

THE SOWER.

ARE YOU READY ?

A LESSON FROM THE ROMAN ARMY.

THE morning appears on the distant hills,
A white fog curls up from the little rills,
And nothing is heard in the Roman camp,
Save the sleeper's snore, and the sentries' tramp,
But hark ! that sound, shrill, loud and clear,
As the trumpet's notes, falls on each sleeper's ear,
From end to end of the camp resounds,
And away to the echoing hills rebounds.
A change now breaks on that quiet scene,
Bustle and life where rest had been,
As warriors step forth in their armour bright,
And greet the first rays of the dawning light.
The horses are saddled, the baggage is pack'd,
The tents are struck, and the tent polls stack'd.
And cavalry, infantry, horses and men,
Are *ready*, and waiting the march to begin,
But hark ! again the trumpet's din,
The camp is fired, and the ranks fall in.
And now they await, in unbroken array,
The trumpet's loud peal, the third time that day,
'Tis heard ; the *third*, the LAST great trump.
Ere its notes die away or its echoes die out,
A voice is heard ; it demands, ARE YOU ready ?
In loud cheerful tones they reply, WE ARE ready.
Again yet again the question is ask'd,
The answers ring out as clear as at first,

The word is then given : the ranks move away,
 To conquer or perish, be slain or to slay.
 But the time is coming, it hastens along,
 It might be here ere to-morrow's sun,
 When the Lord Himself, with His heavenly shout
 With archangel's voice and the *trumpet's* note,
 Shall summon His saints to Himself in the air,
 My reader or hearer, will you be there ?
 Oh ! bear with me patiently a moment or two,
 The scripture has said it : it must be true,
 That " all have sinn'd, of the glory come short."
 Of sin, death's the wages ; life cannot be bought.
 No ! Life is a gift as the flowing stream free,
 And the Saviour Himself says, *Come unto Me.*
 For that *trumpet call* can only be heard
 By those who have known and received Him as *Lord.*
 By those who have found that by simple faith,
 In His *precious blood* pour'd out at His death,
 That their SINS ARE FORGIVEN, their guilt put away,
 Turn'd from darkness to light, made children of day.
 I know some would tell you ; with confidence too,
 That nought of all this can be known by you,
 Till before the white throne for judgment you stand,
 With sheep or with goats on the right or left hand,
 But what saith the scripture ?

" There's NO condemnation,"

Oh, stop ! and consider it,

" There's NO condemnation,"

" To those who are in Christ Jesus " the Lord,
 Our Saviour, Redeemer, Jehovah, the Word.

" At the *last trump* " (for the trumpet shall sound,

An
 An
 Wl
 Cal
 My

Y

chos
 St
 him
 depr
 sinn
 devi
 dose,
 to r
 thou
 on t
 him
 the
 bless
 pit :
 Savic

And from end to end of the world rebound),
And the dead in Christ shall first rise, and we
Who are alive and remain on the earth shall be
Caught up together with them in the air.
My reader or hearer, will you be there ?

I THESS. iv. 16, 17. I COR. xv. 51-57.

SWEETENED POISON.

YOU may have observed a bottle hung in a fruit tree, with a sweet poison in it. Numbers of wasps, bugs and flies tasted it and died. They chose the poison instead of the fruit.

So Satan has his poison baits for man to attract him from the gospel fruit. Knowing man's depraved taste he mixes his poison to suit. Poor sinners like it. He says: "There is no hell, no devil." And to those who cannot swallow that dose, he says, "You can be saved by your attention to religious duties, sacraments," etc. He has thousands of honeyed lies for poor men to lure them on to the pit of woe, to the same misery he is in himself. Reader, he is a liar and a murderer from the beginning, believe him not. But hear God's blessed truth, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Jesus is the mighty Saviour—will you let Him save you ?

TWO MESSAGES FROM GOD.

I JOHN, ii, 12 ; v, 13.

I SUPPOSE every one of my readers has received a letter at least once in his or her life-time, and if it came from some one in whom you had confidence, you would have had faith in all it contained, and the effect produced upon you by that letter would have been in accord with its contents, you would have been rejoiced at the good news and distressed by the bad which it brought to you.

But suppose that some one receives a letter from a king, from an emperor, or from some other personage of high rank. What honour! As it came to be spoken of in the family, and as the report spread abroad outside, with what carefulness the precious bit would be preserved.

Now, I would ask you : Have you ever received a letter from God ? I have received two, and would like to tell you a little about them.

This is the first: "I write unto you, children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake."

