

# TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

(PART VI.)

BEING NOTES OF ADDRESSES AND  
READINGS AT QUEMERFORD,  
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# THE GOSPEL.

(ACTS IX. 1-18.)

MY subject is very elementary, but the one thought before me is, that if you do not begin right there will always be delay in your progress. It necessarily must be so: it is not that souls are not converted, but they are deficient; they have not received the revelation belonging to the time. Many do not get beyond the offerings under the law, and indeed we have, as we know in Christendom, even the repetition of the sacrifice—the mass, and so on. The question is—Where do you begin? Many souls in Christendom are occupied with offering the sacrifice of Christ, as their own offering. Under law the *man* brought the offering, and in the preaching of the gospel now there is often this defect, that man's side is alone presented; thus occupying souls too much with themselves. The great thing is to occupy the soul with *God*. I ask, Whom did you offend? *God*. Then it is not your feelings about it that are to be consulted, but His. Nothing can be more important than to keep before the soul the great question, "Whom did you offend"? If a child offends against his father, should he not think of his father's feelings towards him. You may so occupy a person with his own relief that he will

scarcely touch the solemn ground of what his offence towards God is. The gospel is frequently put thus—Did not Christ die? Will not faith in His blood save you? Have you not got relief by accepting it? Such is the formula. But what about God? The great question is, How does *He* feel?

Now it is very marked that in these verses we have read, the distinct beginning is with God. Acts ix. is—it begins with God. The mark and power of an evangelist is, "To open their eyes"—to see the light. That is his first and great characteristic. Here light shone *out* of heaven. It begins with God. That is an immense comfort to my soul. I refer to this light out of heaven as supplying us with a direct proof of how in the apostle's case the work began immediately with God, and the reason of its beginning with Him, and the blessedness of it, is in the fact that He was the One offended.

It is not here as in the Jewish offerings, or even as with Abel's, where it began with man; Abel brought an offering. But here the grace began with God. That is the marvel; grace begins with the One who was offended. Take as an illustration a father saying to his children, If either one of you breaks that clock, you must stay in your room until it is mended. Well, one of them does

break the clock, and he retires to his room to try and mend it; but he cannot, all his attempts are in vain. At length the father, who does not like the distance between him and his child to continue, proposes to mend the clock himself. What a feeling that awakens in the child! He must feel—how good is my father, and as he has mended it, he cannot find fault with the way it is done. That is a feeble illustration. Were I to speak for hours, I could not open out the greatness and blessedness of the fact that it is God Himself who has removed the distance from His own side. Wonderful goodness! The distance is removed on God's side. He is the first relieved. *He* rent the veil. God has found One who relieved Him; His eye rests with delight on the MAN who has done it. The great thing to get hold of is this simple fact, that God has removed the distance from His own side. The great defect in many souls is, that they do not apprehend that the distance is removed from God's side. It is an immense thing to get clearly hold of the truth that God is and must be the first to establish the blessing of man. What is lacking in many a soul is, that they do not understand the nature of the distance that existed between God and themselves, nor how it has been removed. You will never

have solid peace and rest with God till you see that every atom of the offending man who did the offence has gone in judgment. The light came out of heaven in this chapter, and there is not a soul converted since but by that light out of heaven.

The second thing with Paul was that he was three days without sight, and he neither ate nor drank—he saw no man; man and everything was shut out; he lost his eyesight by the glory of that light. A soul converted apart from man, in private, it is wonderful the way that soul has laid hold of God. In the case of Saul such was the glory of the light from heaven that on its reaching him he is blind, does not see man for three days, and neither eats nor drinks. What was Paul doing in those three days? He was practically walking through death, as the Red Sea prefigured—learning the effect of the death of Christ—how it had cleared everything away. There was no song in the Old Testament till after the people had crossed the Red Sea. You may know you are under shelter of the blood, and that is a very good beginning; but until you know you are brought to God, you are only clear of the Judge. In the profession around us the prominent thought (as is found in the Prayer Book of the Church of England) is, that Jesus is the One who softens

the heart of God; there is no reaching up to what is so beautifully displayed in the case of the prodigal, who is brought to the heart of the *father*. He is conscious that he has offended the father, and he finds the father has removed everything that caused the distance, and that his father is on the very best terms with him; and then it is not his own feelings which rule, but the feelings of the one whom he had offended, and who now restores him; he has to learn the terms on which his father can be with him. This is reconciliation, and then "we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the reconciliation." It is "reconciliation," because God on His own side puts away the offence and brings me to Himself. He has removed the distance completely, never to revive it. An immensity is unfolded to you when you become acquainted with the heart of God, that His grace is not merely the measure of your need, but the measure of His own love.

