

## CHRIST IN HEAVEN, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT SENT DOWN.

Acts ii. 22-36.

(Notes of a lecture.)

This passage brings very definitely before us (Christ having been exalted as man by, and to, the right hand of God) how, consequently, the disciples received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. This runs through all the instruction given here. The place of Christ, having finished redemption, is to sit now at the right hand of God, "expecting till His enemies be made His footstool" (Heb. x. 13). He has not yet taken His own throne; He is seated on the Father's throne. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. iii. 21). Thence He will "come again," as He says in John xiv., and receive us unto Himself.

Christianity is not the accomplishment of promise. Of the earthly part the Jews were the centre. But God meanwhile "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephes. i. 3); and then, till Christ comes again, He is sitting on the throne of the Father, and has sent the Holy Ghost down.

The Christian is one in whom the Holy Ghost dwells, between the accomplishment of redemption by Christ and His coming again. The thought

and purpose of God about us is that we should "be conformed to the image of His Son." The Holy Ghost is given to dwell in us meanwhile, to dwell in us individually—collectively too, but I speak now of the individual aspect. That is what the Christian is : Christ is his life, his righteousness ; it is a ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 8, 9). "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9); it does not say, "if he is not converted," though that would be true, of course. You see so many saints everywhere who are not settled in their relationship with God ; the present power for this is the Holy Ghost come down.

The coming of the Lord Jesus is not simply a little bit of knowledge which we may add to the rest, but it is the hope of the Christian. If we die we go to Him, but what is held out to us is that the Christian is waiting for Christ "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" (Heb. ix. 28). If we die we go up to Him, and blessed truth it is too ; but that Christ shall come, this is the hope of the Christian—the only full hope. "To depart and to be with Christ, which is far better," true, but this is not the purpose of God for us ; the purpose of God is that we shall be like Christ (Rom. viii. 29, 30). I would not be like Christ with my body in the grave, and my spirit in paradise ; the expectation of the

Lord's coming makes the *Person* of Christ to be so much before the soul. I am going to see Him and to be like Him. Scripture does not talk of going to heaven; "Absent from the body, present *with the Lord*" (2 Cor. v. 8). "To depart and be *with Christ*, which is far better" (Phil. i. 23); always, the thought is *going to Christ*. What we all want personally, is, that Christ should have a larger place in the heart: "Rooted and built up in Him"; "To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." "Christ is all," and He is "in all" as the power of life; having become our life, He is before our souls to fill them.

Christ is the motive for the Christian for whatever he does, whether he eats or drinks; and his desires are never satisfied, and never can be, till he be with, and like, Christ. Therefore, he is always waiting for Him. The Thessalonians were converted "to wait for His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. i. 10). The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, instead of being a little bit of prophetic knowledge, is interwoven with all the thoughts and condition of the Christian. Grace has appeared teaching us (Titus ii. 11, 12), and the grace that has appeared is the grace that saves. When the Lord went up on high the Holy Ghost came down, and through the Holy Ghost we have not only the knowledge but the fruits of the place He has given us. The seal of the Holy Ghost is put upon us; the presence of the Holy Ghost is that which gives the full knowledge of our place and

blessedness. Redemption, which brings us to God, is finished; we are exercised afterwards—all that goes on, but our relationship is never in question. I believe the government of God is most important when we are children. "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous" (Job xxxvi. 7). This is most important and blessed in its place; but the great thing is, first of all, to have a right apprehension of the place where God has put us. The very names of God go along with this. To the patriarchs He was "God Almighty," when they were strangers and pilgrims; to Abraham He said, "I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward" (Gen. xv.). To Israel He had given promises, and He takes the name of Jehovah, the name of One who, having given promises, never rests until they are fulfilled. Then, in the Revelation, He speaks of Himself as the One "who is, and who was, and who is to come" (Rev. i. 8). All that was concerned, in a certain sense, with this world; but it is not so with us. We are called to suffer with Christ (because Christ has been rejected), and this with the full knowledge of redemption. "And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii. 26). God has another name, "Most High." You never find the name "Father" from Psalm i. to cl. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ,

whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). "Life and incorruptibility" have been brought "to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10). The name "Almighty" did not carry eternal life. "Jehovah" fulfilled promises, but the giving of eternal life was not connected with that name; but the Father sent the Son," "that we might live through Him" (1 John iv. 9). "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John i. 2). "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11). When we receive the Son, we get into the place of children; it is the force of the expression: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God" (John i. 12. *Rev. Ver.*) The Son is there, and we are associated with Him completely and fully. In Matthew iii. the Holy Ghost comes down upon Him, and the Father's voice says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." There was the full revelation of the Trinity (and this is what we have in Christianity); we have the Son as man, the Holy Ghost coming down in bodily shape like a dove, and the Father's voice, in that wondrous scene of Christ taking His place publicly as man. "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John i. 34).