Whom does He address ? Children, that is to say the children of God, and this expression embraces the *fathers*, the *young men*, and the *little children* in Christ. It is one great family. All are children from the eldest to the youngest, but all are not little children.

God then addresses this first letter to His children. Are you one of His children ? Do you enquire :

Ho
of t
ma
'
pov
bel
nor
but
'
Ch
I
pas
are
bec
JES
Hir
"ch
V
In
give
I
peo
beli
"A
do
forg
to s
I
spol
her
S

How does one become a child of God? Two passages of scripture will answer your question in the simplest manner. They are :

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name : which 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.)

“For ye are all children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. iii, 26.)

Pay special attention, I beseech you, to these passages. You are not a child of God, because you are His creature ; this is to say, by birth : you do not become so by baptism, but only BY FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS. Have you received Christ by believing in Him? If so ; you have the happiness of being a “child of God,” and my first letter is addressed to you.

Why has God written this letter to His children? In order that they may know that their sins are forgiven for the name's sake of Christ.

There are in the Christian profession thousands of people who repeat every Sunday, these words : “I believe in the remission of sins,” and who, if asked, “Are your sins forgiven?” would reply : “No, and I do not think any one can know, in this world, the forgiveness of sins.” What nonsense for such people to say, “I believe in the remission of sins.”

Do you think, dear reader, that the woman who is spoken of in the seventh of Luke, knew that her sins her “many sins,” were forgiven her?

Surely, were they not?

And how did she know it ?

BECAUSE JESUS SAID SO.

Now, how does a child of God know that his sins are forgiven ?

Because God has written a letter to him in order that he may know it, the child of God *knows* it is so, not because of his feelings or his hopes, but because of the infallible word of his God and Father in Christ.

O, dear friend, you who read these lines, if you are a child of God by faith in Christ, give thanks to God your Father for this letter which he has addressed to you, and the Lord Jesus Christ who has loved you and washed you from your sins in His precious blood. (I Jno. ii. 12 ; Rev. i. 5.)

The object that God has in view in the first letter is that *all* His children may *know* that *all* their sins are forgiven.

His purpose, in the second, is that all those who believe in the name of the Son of God may *know* that they have eternal life. This is the second letter : "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." (I Jno. v. 13.)

Do you know what the difference is between pardon and eternal life ? I will try and make you understand it.

Suppose a man has been imprisoned for debt. He has not a cent wherewith to pay his debt. But a rich and generous friend comes to his aid and fully satisfies all his creditors. Our man is out of prison,

gra
hap
wh
No
set
acc
tud
his
has
cap
T
deb
us t
A
tha
thos
hav
I
fore
had
lett
sec
four
V
Joh
me
life
life
vers
if I
C

grateful for the payment of his debts, and yet not happy. In fact he is absolutely without resources, what is to be done, but to go into debt again? Now he learns that, not content with merely having set him at liberty, his friend has opened for him an account at the bank. He is at once full of gratitude, of happiness and of contentment; first, because his debts have been paid, but much more because he has no need to run into debt again, since he has a capital both to live upon and to resume his business.

Thus our first letter gives us to know that our debts are paid, our sins forgiven, and the second tells us that our future is made—we *have* eternal life.

And notice, there is no word of feeling or hoping that we have eternal life; the apostle writes to *all* those who believe, that they may *know* that they *have* eternal life.

Let us suppose that I receive a letter from a foreign country telling me that a friend when dying had left me an estate. There are four things in this letter: First, that an estate has been left me; second, where the property is; third, what it is; fourth, that it is really mine.

We find the same thing in this fifth chapter of John's first epistle. In the eleventh verse God tells me that He has *given* me eternal life, and *where* this life is; in the twentieth verse He tells me who this life is and what it is, and lastly, in the thirteenth verse He lets me know, as positively as possible, that if I believe in the Son of God I HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

Can anything be more simple? Are you a child of

God by faith in Christ? Do you believe in the Son of God? If you can say "Yes, thanks be to God, I am," then these two messages are addressed to you, in order that you may *know* that your sins are pardoned, and that you *have* eternal life.

All that you have to do is to accept these two good news as coming from God for you, to believe what he has told you by them, and to give thanks for them, then to look to Him that He may give you grace to glorify Him in your words, your deeds, in all your walk, until His Son comes to bring you into the glory with all those whom He has washed in His blood.

BROUGHT TO YOU.

GRACE BRINGS to us; "the grace of God which bringeth salvation to men," it does not ask man to bring works of righteousness to God. Jesus "come to seek and to save." God meets our need, and meets us just where we are. But too often the awakened sinner acts with himself as if the grace had to be fetched by himself, as if the Saviour had to be brought to himself by his own effort. Helpless sou', be content to BE saved. Who would bid the sick man run for the doctor? What nurse would tell the weak infant to feed itself? And has not God shewn His pity by BRINGING His salvation to us? and has not the Lord Jesus manifested His love to sinners by COMING into this world to save them?