As I have said, Paul was three days learning this wonderful work, walking through the Red Sea, learning the cross. As a man under law he could say, "Touching the righteousness of the law blameless;" he was blameless as to the law, and according to the thoughts of man; but the light from heaven had declared to him that he was unfit for the presence of God. Next

he learns that he is clear of everything by the death of Christ, and he passes out to God; and the testimony of the Spirit is, "Behold he prayeth." In the Psalms it is said, "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found." Saul has to do with God, he receives his sight, and is filled with the Holy Ghost; he sees everything now in a new way; he has an entirely new power, and comes out in a new way; he knows that he has a Saviour in glory, outside of everything here, and he has received the Holy Ghost in himself. Thus you see the wonderful nature of the conversion. I want to give you an idea of true conversion. My desire in dwelling on this is that you should all see the great importance of preaching the gospel in the closest accordance with the revelation God has given at the present moment. If you present to a soul a revelation that is passed, that soul receiving it, will as a consequence not get beyond it. It has been said by another, "It is easier to build on the edge of a knife than on a revival conversion."

Now I desire in connection with the gospel to bring before you another subject of the deepest importance in this day, and it has been a very helpful discovery to myself. It is that while the word of God is quoted as the only authority,

it is limited to man's side, and consequently God is left out. It is so with the gospel, and all the truth. As far as I know, there is not a christian doctrine in Christendom that is not limited to man—to man's benefit, consequently God is left out. And I may ask, Have not *we* quoted scripture, and confined it to man's benefit—to his side of things? I would exercise your hearts about this. If you have begun with God, it is God that is before you, and not man. If we begin with God, we have to do with Him, His heart and mind are before us, and His thoughts will be prominent. Take, for instance, the doctrine of "Holiness by Faith," it is all your side, and it is simply legal holiness, not *God's* holiness. I could quote numberless examples of how the truth is limited to man's side, and God is left out. It is the chief thing to contend for in Christendom. It is said, We have the Bible, and nothing but the Bible. Now note that in Matthew xiii. there are six similitudes of the kingdom of heaven: three, of the word of God in man's hand; and three, of the word of God in the hand of Christ---the Spirit's work. The first three parables shew us what man has made of the word of God in the Latin kingdom. A huge system on earth is built up by the word of God in man's hand. This I deprecate. The word of God exalts and

advances man immensely if it does not supersede him. If the word of God is appropriated by the human mind, man is intellectually advanced; but if the word of God is wrought in his soul by the Spirit, he is on divine ground. This is the difference between the two. In the first three similitudes we see what man has made by the word of God, that is man's side; in the last three we have Christ's side. When the Lord "sent the multitude away" He "went into the house;" (see ver. 36), the disciples follow Him into seclusion. There He opens out to them that His treasure is here; when you go into seclusion with the Lord He will open out to you that His treasure is here. It is an immense cheer to the true heart to know that Christ's treasure is on the earth. When I look around at the terrible system called Christendom my heart rejoices that His treasure is here; but you will learn this only in seclusion with Him.

Having said so much as to the true interpretation of the word of God, I now turn to Romans v. 1-11, which sets forth the terms on which God is with you. Chapter viii. is how you are in Christ before Him. Many are occupied with chapter viii. who are not established in chapter v. You must take them in divine order. When you look up to God you see everything gone to His endless satisfaction; but when you look at

yourself you are troubled with the working of sin. Why is this? You must change your man, that is the only solution of the difficulty. In the first eleven verses of chapter v. you see that everything has been established for you to God's own satisfaction. In the latter half of the chapter it is, you must change your man—not Adam but Christ. I ask, Which man are you connected with—Adam or Christ? You will never know that you are dead to sin till you have changed from Adam to Christ. You see all this in Romans v. Chapter v. 1–11 is the statement of the terms on which God stands with you, and the rest of the chapter is your transference from Adam to Christ; and until you understand chapter v. you will never enter into chapter viii. You can never rise up to how you are before God till you are enjoying the terms on which God is with you. The prodigal was brought *in* to share in the joy of the father. How much is really lost by not seeing that the love of God has brought us to God; that is the true beginning. We have not begun right if we do not see this.

Paul says to Timothy, "the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." He knew how things would be brought down to the human level; I

believe John resuscitates Paul's teaching; he puts it beyond imitation; he brings in God's side; with Him there is no darkness at all—all is light. How were Jannes and Jambres defeated? (Their opposition was imitation.) They could not produce *life*. John brings in life.