The Old Testament saints were quickened surely; but if you take Galations iv., you find they

were not in the condition of sons, "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all" (ver. 1). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (ver. 6). That had not been the case before ; they had been ordered to do this and that under the law.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat falleth into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24). He was totally alone, a true man in His relationship with God ; even when He declared His Father's name to His disciples, they did not understand a bit of it. Then you see redemption brings us into this place.

Let me turn back to the basis of all this. Here I am a child of Adam, with an evil nature and sins ; Christ bore my sins, and that is al' perfectly settled for ever—if it is not, it never can be ; but it is "once for all," and "for ever" (Heb. x. 10 and 14) ; there is no other application as regards the putting away of my sins in God's sight. He does not impute them for the simple blessed reason that Christ has borne them, and He is sitting at the right hand of God, because it is done. Many a true honest soul sees only past sins put away, but what about sinning afterwards ? Go to some, and they will send you back to your baptism, while others go back to the blood. "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, . . . can never with those sacrifices which they offered year

by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. x. 1); "In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (Heb. ix. 9). If I go into God's presence, I have not the most distant thought that He imputes anything to me as guilt; that is what is wanting in so many souls; "Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of *sins*" (Heb. x. 2). He does not say sin; the old stock is there. "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (Heb. x. 3). I go into the presence of God now, and I see Christ *sitting*, because by one offering He has settled everything—"And every priest *standeth* daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever *sat down* on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool" (Heb. x. 11-13). He *sits* at God's right hand, because He has finished that work perfectly: "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (ver. 14). He has set them apart to God, and He has perfected for ever their consciences.

"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (Heb. ix. 8). Now we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x.

19). The thing is done ; it was prophesied of before, but now it is done. " For ever" here means, uninterruptedly. If I come to God, Christ is always there, and my conscience is always perfect. I may go and humble myself in the dust if I have dishonoured Christ ; it is in the holiest that I learn how bad sin is. I could not be before God in the light until the veil was rent, but " by one offering" Christ has perfected my conscience. When I go to God I find Christ, who bore my sins, sitting at the right hand of God because He has done it. This will make me see sin a great deal more than anything else. I have got a new nature, and I am in the light as God is in the light.

This turns the question from righteousness to holiness. So long as I am connecting it with a question of acceptance, it is righteousness that I want : suppose righteousness is settled, then I abhor the sin because it is sin, for itself. " Well, but," you say, " without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." That is quite true, but you are looking for righteousness, not holiness. The clearance in that way is absolute ; but there is another thing which gives my soul its place before God. Not only Christ died for my sins, but I died with Christ ; the tree is bad, not only the fruit : then I reckon myself dead. In the first part of Romans (*i. e.*, up to chap. v. 11) we get nothing about experience. Suppose I owed £100 and that it was paid for me, no experience would be in question ; but suppose I say to you, " You are

dead to sin," perhaps you would say, "Indeed I am not; it was working in me this morning." Till you are clear about that, you are not settled in your place. The old tree has been cut down and grafted with Christ. In Romans vi., I reckon myself dead; "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" (ver. 11); in Colossians iii. 3, we get, "For ye are dead;" and in 2 Corinthians iv. 10, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." We find God's estimate and faith's estimate; and in Galatians ii. 19 we have the summary of the whole thing, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." When I find a nature working in me contrary to Christ, I say it has been crucified with Christ, and I do not own it. "What the law could not do . . . God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). He has forgiven the sins and condemned the tree that produced them, but the tree that was condemned has died with Christ.

I have to learn thus, by the power of the Spirit of God, not merely that what the old tree produced has been blotted out, but that Christ is my life; "I am crucified with Christ," and sin in the flesh has been condemned. Where? Where you died with Christ; when Christ was there for sin, sin in the flesh was condemned, not forgiven; it died, for faith, where it was condemned. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me

from the body of this death ! I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vii. 24, 25). Looked at as in the old man, I died with Christ. When we believe in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we get the sealing of God (Ephes. i. 13). Because the blood of Christ is upon me, then the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in me. In Acts x., we find that on faith in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, they received the forgiveness of their sins, and then the Holy Ghost came on them. As in the figure in the Old Testament, we are washed, sprinkled with blood, and then anointed with oil. The Holy Ghost comes, then I know where I am, that my standing is in Christ : " There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus " (Rom. viii. 1). " In Christ " is my standing before God ; the Holy Ghost is the present power of it all ; the work is Christ's.