N
at v
est
talk
from
con
atte
pres
wor
say,
ind
how
esti
ever
with
T
read
and
tow
salv
to fi
that
the
T
hear
reje
rais

" COMPEL THEM TO COME IN."

N EARLY twenty years ago a series of meetings was being held in a country school-house for the preaching of the gospel. God's Spirit was at work in one and another, and a good deal of interest was being manifested, and the meetings were being talked about in the country around. About half a mile from the school-house lived a man who had been converted a short time before. He was among those attending, and took much interest in what was being presented. His wife was still living at ease in the world, a nice, upright, moral person, as people would say, but quite unconcerned as to her soul's need, and indifferent to the claims of the Lord. She had heard, however, that the meetings were very nice and interesting, and she thought she would like to go some evening and hear, not from a sense of any need, but with the thought of being entertained.

The evening she came to the meeting, the speaker read the parable of the "great supper" in Luke xiv., and spoke of the great and marvellous grace of God toward lost and guilty men, in not only providing salvation for the soul, but furnishing that which was to fill and satisfy the soul forever, spreading a feast that would never end, and all this at no less cost than the sacrifice of His well-beloved Son.

Then the fearful wickedness and hardness of man's heart was spoken of. Man had not only despised, rejected and murdered God's Son; but after God had raised Him up from the dead, and offered Him

afresh, setting before His guilty people a door of salvation, and a never ending feast of blessing, to be had simply by receiving Christ, they still rejected Him. They had been bidden before, and now when the feast was spread, He "sent His servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, 'Come; for all things are now ready.' And they all with one consent began to make excuse." (Luke xiv. 17, 18). Of course the excuses were but the excuses of fools, blinded and hardened in heart by Satan to whom they had listened, and to whom they had yielded themselves as his guilty tools. No wonder "the master of the house" was "angry"? But the supper was ready, and He would have His house filled, and so He "said to His servant, go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Wondrous grace! wondrous love, seeking to share its infinite fulness with the poor and the needy! If the Jewish nation *would* not come to the feast, "the poor of the flock" were *brought* in by gracious power. And if still there was room, from the Gentile highways and hedges the house *must* be filled. "*Compel* them to come in."

The woman mentioned above was an earnest listener to all that was said, but it was the words in the next verse (verse 24) that were used to produce

the o
"For
were
warn
God's
when
shall

Th
woma
was e
out o
she h
healt
solem
from
to th
learn
that,
natur
until
was
long
strong
set fr
to-mo
helpe
by his
and t

An
the f
May

the deepest effect in her soul. This verse was read, "For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper," and a solemn warning was given to those present, lest, after all God's invitations and pleadings, the time might come when He would have to say to any of them, "*You shall never taste of my supper.*"

These words went like a sword into this dear woman's soul, and by the power of God's Spirit she was even physically prostrated, and had to be carried out of the room and taken home in a wagon though she had walked to the meeting, and was in her usual health. Five months of great distress followed this solemn call of God, but it was God awakening her from a slumber of spiritual death, and calling her to the feast. And during all that time she was learning, not merely that she was guilty, for she knew that, but what she was as a lost sinner, with a will naturally opposed to God. Struggle followed struggle, until finally grace triumphed, and submission of heart was yielded to the Lord Jesus, Satan had tried long and hard to hold his victim and slave, but a stronger than Satan was there, and the captive was set free. The words, "God says *to-day*, the devil says *to-morrow*," which she had read in some magazine, helped to unmask the enemy who sought to hold her by his seductive lies, and she was led to believe in, and trust, and submit to Him who had died for her.

And now, reader, let me ask, Have *you* come to the feast? Or are you still making vain excuses? May be you intend to come *some day*, but there is no

need to be in haste. "God says *to-day*, the devil says *to-morrow*," and your heart goes with the devil's word, and not with God's. Ah! the secret is laid bare. Your heart is not right with God, but you and the devil are good friends, even though with the cunning of the serpent he is charming you to your destruction. Beware, beware, lest your course end in a forced companionship with him in the lake of fire! Ah! the charm will be broken then! the bubble by which he lured you on will have burst forever! Oh! heed the call of God now—"to-day, if ye will hear His voice"—not *to-morrow*. To-day—now—"come; for all things are *now* ready."

What must I do to be saved?—Acts xvi, 30.
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.—Acts xvi, 31.