To return. If we look at Christendom we shall find that every doctrine is brought down to a human meaning. Take the word "church." What is the definition of it in Christendom? That it is "a congregation of the faithful where the sacraments are duly administered, and the gospel faithfully preached." It is all limited to man's side, and God is left out: and if I look round at ourselves, who meet in separation from evil, we are often not beyond it. How many think of the assembly as a company of believers, rejoicing in the presence of their Saviour, simply a believers' meeting! They are thinking only of their own benefit. The divine side is not understood. At the Lord's supper it is just the same thing; it is our benefit that is before us, relief to ourselves. In system they say, "Take and eat this bread in remembrance that Christ died for thee." There is no remembrance of Christ there. Let us beware of this leaven. Hymns are often given out dwelling exclusively on *our* benefit. If you are in the holiest you will be thinking of *Him*. In the holiest you are as Christ Himself. The

antitype of the holiest is the Lord of glory. You come to Him. You could not be in the holiest and not be settled about yourself. If you refer to your sins you are not settled as to yourself; when you are settled you are not occupied with yourself or your sins; you are clear of sins, flesh, self, and everything, and pass into the holiest to be occupied with Him. If you are walking in the Spirit, you are occupied with Christ, and not with the flesh; you have entered on new ground outside of everything here. In the Lord's supper you are calling to mind His death. He died on this earth, and you are occupied with that great fact.

In conclusion, the great mark of God's favour in Old Testament times was, "I will be *with thee*," and that is not withdrawn. He says to us, "I will never leave thee." But besides this great favour there is a greater favour now, and that is, You shall have "*part with me*" You do not lose the first because you have got the second; but you are brought into another and a greater favour.

How easy to learn the things of the Lord if we know "*part with me*." The Lord shews the deepest interest; He has removed everything that would hinder your having part with Him. There could be no greater proof of love than to remove what would detain you

from that—"PART WITH ME." There is a great deal said of the help of God. Many understand His help who know nothing about the sympathy of Christ. You must *go to Christ* to learn His sympathy; and if you go to Him you must enter a new order of things; this I would press on you. Many think—What could be greater than that Christ should be *with me*? It is infinitely greater for you to be *with Him*, and in an entirely new order of things. I cannot conceive anything more magnificent than that.

The Lord grant that we may each of us be more awakened to the danger of accepting the word of God with the mind of man, and thus limiting it to man. In receiving the word of God, there is first, light; then exercise of conscience; thirdly, prayer—you are cast on God; fourthly, the work of the Spirit to lead you into it. Not one of you is beyond the work of the Spirit in you. Many think because they have the light of a truth that they are in the power of it. No! you may know all the Bible, have much light, but there is no growth beyond the measure of the Spirit's work in you.

The Lord grant we may not only *begin* with God, but *keep* with God—begin, continue, and end with God. It is an immense thing to remember that it is *with God* we have to do.

J. B. S.

# ADAM SUPERSEDED BY CHRIST— THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD.

(COL. I. 15-29.)

I AM sure, beloved brethren, we all want to be taken thoroughly off the ground of the first man, and to know in true power what it is to be connected with the second Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. I have read this passage in Colossians with the desire to help on a little the line of truth we have had brought before us.

It is an immense thing to get into our souls what God began with us for, what was His mind in taking us up. We can all understand a little His mercy to us as ruined and lost, that He had compassion on us in our misery and sin, and gave the Lord Jesus Christ to die for us; but great as that is, it did not tell out adequately what was in His own heart and thoughts in doing it. I go back to Genesis. I do not think any one could read seriously what is said about the counsel of God respecting the creation of man ("And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness," Gen. i. 26) without seeing that God had a plan, a counsel in making man after His own image. The angels were made before. We

do not read of their being objects of counsel, it was man that God made in His image. In the fall we see that Satan in ruining the creature was trying to deface, to stamp out the image of God. It was not merely spite against man, he hated God, he would deface the image of God if he could; he did not care to debase a beast, but to debase the image of God. I would like that every heart should go back to the beginning of man's history and understand how the enemy has come in and utterly debased the image of God. Was that always to be? There are numbers of people who have a sense of their responsibility, and of what they have done; they are conscious of sin and feel they have to answer to God for it, and that their sins need to be forgiven. But what about God? If I look beyond the misery and sin of the creature, and the need of the atonement for his guilt, and for the putting away of sin, is there not the great thought of God to have man in His image? Is not the manifestation of God in man to come out? Is He not to be truly represented? I get back to Him and see what was in His own heart as to man. Man was set here to represent God as a centre of—I do not say *divine* affections, lest I should lower that thought, but of affections that were proper to man as created by God, and which should flow out in the scene over which

