jew—guilty of His Messiah's blood; and, fleeing to it, he is safe from the avenger of blood. When the death of the High Priest, anointed with oil, takes place, *i.e.*, in the antitype when the Lord Jesus finishes His present intercessional priesthood on High, the poor Jew may then, and only then, return to the land of his inheritance. (See Num. xxxv.)

It was an analogous state of things, as in 2 Sam. v. and vi., when the Ark was in delivering grace, on Mount Zion with David; and the Tabernacle at Gibeon, with no Ark or presence of Jehovah; analogous, too, to the pitching of the tent outside the camp by Moses (Ex. xxxiii.) and every one that sought the Lord went out to it.



THE LORD JESUS IS ABLE

- "To *save* to the uttermost." Heb. vii. 25.
"To *make* all grace abound." 2 Cor. ix. 8.
"To *succour* them that are tempted." . . Heb. ii. 18.
"To *keep* from falling." Jude, 24.
"To *do* exceeding abundantly above all
that we ask or think." Eph. iii. 20.
"To *subdue* all things unto Himself." . . Phil. iii. 21.
"To *present* you faultless before the
presence of His glory with exceed-
ing joy." Jude, 24.



TABLE

eb. vii. 25.

Cor. ix. 8.

b. ii. 18.

de, 24.

h. iii. 20.

l. iii. 21.

le, 24.

