

THE TRUE TOKEN.

"And she bound the scarlet line in the window."
(Joshua ii. 21.)

"When I see the blood, I will pass over you."
(Exodus xii. 13.)

Why do the priests their trumpets blow,
And round and round the city go ;
While those who bear the Ark of God
Follow the track which they have trod,
And silently a message bear
Of wrath and judgment brooding there ?

Because our God is slow to wrath,
And never pours His judgments forth
Before He seeks with warning word
To make His voice in mercy heard,
Saying to souls, "Why will ye die,
And madly pass the refuge by?"

The seventh day comes—then seven times round
And after that—O solemn sound !
A shout is heard that rends the air,
And fills the sinner with despair ;
While down all Satan's strongholds fall,
And death becomes the lot of all !

And yet not all ; for there's a spot,
Which God in grace has not forgot ;
It is a house which has a sign—
Oh, look ye—'tis the scarlet line !
By God esteemed a token true,
Which *must* with favour meet His view.

Oh, who is she that there abides,
And in the word of grace confides,
That none her shelter shall invade,
Or make her feel of death afraid,

Because the token will be seen
By Him in whom her faith has been ?

Not one who rests on her own works,
Or in whom fancied goodness lurks,
That boasts of fasting twice a week,
Of tithes being paid—and she so meek,
Comparing self to others round,
To them is far superior found.

It is a stray, a lost one found,
Whose ear had heard the far-spread sound,
The true, yet terrible report
Of what by Israel's God was wrought ;
Which true report her heart believed,
When she with peace the spies received.

Rahab, a sinner much despised,
By Him whom she believes, is prized
Who owns her faith, and lets her call
In freest love her kindred all,
The shelter of her house to share,
And find escape from judgment there.

Oh, happy souls ! how blest your lot
Who prove that death can touch you not ;
While those who've not your token known,
Find all their hopes of life o'erthrown ;
Their works, though much esteemed by men,
As " filthy rags " will all seem then.

And say, dear reader, where art thou ?
Oh ! know you what's the token now,
And what for you in grace divine
Now answers to the scarlet line,
To make your fears and terrors cease,
And cause your soul to rest in peace ?

The Blood is now the God-giv'n sign,
The ever precious scarlet line.

The blood of Him, e'en God's own Lamb,
Himself, though man, the great I AM ;
Under its shelter safe am I,
For Jesus won the victory !

And when the Lord himself descends,
And at His shout the gravestone rends'
Making that blessed secret known,
That He has come to claim His own,
With joy He'll meet them in the air,
And greet them as His loved ones there.

RAHAB ; *

OR,

SAFETY, SALVATION, CITIZENSHIP, UNION.

(*Joshua ii and vi.*)

We are told (Ephes. ii. 7) that in the ages to come God is going to "shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." The Spirit of God, however, is careful to remind believers of the fact, that it is grace and nothing but grace, saying, "For *by grace* are ye saved *through faith*, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast," etc.

I know of no case in Scripture that (in type) il-

* Rahab (or more accurately "Rachab" meaning "enlargement") the name of the woman referred to in this paper must not be confounded with "Rahab" (meaning "pride"), used figuratively for Egypt in Psalms lxxxvii. 4. lxxxix. 10, and Is. li. 9, occurring also in Job ix. 13 and xxvi. 12, where it is translated "proud," and in Is. xxx. 7, where it is rendered "strength."

illustrates the above more forcibly and fully than Rahab's history.

In Jericho we have a picture of this world. It was marked out for judgment; and so is this world. Jesus said when about to go to the cross, connecting it therewith, "Now is the judgment of this world," adding, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This He said, signifying what death He should die." The doom of the world was sealed at the cross. We are told also (2 Pet. iii.), that the heavens and the earth are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men; and that the present interval is the period of long-suffering on God's part, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

What was it that was used of God in blessing to Rahab? She tells us herself in chap. ii. 10, that they had heard what Jehovah had done at the Red Sea, which was the place where the power of God was displayed; a type of the death and *resurrection* of Christ. Acts xvii. 30, 31, informs us that "now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath *raised Him from the dead.*" Many in Jericho heard it besides Rahab, and how many there are now that know of the historical fact of the resurrection of Christ, etc. What then is the differ-

ence? Let Scripture answer: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with *them that believed not.*" Ah! there was faith in Rahab, and "faith cometh by hearing." Whereas on the part of them that believed not, "the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. iv. 2).