I get the other point, knowledge of salvation, and knowledge that I am not a child of Adam but a child of God. " To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins " (Luke i. 77). " Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ; " " The same is He which baptizeth in the Holy Ghost " (John i. 29, 33). He could not baptize with the Holy Ghost till He had died, and was risen and glorified. I know the place I have got into ; the treasure is in an earthen vessel, but I have got the knowledge of salvation. " Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty " (2 Cor. iii. 17). It is that which

enables me to say with truth, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." There I get the accomplishment of redemption, and Christ sitting at God's right hand, and the purpose of God; as the blood on the lintel and door-posts made the Israelites free, and they were brought out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, out of an old place into a new (Ex. xii. and xiv.), so that Moses could sing, "Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation" (Ex. xv. 13); "Thou shalt bring them in" (verse 15). I get these two things, complete redemption is one; the other I have not got yet: Christ has entered as our forerunner, I have not entered yet, but the Holy Ghost is "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Ephes. i. 14). Christ "endured the cross, and despised the shame," and He is set down as man at the right hand of God. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Rom. v. 1, 2). I know by the Holy Ghost that I am in divine favour. We have these three things.

1. We are justified, and have peace with God.
2. We stand in present grace, in divine favour.
3. When Christ comes again, we shall be in glory with him, "That the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and has loved them, as Thou hast loved Me" (John xvii. 23). It is "That the

world may *know*," not believe ; this ought to be now, but it is very far from it. When it sees us in glory, it cannot help knowing ; when we appear in the same glory with Christ, people will think, " Why these people that we trampled under foot are in the same glory with Christ ! " *We* do not wait for that ; the world will know when we are in the same glory with Christ, but now we know by the Holy Ghost, " That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them " (John xvii. 26). Beloved friends, just think of that ; your hearts ought to have the consciousness that He loved you as He loved Jesus ! A child might say, " I am a foolish child, I think little about my mother ; " but he has no uncertainty about his mother's love to him. We never apprehend all God's love to us ; still we know we are children and sons. It is no uncertain place ; I know I am loved as Christ is loved ; we have poor wretched hearts, that is quite true. A true child does not measure its mother's love ; and I am sure it could not, but it knows and is in it.

We have got " the adoption of sons. " " Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father " (Gal. iv. 6). I have got the consciousness of it ; I know my place. We know God as our Father. The soul that has the Spirit of God dwelling in him knows not only the clearing of sins of the old man, but that he is in the second Man ; and, knowing it, he cries, " Abba, Father. " For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one ; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren " (Heb. ii. 11). They are " all of one, " one set, as it were. What is my life ?

Christ. What is my righteousness? Christ. He is not one with the unconverted world; there is no union in incarnation (see John xii. 24). He stood for us at the cross, but He has united us with Himself in glory. If I take the Father's relationship with Christ as man, He is not ashamed to call us brethren. In Psalm xxii., He says: "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare Thy name unto My brethren." His work was finished; as soon as that was done, He comes out in resurrection, past the power of death and Satan, and He sends this message to His disciples: "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God and your God" (John xx. 17). He had never said that before, though He called them "sister" and "mother" and "brother" in a general way. Beloved brethren, what we want is to see how Christ has united us to Himself, to see the way God has brought us into the place of the second Man, as sin brought us into the place of the first man.

One point more, our connection with Christ: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter"; "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (John xiv. 16, 20). Ah, it is a terrible thing that saints are so far from Scriptural ground as to say that we cannot know! We are "in Christ" (Rom. viii. 1); "accepted in the beloved" (Ephes. i. 6); and we "have received the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15). One thing more, besides the point I am on; Christ is in us. You cannot live on in sin, you are dead; that is where Christian responsibility is, not in connection with his acceptance ("By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"). I know He is in me, having bought me at all cost, and there I see re-

sponsibility. I get the two things in Rom. viii. "No condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," and "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." You have been delivered, you have redemption in Christ, and you have been sealed with the Holy Ghost. I own nothing as life in the Christian but Christ; the whole of our lives should be the expression of Christ, and nothing else; our "speech alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. iv. 6). Only one other thing, beloved friends: God is love, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; therefore we get, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him" (1 John iv. 16). We have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, so our bodies are temples: God is there in the perfection of His own nature; we have to watch not to grieve such a guest. It is through the Holy Ghost that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Rom. v. 5); that is the key to everything. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also" (ver. 3); it is the key to everything; I want it, and He sent it. Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, and the Holy Ghost comes down, giving us the consciousness of the present relationship in which we are to walk.

