

THE SERVANT FOR EVER.

EX. XXI. 5, 6.

(An old hymn slightly altered.)

Sweet to ponder o'er His footsteps,
 All the service of His love ;
 And adoringly remember,
 Grace 'twas brought Him from above !
 Learn His love beside the manger,
 Learn it on the stormy wave,
 By the well, and in the garden—
 Learn it by the Cross and grave.

Yet not only in remembrance
 Do we watch that stream of love ;
 Still a mighty torrent flowing
 From the throne of God above.
 Still a treasure that's uncounted,
 Still a story half untold,
 Unexhausted and unfathom'd,
 Fresh as in the days of old.

Christ, at God's right hand, unwearied
 By our self-will and our sin,
 Day by day, and hour by hour,
 Welcoming each wand'rer in ;
 On His heart amidst the glory,
 Bearing all our grief and care,
 Ev'ry burden, ere we feel it,
 Weighed and measured in His prayer.

Fragrant thus, with priestly incense,
 Each distress, each sorrow tells
 Thoughts that fill the heart of Jesus
 In the glory, where He dwells.
 All His love, His joy, His glory,

By His Spirit here made known,
 Whilst that Spirit speaks the sorrows
 Of His saints before the throne.

He, of old the Man of Sorrows,
 Pleads before the Father's face,
 Knowing all the needed solace,
 Claiming all the needed grace.
 We, so faithless and oft weary,
 Serving with impatient will ;
 He unwearied in our service,
 Gladly ministering still.

Girded with the golden girdle,
 Shining as the mighty sun,
 Still His piercéd hands will finish
 All His work of love begun.
 On the night of His betrayal,
 In the glory of the throne,
 Still, with faithful patience, washing
 All defilement from His own.

When the Father's house resoundeth
 With the music and the song ;
 When the bride in glorious raiment
 Sees the One who loved so long.
 Then for new and blessed service
 Girt afresh, will He appear,
 Stand and serve, before His angels,
 Those who waited for Him here.

He who led them through the desert,
 Watch'd and guided day by day,
 Turn'd the flinty rocks to water,
 Made them brooks beside the way--
 He will bring them where the fountains
 Fresh and full spring forth above,
 Still, throughout the endless ages,
 Serving in the joy of love.

A SERVANT FOR EVER.

EXODUS XXI. 2-6.

It will be profitable to look at what Scripture says about the Lord Jesus as "The Servant," and to meditate a little season on the moral glory attaching to Him as such.

Another has very beautifully and truly said, "Love delights to serve;" and we see it exemplified in perfection in the blessed Lord. "In all things He hath the pre-eminence" is as true of Him as the Servant as in every other position that He has ever filled.

How brightly the above passage in Exodus lights up when we see in it a type of Him as the Servant! Phil. ii. 7, shows us that He "took upon Him the form of a servant" when He "was made in the likeness of men." It was a new thing for the one "by whom all things were created" (Col. i. 16); who "spake, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 9), to be in the position of receiving commands; and so we find in Ps. xl. 6, it is said of Him, "Mine (lit. 'for me') ears hast thou digged (margin). Then in Heb. x. 5, the Holy Spirit accepts the Septuagint rendering (conveying as it does the right thought), "a body hast thou prepared for me," thus identifying what Ps. xl. 6-8 says with Phil. ii. 7.

What led Him to take this place? "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In keeping with this, we

get Him saying on one occasion, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business" (Luke ii.); on another, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John iv.), showing what was ever before Him. Did the selfishness of His disciples manifest itself in "strife" as to "which of them should be accounted the greatest" (Luke xxii.), he tells them that what obtains in the world was not to be the case among them, adding, "I am among you as *He that serveth*." O beloved reader, what a rebuke to the selfishness of (the disciples' hearts, do you and I say?—nay, but of) your heart and mine; and not only selfishness, but pride, when we find that men—yea even the people of God—nowadays, object to be called "a servant." If there is one position that, more than another, has been lit up with moral glory, in this world of pride and selfishness, it is that of servant. In connection with this very position we find some of the most precious teaching in the New Testament, Ephes. vi. 5-8; Col. iii. 22-25; (How exquisite for the heart, where the eye is single, are those words in ver. 24, "Ye *serve* the Lord Christ." What higher object could a saint have?); 1 Tim. vi. 1-5; Tit. ii. 9-14; 1 Pet. ii. 18-25.