Never had Jericho *seemed* more secure. *To all appearance* it was impregnable. So with this poor world in these days of progress and advancement in learning—vaunting itself and going on, on, on, to judgment, heedless of what God says.

But "faith is the evidence of things *not seen*" (Heb. xi. 1), and so Rahab (let appearances be what they may) says, "I know that Jehovah hath given you the land" (ver. 9). What then? She wants a place of safety when the judgment falls, for herself and her father's house, and a true token (vers. 12, 13). "Our life for yours," if she acts on the word spoken ("obedience of faith," Rom. ii. 5; xvi. 26); and, "bind this line of scarlet thread in the window." How precious her faith shews itself. She did not put off, saying, "Oh! there's plenty of time. They have to hide for three days at least, and then they have got to go over to the other side of the Jordan and get all the men of war ready, and it will take them some time before they will be ready," etc., etc. No. God's word says (and if any unconverted person reads these lines let him hearken), "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of

salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2), "And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed; *and she bound the scarlet line in the window*" (ver. 21). Not a moment did she lose putting the scarlet line in the window. She was then safe. Let the judgment fall on Jericho, she was perfectly safe. That "scarlet line" is a type of "the precious blood of Christ," and God says "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Like Israel of old in Exod. xii., where Jehovah said, "And the blood shall be to you for a token . . . and when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

But she thought also of the blessing of others: "And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters," etc. (ver. 13). She is heard, but there must be a test for them: "thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household home unto thee" (ver. 19). What, be found under the roof of such an one, one who had been a disgrace to the family! Yes, dear reader, there is not one platform for the thief and the harlot to be saved, and another for the moral respectable person. "There is no difference; *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 22, 23). "Ye must be born again" (John iii.) was said to the moral, upright, religious ruler, and not to the immoral woman of chap. iv. (though of course she needed to be born again). Ah, how many have stumbled at this stumbling-stone!

Pride in the heart, self-sufficiency and utter ignorance of the awful havoc that sin has made, have led many to reject God's way of being saved. Simon, the Pharisee in Luke vii, and the elder brother, in Luke xv., are illustrations of this. If this meets the eye of any one out of Christ, I pray you don't turn away and reject God's *great* salvation. In the *governmental* ways of God *in this world*, it is much better to be honest, upright, etc.; but, if it is a question of the *soul's salvation* and where you will spend eternity, remember the words of "Peter filled with the Holy Ghost," in Acts iv., where, referring to Jesus Christ who had been crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead: "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Chap. vi. 23 shews us that Rahab's family availed themselves of God's way of safety from the judgment about to fall. Though *safe* under the shelter of the "scarlet line," the power of God had not yet acted in their behalf. We are told "the Gospel is the *power of God unto salvation* to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16), shewing that salvation (or "deliverance") is connected with the display of power. We see it in the types as well as in the antitype. In Exod. xii. we get the blood of the lamb as the ground of security, but when we come to Exod. xiv. we find God's power displayed against the enemies of God's people and in their favour, placing them on the other side of the Red

Sea. We see God's love shewn in giving His own beloved Son to be the Lamb who shed His precious blood on Calvary's cross, but there *the enemy's* power was displayed in leading on man (and every class was there represented—kings, ecclesiastics, religious people, educated people, soldiers, common people, thieves) to reject the blessed Lord. God refrained from displaying His power (Matt. xxvi. 53) to deliver His Son. Man, blinded and led on by Satan, even went so far as to use what God had placed in his hands against His Son. God had given His law to the Jew. Not only did he break it himself, but actually used it to condemn God's Son. "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die" (John xix. 7). Power in connection with governmental authority was also given to man, "the minister of God . . . to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (Rom. xiii. 4). This power, which had been connected with Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem, was transferred into the hands of the Gentiles in the person of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 37, 38). Pilate, the representative in Jerusalem of this power in the hands of the Gentiles, used it against Jesus (Luke xxiii. 24, 25; John xix. 15). Thus man used the two things with which he was entrusted by God against His Son. But in the resurrection the power of God was displayed (Rom. i. 4; 2 Cor. xiii. 4; Ephes. i. 19, etc.). Paul desired that the saints may know that they stand before God according to the display of His power which was put

forth when He raised Jesus from the dead ; see Ephes. i. 19, 20, and ii. 6. For the important place that the resurrection holds, and what is connected with it, see Rom. iv. 24-v. 1 ; x. 9 ; 1 Cor. xv. 16, 17 ; 1 Pet. i. 3-5. And so in Rahab's case when the power of God had been displayed against the enemy and on her behalf, then (and not before) it is said, " And Joshua *saved* Rahab, etc., bringing her out of what had been judged and putting her in an entirely different place. And so it is now with the believer, before God and for faith. He is no longer seen as " In Adam," where death holds universal sway, but " In Christ," where there is " no condemnation," and all " made alive" (Rom. viii. 1 ; 1 Cor. xv. 22. See also Col. iii. 1). Rahab was safe when " she bound the scarlet line in the window" (chap. ii. 21), but she was not " saved " till the action in chap. vi. had taken place (see ver. 25).