"Be ye therefore followers ("imitators") of God, as dear children" (Ephes. v. 1). How are we to imitate God? Was not Christ, God? I earnestly desire that all our hearts may get hold, through the power of the Spirit of God, of the place we are brought into, that we may have the consciousness of this, the knowledge of it through the Holy Ghost until we go to be with Him. The Lord give you to have this consciousness. Why, beloved, to think of the Father's love at work, and the Son of God having gone down to death for you, it is not much to expect!

The Lord give us to feel what we owe Him, that our whole desire may be to glorify Him.

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## MEDITATIONS ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

(Continued from page 140.)

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### *Victories.*

#### (Chapter XV.)

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Chapters xiv and xv form really a single narrative, and before going further, I would like to return to the consideration of two or three points common to both.

The first is, that God always works out His ways, and that too through a multitude of circumstances that are far from answering to His thoughts. Yea, further, He uses these very circumstances to make good His purposes, which are, in the case we are considering, the deliverance of Israel by an instrument moulded by Him with this end in view; and this explains the words, "It was of the Lord" (chap. xiv. 4). God brings about His ways, not only by means of things that He approves of, but also by making, our very faults, His discipline, the opposition of Satan and of the world, in a word, everything to conduce to the desired result. Unfaithfulness on our part does not disturb the ways of God. This is seen, in a remarkable manner, all through the life of Samson, and can be verified in the history of the Church. These ways of God all culminate in victory and in the blessings consequent thereon. How encouraging to prove it! Very often, to our confusion, *our own* ways come to nothing. Witness Samson, who did not take the daughter of the Philistine as his wife. Frequently do the children of God find

themselves unable to proceed farther in the path they are upon, because of some divine obstacle blocking up the way, and they are forced to retrace their steps with humiliation. At other times, our course, which should have been continued in the power of service, is suddenly interrupted without return to the point of deviation being possible. Samson again furnishes us with the proof. Nothing like this ever occurs in the ways *of God*. They overrule our ways. It was by the death of a blind Samson that Jehovah achieved the greatest victory. A Moses, whose way was stopped before entering the land of promise, was forthcoming on the holy mount in the same glory as Christ.

The second point is, that mixed as Samson's motives were, "he sought an occasion" in a time of ruin (chap. xiv. 4). And wherefore? To deliver Israel by smiting the enemy that held them in bondage. May this motive be ours also. "Redeeming the time" (seizing opportunities), says the apostle, "because the days are evil" (Eph. v. 16). May we then, Nazarites ourselves, have our hearts filled with tender pity for our brethren who are still in bondage, under the world's yoke, and seek occasion, in love and the energy of the Spirit, to deliver them from it. These two chapters strikingly illustrate the fact that Samson sought an occasion against the Philistines, and that the intensity of his desire enabled him to find it, and that too when the slothful and indifferent, meeting an obstacle in their path, would have turned back.

A third expression constantly occurs in these chapters: "The Spirit of Jehovah came upon him" (chap. xiii. 25; xiv. 6, 19; xv. 14). When we see these words we may be sure that the conflict is entirely according to God and without mix-

ture. We likewise may achieve such victories, not by being dependent upon a temporary action of the Holy Spirit coming upon us from without, but because we have, in virtue of redemption, been *sealed* by the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of power. Nevertheless, it is important to remark that we cannot estimate the *moral* worth of a man of God by the greatness of his gift. Nowhere in the Scripture do we find a stronger man than Samson, nor one weaker morally. The New Testament gives us a similar example in the Assembly at Corinth, which came behind in no gift of power, and yet permitted every sort of moral evil in their midst. Samson was a Nazarite, upon whom the Spirit of God often came, but he was also a man whose heart had never been judged, and so his state was not in keeping with the gift he exercised. Not once, from the beginning to the end of his career, did he hesitate following the path of his lusts; going, without a struggle, wherever his heart led him. Notwithstanding the power of the Spirit, he was a carnal man. When he visited his wife with a kid, his kindness was carnal; when the world proposed giving him another woman, which he did not care for, in exchange for the one he so earnestly desired, his anger was carnal. Yet thus it ever is that the world treats us, to our loss and shame, when we have desired anything from it. That which it gives, after so many fine promises, has no value to the child of God, and cannot satisfy him. In the matter of the three hundred foxes, the Spirit of Jehovah did not come upon him, for, as I have already said, his anger was carnal. He wanted to "*do a displeasure*" to the Philistines, by attacking them in their outward circumstances; and, with a view to this, resorted to a device which does not

at all seem to be according to the mind of God. The enraged Philistines went up and burnt his wife, who was their accomplice, and her father.