How full of moral beauty is the way that the Spirit of God portrays Him in the Servant's place in Is. l. 4.* (having, in the previous verse, shewn

* Delitzsch renders "learned" as "disciple" in both occurrences in this verse.

Him as the One who "clothes the heavens with blackness, etc.," where He is represented as waiting "morning by morning" for the "word in season;" and what "apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 11) were "the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth!" (Luke iv. 22). Well might the officers say, "Never man spake like this man!" (John vii. 46). Surely we may connect Mark i. 35, * with Is. l. 4. Beloved reader, what lessons and what an example for you and me in these two scriptures! If we were found acting upon them more, what the Holy Spirit enjoins in James i. 19 would be made good in us, in increasing measure.

All through His wondrous pathway in this world do we see the same perfection as the servant, ever doing His Father's will. In Gethsemane, in all the solemn agony of that moment, with the cross before Him, when praying, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me," He immediately adds, "nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done" (Luke xxii). Thence He passes onward, in the path of obedience, to the cross, "Obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii).

Now let us return to Ex. xxi. We have glanced at Him as the Servant and seen what perfection shone out in Him as such. Now comes the question, "Will He 'go out free'?" That He could

* Mark's gospel presents the blessed Lord in His Servant character, but noting in ver. 1, that He was "the Son of God."

have done so John x. 18, and Matt. xxvi. 53, show plainly enough. But no: "I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free" were about to be fulfilled. There was not only the One whose will He came to do (and which He did *perfectly*), but, "my wife and my children." Turn to Ephes. v. 25-29, 32; and Heb. ii. 13-15, and I think we shall there find what corresponds to the type.

In Ps. xl. 4 we have seen ears digged or prepared for Him, and that that corresponded to His taking the Servant's place. Now it is the question not of His being a servant, but of His being a SERVANT FOR EVER. The cross answers to Ex. xxi. 6, and so we find in Scripture that He never gives up being a man. God the Father has righteously decreed that He shall judge the world as Son of Man (John v. 22, 23, 27; Acts xvii. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 25-27); and that all things shall be put under Him as such (Ps. viii.; Heb. ii. 5-8). After the millennial reign, even in the eternal state, He will not cease being a man (1 Cor. xv. 28). O, dear reader (if you are a believer), that blessed One has served you and me, where, and in a way, that no one else could. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii.), may well come before us in this connection, and may the Spirit of God apply those words to our hearts with such power that "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 should not henceforth live unto themselves, but *unto* HIM which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. v.), may be practically true of us during the "little while" that He leaves us here to "occupy till I come."

We find then that He has served us on the cross, bearing the judgment of God for us and shedding His precious blood—our only title to glory.

If we turn to John xiii. we shall find a precious picture of His present service. "His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father." Was he going to cease serving them? Oh, no! Love delighting to serve, as has been said, His service is as unceasing as His love; so now "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end;" and so "He riseth from supper and laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

The reader will notice that it is water in the basin, not blood. When a person has taken his true place before God as a sinner and rested in simple faith on the work the Lord Jesus accomplished on Calvary's cross, he is "justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39), has "peace with God" (Rom. v. 1), and is a "child of God" (Gal. iii. 26). Then comes the question of communion, which the

least allowance of evil, or of defilement contracted, interrupts. The Lord uses the simplest things of every day life to teach lessons by. In those countries where they wore sandals, however clean the individual might otherwise be, the dust was very apt to settle on the feet as they walked about. So we, in this sin-defiled world, are very apt (through lack of dependence and watchfulness) to contract defilement, and this interrupts communion. In ver. 10 the first "washed" is rather "bathed" or "washed all over" and corresponds to the action of the word when we are "born of water" (symbol of the word, Ps. cxix. 9; John xv. 3; Ephes. v. 26; cf. 1 Pet. i. 23, 25) "and of the Spirit," and of which there can be no repetition, for "He that is washed needeth not save to wash (a different word, and used more particularly with reference to the feet and hands) his feet, but is clean every whit."