But that is not all, for we read, " and she *dwelleth* in Israel " (chap. vi. 25); so now, instead of being a dweller in, or citizen of, Jericho, she becomes a dweller in Israel—her citizenship is entirely of a new order and a new country. And so when we turn to the New Testament we find that we who were once " dead in trespasses and sins, . . . walking according to the course of this world," not only have peace and are saved (by grace), but are " no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God " (Ephes. ii. 19). Our relationships

and responsibilities are wholly changed. We belong to an entirely new order of things, as it is written, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature (or 'it is a new creation'); old things are passed away; behold all things are become new; and *all things are of God*," etc. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18). We are "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Pet. ii. 11) as to this world, and "our conversation (or rather 'citizenship' or 'commonwealth') is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20).

But that is not all in the history of Rahab. If we turn to 1 Chronicles ii. we get from the fourth verse the genealogical register of Judah, the Royal tribe. Comparing verse 11 with Ruth iv. 21, and Matt. 1. 5, we find that she was married to Salma (or Salmon), the prince of the royal tribe. Now turn to Romans vii. 4 and 1 Cor. vi. 17, 19, 20, and what wondrous and precious truth is brought before us, and how calculated to speak to the heart! Ah, beloved fellow-believer, you and I are not only safe and saved, but are citizens of heaven, yea more than that, "joined to the Lord" "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, *that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*"

Just think of, and ponder over, the contrast between the "harlot of Jericho" and the "wife of the prince of the Royal tribe," and see therein a wondrous picture of what GRACE hath done for you and me!!! Surely our hearts may well exclaim:

"What heights and depths of love divine,
Will there through endless ages shine!"

What manner of person ought Rahab to be now and how ought she to conduct herself? Not only old things were passed away and all things were become new, but she was a wife—her affections had been won. How would she prove that her heart had been won? Surely by seeking to please the one who won it. Dear reader, do *you* “know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet *for your sakes* He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich?” HAS JESUS WON YOUR HEART? Then He gives you and me an opportunity of proving it, here in this scene where He once was, but has been cast out of; and He tells us, “If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (John xiv. 23). Amongst the “all things new” is the motive of the heart, for it says, “*The love of Christ* constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that *they which live* (have you and I got life at *such cost* to Him?) should not henceforth live unto themselves (we did that long enough when we were citizens of Jericho), but *unto HIM which died for them and rose again*” (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). It is thus, having been united to the Other who has been raised from the dead, and the affections of the heart in exercise: that we “bring forth fruit unto God” (Rom. vii. 4). How sweetly then, to one walking in that spirit, come His precious words, “If any serve Me (not a

'cause' or a 'sect' but 'Me'), let him follow Me (what was His path in this world?); and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve Me, (he wont get any honour in this Jericho but) him will My Father honour" (John xii. 26).

Finally, let us remember, that "no man can serve two masters," and—

"We've now to please but One."

"And WHATSOEVER ye do *in word or deed*, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Col. iii. 17). We shall then be able truthfully to sing,

Oh worldly pomp and glory!
 Your charms are spread in vain!
 I've heard a sweeter story!
 I've found a truer gain!
 Where Christ a place prepareth,
 There *is* my heart's abode,
 There shall I gaze on JESUS!
 There shall I dwell with God!



THE CHILD OF THE BRIDECHAMBER.

Matt iv. 9-17.

The conversion of Matthew, the publican, will not, I believe, be fully enjoyed, if we do not continue with it in our view to the end of ver. 17. For I regard Mathew as being at that moment in the thoughts of the Lord, a new bottle with new wine in it.

The Lord met him in the place where the world had put him. He was a publican, and was sitting

at the receipt of custom. But He passed by, and it was "a day of power," and Matthew was "made willing." He "hearkened diligently" to Christ, and his soul at once "delighted itself in fatness." For he arose and followed the Lord, and then spread a feast for Him.