Samson found in their vengeance (ver. 7) a fresh opportunity for doing the work of God. Here again we find much mixture: "Yet will I be avenged of you," and it is not added that the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him; but if He did not openly appear, God was behind the scene, and, in spite of all, it was a deliverance for the people. "And he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam." It must necessarily be the case, that the believer finds himself isolated, when he takes sides with God against the world, and Samson understood this. Those who would be witnesses for Christ in a day of ruin must expect to be set aside, and this, too, alas! by the people of God.

The three thousand men of Judah, the stillness of whose servitude was disturbed by Samson's testimony, consent to help the world which wishes to get rid of him; preferring the yoke of the Philistines to the difficulties and risks arising from this testimony. No where in the book of Judges do we find a lower moral state than this. Not only does Israel no longer cry to Jehovah, but *they do not wish* to be delivered. The man of God, their rightful deliverer, was an incumbrance to them. The Philistines said: "We are come up, to do to him as he hath done to us" (ver. 10). Judah said: "What is this that thou hast done unto us?" (ver. 11). In thus identifying themselves with the enemy who enslaved them, Judah was no longer Judah, but morally exchanged their name for that of the Philistines. Fellowship between them was complete; both were enemies of the testimony, though Judah was far the worse, preferring slav-

ery to the unhindered power of the Spirit of God, of which Samson was the instrument.

Samson allowed them to bind him, and this finds its counterpart in the history of Christendom. The people of God have acted towards the Holy Ghost in a similar manner that Judah did to Samson. His power disturbed them; and not wanting the liberty of the Spirit, they have hindered His action, fettering Him, as it were, with their new methods, like the new cords with which Judah bound their liberator, saying to him all the time: "Surely we will not kill thee." Samson could have acted very differently, for these worthless fetters were to him like so many spider's webs, as he proved later on. The strong man laughed at their new cords, but he consented to be bound. What a responsibility for the three thousand men of Judah who had such a slight appreciation of the gift that God had given them! What shame for them! Surely there was no shame for Samson. If anything casts merited reproach upon the Christians that are linked with the world, it is the restraint put upon the free working of the Holy Spirit among them, because His action embarrasses them, and they are at a loss what to do.

But, at a given moment, the power of the Spirit bursts all bonds. "The Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands" (ver. 14). Then God made use of a bone cast away in the fields, the worthless jawbone of an ass, to gain a signal victory, and the place was called Ramath-lehi, from the name of the despicable instrument used in the combat. Such instruments are we in the hands of the Spirit of God (see 1 Cor. i. 27-29), but it pleases the Lord to associate our names

with His victory, as if the jawbone of an ass had slain "heaps upon heaps."

After his victory Samson "was sore athirst" (ver. 18). The activity of the believer is not all; conflict does not quench the thirst. Something was necessary for Samson to meet his personal need, otherwise, as he said, "I shall die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised." If we do not wish to lose the results of conflict, we must use the word of God for our refreshment, and not only for combat. In his extremity, Samson called on Jehovah, who showed him a refreshing spring flowing out of a rock cleft by God's hand. The rock everywhere and always is Christ. "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37). Let us get back into Christ's presence after conflict. His word will refresh us. Samson was alive to the dangers which closely attend victory. The fact that God had "given this great deliverance into the hand of His servant" would be very likely to make us "fall into the hands of the uncircumcised," if the soul does not at once seek shelter, refreshment and strength by the waters of grace, of which Christ is the dispenser. In that day of blessing, Samson was characterized by these two things: a great activity in conflict for others, and, as to himself, a humble dependence upon God, which enabled him to avail himself of the resources in Christ.

The first part of Samson's history closes with these words: "And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years" (ver. 20). It contains, notwithstanding all the failures which we have pointed out, God's approbation of the public career of His servant. The ensuing chapter shows us the loss of his nazariteship.

*(To be continued, D.V.)*