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

How often, though, dear fellow-believer, have you and I, since we have been the Lord's, lacked watchfulness and failed in dependence, and done or said something naughty. Perhaps, too, we have gone on our way and forgotten, or tried to forget, about it; or, what is still worse, made an excuse for it. But in spite of all our efforts to do so, it has kept coming before us again and again, till at

last we have been broken down in self-judgment and confession ; and the soul, looking back, said, "Why, here have I, after all the love and grace I have been brought to know, gone and taken my pleasure (be it only for a moment) in that which caused the Lord Jesus His agony on Calvary's cross"—or some such words ; and, going to the Father, a simple and full confession has been made (specifying what has been done), acting as 1 John i. 9 shows us. But what has produced this ? The blessed Lord Jesus has had His eye on us all the time ; and, in His unceasing, unwearied love has stooped down to wash our feet, by His Spirit applying the word to the conscience. John xiii. shows us His side of it ; and 1 John i. 9 the effect in us.

Lastly we come to His future service. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching ; verily I say unto you, that *He shall gird Himself*, and make them sit down to meat, *and will come forth and serve them*" (Luke xii. 37). *He will Himself minister* to our joy, when we are with Him in glory. What surpassing love ! Well may we sing :

It passeth *knowledge!* that dear love of Thine,
My Jesus ! Saviour ! yet this soul of mine
Would of Thy love, in all its breadth and length,
Its height and depth and everlasting strength,
Know more and more.

It passeth *telling!* that dear love of Thine,
My Jesus ! Saviour ! yet these lips of mine

Would fain proclaim to sinners far and near
 A love which can remove all guilty fear,
 And love beget.

It passeth *praises!* that dear love of Thine,
 My Jesus! Saviour! yet this heart of mine
 Would sing a love so rich—so full—so free,
 What brought a rebel sinner, such as me,
 Nigh unto God.

And Jesus, when Thee face to face I see,
 When on Thy lofty throne I sit with Thee;
 Then of Thy love in all its breadth and length,
 Its height and depth, its everlasting strength,
 My soul shall sing.

One feels how poor these few words have been on this wondrous subject, for what deep, full, moral glory shines out, and ever will, in connection with the Lord Jesus as the The Servant! And when he comes forth as the Conqueror (Rev. xix) having on His blessed head "many crowns," methinks that of THE SERVANT will (if it be possible) outshine all the others in its surpassing brilliancy.

Finally, what practical effect, dear reader, will this little meditation have on you and me? I will close by simply quoting two or three Scriptures, praying that the Spirit may seal them home with power in your soul and mind. "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (John xx. 21). "Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your *servant*; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom" (Matt. xx. 27, 28).

LIVING TO SELF-OR TO CHRIST ?

(2 COR. V. 14-16.)

The thought uppermost in my mind, in reading these verses, is just as simple as it is *of all importance*, and that is, beloved brethren, *what are we living for?* A weighty question, I need not say, and it is of moment to our souls that we should not shrink from answering it, and that we should answer it in the fear of God. Verse 15 was peculiarly before me, "He died for all, that they which live," that is, the believers, etc. All were dead, believers and unbelievers alike, all were ruined men before God ; and the death of Christ is the proof of the condition of every soul naturally ; that is, all are lost—all lifeless toward God ; that even the Son of God, who is everlasting life, should need to suffer—should find no portion but death in this world, is the proof that there was no life in it. Everything lay so irretrievably in death, that for Him to die is the only door of deliverance out of it. And "He died for all." It is not said that all should live, though undoubtedly there was life in Him adequate for every soul, life everlasting in Christ : but then, in fact, no soul did, none would, receive Him, not one. Grace therefore has wrought, and given some to receive Him. And therefore it is added, "He died for all, that they which live," that is, they who do believe in Him and have life therefore—"that they which live

should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." Now, there is never a question day by day that arises, but what brings out one of these two things, that is, whether we are living to ourselves or to "Him who died for us and rose again." And have I not to own the sad truth, how constantly we have to rebuke our souls? How often, not to say in general, the first impulse of the heart is to take that view of everything which would minister to our pleasure, or gratification, or importance? What is this but living to ourselves? When any question comes before us, when anything, either in the way of an evil to be avoided, a loss to be shunned, or something to be gained, some object that comes before us, is it not our tendency to look upon how it will bear upon us and to give it that turn which will be for our profit or advantage in some way or another? I do not say always personally: it may be for our family, for our children, looking onward to the future or at the present. Now, we are always wrong when we do it. God would not have us to neglect the real good of those dear to us and dependent on us; but the question is, whether we trust ourselves or Christ. Are we adequate judges of what is best for our children? Are we the least biased and the wisest to decide on that which would be for, not the passing profit, but the good which endures for ever? It comes to a very simple issue. We have two natures—one which is always grasping for something that will