This was joy and liberty. And Jesus sanctioned it. He sat at Matthew's table. This was done suddenly, it is true. But though *sudden* it was not *premature*—though *unbidden* it did not remain *un-sanctioned*. The Eunuch, in his day, went on his way rejoicing, and that rejoicing, like this of Matthew, was early and sudden, but it was not premature.

And in Matthew there was light, and the mind of Christ, as well as liberty and the joy of Christ. He seated at the same table the publicans and sinners who had been following Jesus—the very people who had brought the Lord of Glory from heaven, and the very people whom the Lord Himself will have at His own table in the day of the marriage-supper; a company of sinners redeemed and washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Matthew thus justly and beautifully understood the mind of Christ. He *knew* Him, though he had but just then been introduced to Him. Like the dying thief. For a short moment is time enough to carry the light and liberty of Christ into the dark and distant heart of either a thief or a publican.

Matthew was in Christ's presence *in joy*. He

was a child of the bridechamber. He feasted the Lord. The King was sitting at his table—because, in spirit, Jesus had already brought Matthew to his banqueting-house. This was the time of “the kindness of his youth,” or, “the love of his espousals;” and in that joy, he had risen up, left all and followed Christ. The world might, therefore, be to him, “a wilderness, a land not sown” (Jer. ii. 2); but with Jesus he feasted. The word of power, the invitation of grace, he had listened to, and to his soul it had been “a feast of fat things,” wine and milk of the King’s providing. It was as a bridegroom, as a lover of his soul, Matthew had apprehended Christ, and was now entertaining Him at his table; and because of this new-found liberty and joy, Matthew is among the children of the bridechamber, a new bottle with the new wine in it.

Neither Moses, nor John the Baptist, could have made such a bottle as this. The word of Christ, heard in the light and energy of the Holy Ghost, could alone have provided it. On Him only, all the vessels of the Lord’s house hang, the “flagons” and the “cups.” The Pharisees and the disciples of John do not even understand this. The one object to the feast *with sinners*—the other, that the feast is not a *fast*. The legalist and the religionist, neither of them, can brook the publican’s, that is the sinner’s, feast. The elder brother complains of the fatted calf. The music and the dancing, as the cheerful sound reaches him in his outside place,

vex him—as the sight of the table and the company in the house of our Levi, irritates the Pharisees as they look on and will not sit.

The good Lord, however, vindicates both the feast and the guests. He lets be heard, there on the spot and at the moment, that He had come to gather such a scene. And He thereby vindicates the host as having done the part of a child of the bridechamber, and as having done it well.

A simple sweet story of grace! Would that one's heart realised the joy that the mind is tracing! Jesus found a publican, a sinner, just at his place in this wretched self-seeking world; he took him up at once, made him a new bottle, and filled him with new wine, like the Samaritan at Jacob's well. She was taken up just *as* she was and *where* she was; and, as another child of the bridechamber, she was sent on her way rejoicing. The world will "fret itself," and "be driven to darkness," as the prophet speaks. The heart of the Pharisees is rent by vexation at such a sight. The publican's feast is lost upon them, the new wine is spilt; as the Lord adds, "No man putteth a new piece of cloth upon an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse: neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish."

But then, days of absence, and therefore days of sorrow of heart, were to come, after these feast-days of His presence; but they had not come *then*.

That day in Matthew's house was "one of the days of the Son of Man." But the heart that can feast a present Jesus will mourn an absent Jesus. The children of the bridechamber will fast during the Bridegroom's, absence, because He is dear to them. It is not the Pharisee's fast of religious service and merit, but the fast of a heart that has been weaned away from other objects, and for the present has lost the presence of its own.

The Wise Virgins are as children of the bridechamber, fasting while the Bridgroom has not as yet returned. The oil in their vessels tells us that they are waiting and watching for Him, with hearts separated to the desire of His return ; and the Matthew who, upon the revelation of the Lord to His soul and in His presence, could spread a table, would be the Wise Virgin that would wait and watch, in separation and desire, during His absence. The oil in the vessel would well suit the soul that in other circumstances had spread the table.

It is not from *experience* but from *desire* only, one's heart traces the path of a child of the bridechamber. Of such a soul some of us will say, "I see from far the beauteous light." There are occasions and seasons when the state of the affections to Christ are sorrowfully discovered ; and sure I am, we need more *earnest* eye for Him. Our look at Him has need to be a nearer one, more fixed and personal. Our sight of Him is too commonly conducted as by the light of others. We are

prone to have Him in *company*, in the reflections and by the help of the scene and circumstances in which we place ourselves. I covet a more *earnest* look at Him ; a look that can reach Him very closely and personally, without aid, or countenance, or company. The single eye knows Him *only*, the earnest eye enjoys Him *deeply*.