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.—Romans x, 9.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.—Romans x, 10.

For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—Luke xix, 10.

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.—Ephesians ii, 8.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.—John iii, 17.

GOD'S PROMISES.

“SUCH a nice text this morning,” said a little girl five years old, the other day, as she came down, almost too full of the text even to say “good morning.”

“What is it, darling?” I asked.

“Oh! something about God promising”—“He is faithful that promised,” even the child realized. His name is “Faithful and True.”

Directly sin came into the world God said that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. And Adam believed the word. The rainbow of hope shone in his heart, and he called his wife's name Eve, i. e., “the mother of all living.”

He gave Noah a promise for the earth, and set His bow in the cloud for a token, and every time we see the colored arch in the sky, no matter what scientific man has to say, we see God's reminder of His promise.—(Gen. ix, 13.)

He promised Abraham that his people should be as the stars for number, and “He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness.”—(Gen. xv, 5-6.)

He promised, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”—(Gen. xxii, 18.) He promised *Christ*, and from the first taking of life to clothe Adam and his wife, Christ was typified—typified in Abel's sacrifice, in Noah's

in Abraham's, and all that followed, until in the Tabernacle every cord and nail, every board and vessel, every animal slain, every act done, every fold in the priest's garment, every thread in the beautiful curtains typified Christ—Christ as He would be in humiliation, Christ in resurrection, Christ in glory. And when the promise was fulfilled and the aged Simeon took the holy Babe in his arms he said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast *prepared* before the face of all people." Now the work is done, the door of heaven is opened, and for us the promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus.—(2 Cor. i, 20.)

First, "This is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life."—(1 John ii, 25.) If you or I have not eternal life, dear reader, that is your fault, and mine, not God's.

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—(2. Pet. iii, 9.)

He promises *life*.—(John x, 28; Rom. ii, 7.)

He promises *peace*.—(Rom. v, 1; John xiv, 27.)

He promises *joy*.—(John xv, 11); (1 Pet. i, 8); (Luke x, 20.)

He promises liberty, strength, blessing, future glories to "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." *Now*, victory over death, and hell, and sin. *Then* to see His face and serve Him in that wondrous heaven peopled with its wondrous host; to be presented to the Father as His

de'i
the
(2
G
no '
you
prom
"E
Pete
once
wort
with
more
of th
Jews
have
Do
etern
nothi
to yo
"I
gener
Since
mises
man's
The
little
bitter
her, t
The cl
ness, a

de'light and joy (Jude 24), and to be presented to the world as His glory and His triumph. — (2 Thess. i, 10.)

God has promised, God has performed. There is no "shadow of turning" with Him. What about your side of the question? Are all those precious promises lying at your feet? Peter called them "Exceeding great and precious promises."—(2 Peter i, 4.) Yet he denied the Lord to His face once. We do not claim the promises because we feel worthy of them. No, the more we take all He gives with Himself, the more we see His worth, the more we know what we are. We take them because of the *promises*. Did it wound His heart when the Jews rejected Him? He cried, "How often would I have gathered you, and ye *would not*."

Does it wound Him when you refuse His gift of eternal life? Yes. There in the glory, wanting nothing but the souls He died for, He is daily crying to you through the Holy Spirit, "Come unto Me."

"Doth His promise fail," said David, "from generation to generation?"—(Psa. lxxvii, 8.) Never. Since the creation there is one line of unbroken promises on God's part; worthlessness and failure on man's; and the future is as sure as the past.

There is a story of Sir William Napier meeting a little girl in the street one day, who was crying bitterly over a broken jug. He stopped to speak to her, trying to comfort her, and telling her not to cry. The child dried her tears beneath the words of kindness, and looking up said, "You can mend it." "No,

I can't do that, but you shall buy another, and putting his hand in his pocket, he found to his dismay that there was nothing there, no sixpences, and no shillings, but telling the child to meet him on that same spot the next evening, he left her full of joy and comfort. When he got home he found a letter asking him to dine with a friend at Bath the following evening in order to meet some one he had long wished to see. What was he to do. The child and his promise stood in the way. He soon decided, and wrote saying that he much regretted it, but a previous engagement stood in the way, and he must give up the pleasure.

Dear reader, that was a human heart, and he could not betray the trust of a little child, and will you doubt that blessed One who cannot lie? Wont you fall at His feet to-day and cry "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," and give Him joy in the presence of the angels of God.

Poor, wretchedly poor unbeliever, you have a few short-lived pleasures here and eternity of ceaseless remorse to look forward to ; but hark, "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Delay not, don't put it off, don't slight such love, but come to Him now.