please and exalt itself, and another which, by the grace of God, is willing to suffer for Christ,—and clings to what is of Christ. But as the apostle says (1 Cor. xv. 46), not that which is spiritual was first, but the natural, and afterwards the spiritual. So, it is precisely in our practical experience. The thought that is apt promptly to arise when there is trial and difficulty, is the simply natural one, how to get out of it—not, how am I to glorify God in it, and turn it to the praise of Christ. Then, again, if there is any prospect of improving circumstances, this is the first thought—that which is natural. Ought we not to be upon our watch-tower with respect to this? Should we not have it as a settled thing for our hearts, this is my danger? We may not all be tried in the same way; for that which would be a gratification to one might not be so to another. But there is one sad thing in which we all agree: we have a nature that likes self, and seeks to gratify it, and we have hence a tendency to indulge that nature as the first thought of the heart. But let Christ only come before our souls—let us bethink ourselves of Him, when either trouble or pleasure comes before us, and what then? That which is natural fades away: we judge it. We say, That is a thing which brings no glory to Christ—and what are we here for? Let us remember that God has done everything to fit us for His presence, He “has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. i. 12). There is no doubt of that.

it remains untouched. But the practical question for our souls is, whether our hearts, knowing the perfect goodness of our God and Father towards us, enter into this great thought—that He now sets Christ, dead and risen, before us, in order that, in the presence of the angels as well as of men, yea, in His own presence, there may be the wonderful spectacle of beings who once lived for nothing but self, here, by the very image of Christ before their souls, lifted above self altogether.

May we bring this to bear upon whatever may be the circumstances through which we pass day by day! It is the main thing for the walk of every saint. There are other great things for the Church; but they are so much the greater as they are built upon Christ, the Object of each individual that composes the assembly. Let us not deceive ourselves as to that. No position can ever make amends for failure in the habitual thought of the heart. May we search and see whether *we are living to ourselves* or to HIM *who died for us and rose again!*

FORGIVENESS, DELIVERANCE, ACCEPTANCE.

(Continued from page 75.)

DELIVERANCE (*concluded*).

If we turn to Ex. xiv., we shall see a type of God's way of salvation (or deliverance). It is not as in Ex. xii., God passing by as a Judge and

kept out (in that character) by the blood. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," which was perfect security. It is not a question of *Safety*, but of *Salvation*, which are quite different, though often confounded. In Rom. i. 16, we are told that "The Gospel is *the power of God unto salvation* to every one that believeth." That is what Ex. xiv. shows; bringing out, in type, what the death and resurrection of Christ has done for every believer. The people there are in a dilemma; Pharaoh and his host are pursuing them, and the Red Sea before them. In this terrible plight they feel how powerless they are. Moses says to them, "Fear ye not, *stand still*, and see the *salvation of the Lord*, which He will (not 'shew to,' as in the authorized version, but) *work for you*" (ver. 13). What a word to a person bordering on despair, "Stand still!" The very last thing that any of us will do till brought to feel how powerless we are. How suited then comes the word, "When we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom v. 6). And whilst this last named Scripture refers primarily to that period of time in the varied dealings of God with man, when the truth came out (manifested by his inability to keep the law) that he was "without strength"; still we have each one to learn it experimentally in our own souls (and that was the second lesson learnt, as we have seen, in Rom. vii. 18), before there is the giving up of every effort on our part, and we

"stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord which He (not "*will* work for you" because we look back at a finished work, but) *has wrought* for us. We have to learn not only that God is the Deliverer, but *how* He does it, "see that great work which the Lord did" (ver. 31).

Then comes the word from the Lord to the people, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (ver. 15). "*Go forward*"! Why, the Red Sea is right before them and that (to sight) is, certain death! Yes, quite so, *to sight*; but "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (not *to sight* but) to every one *that believeth*"; and so we read, "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians (where there was no faith) assaying to do were drowned" (Heb. xi. 29). What weapon was it that man's unfaithfulness had put into Satan's hands? Death. What did the Lord Jesus do? He went down into the stronghold of the enemy, as it is written, "That *through death* He might destroy (or 'annul') him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and *deliver* them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15); and, "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished (or 'annulled'—same word as 'destroy' in Heb. ii. 14) death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel (2 Tim. i. 10). It is written of believers (1 Cor. iii), that, amongst other things, "death is ours." Instead

of being a weapon in the enemy's hands, it is the means of deliverance.