Mary at the sepulchre had it, when she could pass by the shining ones, while looking for Him. The sinner of the city had it, when she could let the scorn of the Pharisee pass over her without moving her. The Samaritan had it, when she could forget her water-pot ; and the Eunuch, when he went on heedless of the loss of Philip. Our Matthew had it. And it is this which not only *realizes* Christ, but puts Him in His due supreme place, and *chief room both of attraction and authority*.



PAUL : A GOOD CONSCIENCE BEFORE GOD.

(*Acts xxii.*)

The Holy Spirit often puts Paul forward because in him are manifested the ways of the heart, and this under grace. He displayed a patience truly admirable in caring for the church. We can sound the ways of God and of the human heart in the history that the Holy Spirit has given us of Paul. He had an immense activity and great force of character. This chapter contains circumstances which shew what a good conscience before God is.

If the conscience is not good, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and some, having put it away, have even made shipwreck concerning faith. If a child has offended his father, he is no more at ease before him, and cannot open his heart.

In the history of Paul we see his conversion in verses 3-16. Then he is in a trance or ecstasy (vs. 17-21), in which the Lord commands him to depart from Jerusalem. It is for Him to regulate these things. Paul in his answer says to the Lord that he is precisely the man suited to bear witness for Him at Jerusalem. I have persecuted Thee, and they know it ; will they not see in me the efficacy of Thy grace? Such was the reasoning of Paul. But the Lord takes no account of it.

That which strikes one most is that Paul recalls to the Lord all his iniquity ; and this, because his conscience was perfectly purged before God. It is necessary that it should be thus if one would dare to speak to God in detail of all our offences, of all our sins. There is a false repose in a child of God when the conscience is not perfectly good and opened out before God. Paul replaces before the eyes of the Lord all the detail of his sin. He does not confine himself to saying, Thou knowest all ; he puts all before God, without having the idea that anything can be imputed to him. He talks about his sins as of an affair irrevocably settled. He can even present these sins as being a motive for an apostle, for bearing testimony to Jesus in Jerusalem. Paul reasons with the Lord as a person with his intim-

ate friend. This is what Ananias also does (Acts ix. 13-16).

When God has purified the conscience for us by His perfect grace, the interests of Jesus are ours. Jesus is no longer our judge; He has taken our sins, He has united us to Himself, having taken our cause in hand. Instead of seeing in Jesus our judge, we see in Him a friend. Instead of being affrighted at Christ, we are full of confidence in Him, because we are assured of His love. There is in the heart a complete change.

The reasoning of Paul was true, as we see in 1 Timothy i. 15. God had prepared Paul in that he had been the greatest enemy of the Lord Jesus, and chief of sinners; because if Paul had spoken of other things than God's righteousness by faith and man's perfect pardon on believing God's testimony concerning His Son, his mouth must have been closed.

Peter was prepared by denying Christ, which is even worse than being His enemy. That closed his mouth for every other thing than preaching grace. They had, the one and the other, a profound conviction of sin. If we would be strong and bear testimony to grace, we need to have the sense of the evil whence God has taken us up. If the occasion presents itself, we can speak before men of our sins, provided that all has been laid clearly before God. The Christian converts at Ephesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, brought their books of magic and confessed all their actions. If the love of God is

shed about in our hearts, we have more shame for our sins before God than before men. To have a good conscience we must keep the conscience pure. Paul exercised himself to have in everything a conscience without offence toward God and man. When we have grieved the Holy Spirit, we do not feel the love of God in the same way. A conscience defiled cannot be at its ease before God; and when God enters, there are dark corners that one hides from Him. Impossible then to have that perfect confidence in reasoning with God as with a friend (see 1 John iii. 19-21). If we have beforehand the sense of our feebleness, we shall be forced to seek strength in God.

Can we with boldness recall before God all we have thought, said and done? To be unable to do so, is not to be in the presence of God; to do so is to recall to God His immense grace in having pardoned us. Without Christ, who would venture such things? Sin hidden corrupts the heart, hardens the conscience, and renders us blind and proud. It is of all moment for us that our conscience should be entirely emptied before God. We can afterwards forget these things; we shall not be judged because of it. Be faithful in this sense—to have a pure conscience before God and men.



FRAGMENT.—The presence of God Himself, a Man amongst men, changed the position of everything.