We have seen (p 44, referring to Lev. iv. 4) that laying the hand upon the head of the victim was expressive of identification ; as it were faith looking at the cross and saying, " That's me—He took my place." Just bring that thought in here. Did Jesus bear the judgment of God and die *to sin* ? Yes, and as my substitute. Then what is true of Christ is true of the believer before God and for faith. So in Rom. vii. 24, 25, where we get the cry of one who has learnt that there is no good in him and that he has no strength, " O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from this body of death (margin)," we find the moment he looks away from himself and his own efforts to Christ and His work, he immediately adds, " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." What a relief to find out that, on the cross, not only were my *sins* atoned for, but that the question of my nature (*sin*) has also been fully gone into ; and that " what the law could not do (as the one in Rom vii. found out), God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for *sin*, condemned *sin* in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3), which exactly agrees with what we saw, in type, in Lev. iv. 11, 12. In John iii. 16 we are told, " That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It may be nice *flesh* or nasty *flesh*, educated *flesh* or uneducated *flesh*, religious *flesh* or irreligious *flesh*—but it is still *flesh*. Now God's word

tells us also that "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63); and "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8). Reformation may do for man, but no for God; so the Holy Ghost says in 2 Cor. v., "If any man be in Christ (not only "there is no condemnation," as Rom. viii. 1 says, but), he is a *new creature* (or 'creation'); old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are *of God*."

If we turn to Rom. vi., we find there, speaking of believers, it is said, "Knowing this, that our old man *is crucified with Him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed (or 'annulled,' the same word that we have already had in connection with the devil, Heb. ii. 14; and with death, 2 Tim. i. 10). Then further down in same chapter, "For in that He died, He died *unto sin* once (not 'sins' here, but 'sin'); but in that he liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise *reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin*, but alive unto God (not 'through,' but) in Christ Jesus." Thus we learn that believers are looked upon by God as having died with Christ. That is God's way of deliverance from "sin" (the nature).

It is the same as to the law. The law is not abrogated, as some have unwisely said, but "The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth" (Rom. vii. 1); and, "Ye also are *become dead to the law* by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth

fruit unto God (which man, under the law, never did) But now we are *delivered from the law, being dead* (margin) to that wherein we were held ; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

The law has been carried out to the full, and has killed me, as it were, in the person of Him who, in matchless grace, took my place and bore all the consequences of the place that he took. How sweetly Paul puts it (and it is true of every real believer), "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. *I am crucified with Christ* ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ, liveth in me ; and *the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*" (Gal. ii. 19, 20). How the "newness of spirit" comes out in the above, viz., "The love of Christ constraineth." *His love* working in the heart *is the motive*, and HIMSELF the Object before the soul.

What a real deliverance God's is ; but it excludes all boasting, and so man does not like it, but prefers one that lets him have some credit, if ever so little.

It is helpful to contrast Ex. xii. 13 with Ex. xiv. 31. In the former it says "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you.*" In the latter, "*Israel saw that great work which the Lord did.*" They were then, as it were, on resurrection ground ; and it is in resurrection that the power of God has been displayed. "He was crucified through weakness,

yet he liveth by the power of God " (2 Cor. xiii. 4). It is important for each soul to see that the believer is on resurrection ground before God. One of the desires of Paul's heart for the Lord's people was " that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead " (Ephes. 1).

But not only is the believer delivered by death and resurrection with Christ, from " sin " and " the law ;" but we read, " Our Lord Jesus Christ, who *gave Himself* for our sins, that *He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father* " (Gal. i. 3). And we find Paul saying, " 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* " (Gal. vi. 14).

DEAR READER, HAVE YOU SO LEARNT CHRIST ?
HAVE YOU SEEN THAT (IF YOU ARE THE LORD'S) THE
CROSS OF CHRIST HAS COME AS MUCH BETWEEN YOU
AND THE WORLD AS BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR
SINS ?

(To be continued, D. V.)



" O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."