he was set in dominion. It was a figure of Him that was to come, and now the Son has come into the world revealing the Father—the invisible God has been declared by the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father. Genesis ii. portrays Adam as the image of God and having dominion, set in Eden in relationship to all around him, the centre of affections proper to the relationship, and thus to represent God. It was not understood, even by the disciples, but in the Lord Jesus Christ I see a Man down here the object of the Father's love, not only taking up the cause of man, but revealing the Father, and Himself the blessed object down here of divine affections, bringing down to earth the heavenly affections He knew so well. He says, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world," and then He adds, "Again I leave the world and go to the Father," for though He was here the object of divine affections, and brought them into the world, yet in order to bring others into them He must take another path so as to introduce His own into an order of things outside the order of the first man altogether. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ was the break-up of the system of things connected with the first man. The condition of man as a moral responsible being—the centre of affections in a creation that was subordinated to

him, was then broken up, for though the relationships still exist and are of God, yet the death of Christ has ended that state before God, and a *new state* has been revealed in Christ risen; and if we go on to chapter iii., we see there *are things* above where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. When He appears then will be manifested in the saints the glorious things that are there treasured in Him. But meanwhile, we have been delivered from the power of darkness—the darkness in which the power of Satan holds man as alienated from God, hateful and hating one another, far removed from His image—and we have been translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love. We are under the sway of Him who is the object of the Father's love. It is as the Son of His love and having wrought redemption that in Colossians i. 15 He is said to be “the image of the invisible God.” You say, Was He not always that? In a sense He was, but I do not think He took that place formally till the first man was judged and set aside.

I turn to Genesis again in order to notice the beginning of man's history as a sinner. It took the whole race of man in the development of his history to expose the depths of wickedness that are in his heart. Adam's sin was the origin of all, but it alone would not shew the fulness of the first man's wickedness, though all was em-

bodied in that sin. The moment there was departure from God in man the ruin was all there in embryo, but it took the whole race of Adam, from the outset to the close of the 4,000 years, when the evil culminated in the crucifixion of Christ, to bring out fully and completely the character of the first man. I see everything begun again now in this blessed Man at the right hand of God. It took the whole race of man to bring out what was in the first man, and it will take the whole church to bring out the fulness of the second Man, for all the traits of that blessed Man are to come out in the saints. It is not only that I am relieved from the judgment. Can we for a moment allow that God has taken up man merely to relieve him from judgment? Does that reach the full height of the grace of God? Surely not. For faith, we can say, the first man is gone in judgment, and that being so, faith carries me out of the scene of his utter failure and judgment, and I look up to the right hand of God and there in that blessed second Man I see a new beginning altogether. Nothing could really begin of what God was going to bring in till Christ was at the right hand of God. The shadows of good things to come were committed to the responsibility of man, but nothing suitable to the thoughts of God could begin till then; for everything was to come from that

point: all the blessings in which man is to be set up must come from the right hand of God; they will come out with the manifestation of Christ. The new start is founded on the death and exaltation of the Lord Jesus, and instead of a world filled with the violence, corruption, and lying of the first man, there is to be a universe filled with the glories of Him who is the image of the invisible God. These are to be brought out in the saints, hence the apostle speaks (ver. 27) of God making known to them the wealth of the glory of the mystery, which is *Christ in you* the hope of the glory. Christ in those who had been alienated Gentiles, hope of the glory to be revealed, but in them as life, so that the traits of the heavenly Man, the new man, the display of Christ down here might be manifested. What a thought for any heart! God took me up not merely to make me happy in being delivered from judgment, but He had this great purpose that I should be part of the wondrous company—the church, in which God is going to shew out all that is of Himself for ever and ever. Have you the thought that God has taken you up for this; that you belong to the company in which all the traits of Christ as the image of the invisible God will come out? Adam is thus superseded by Christ.

Now in verse 18 there is a new beginning

—“He is the head of the body the church, *who is the beginning*, the first-born from the dead.” It is not merely I am a sinner saved and delivered from judgment, but I see the Lord Jesus Christ as the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, the fountain and source from whence the assembly as His body derives its being; He is the Head. In chapter ii. 8 you get the warning lest those who derive from, and are complete in the fulness of the Head, should be spoilt by “the elements of the world.” As Satan at first defaced the image of God, so would he mar the lineaments of Christ, and rob the saints of their glory by introducing the elements of the world. “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily* ;” all is derived from that blessed Man, and nothing can be added to Him, for we are complete in Him.

Here is our blessing, that we are transferred *now* from the ground of the first man, in whom all the wickedness was developed, and are of that Man, who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that the development of the traits of the new Man might be brought out in us, so that we might be expressive of Him while we are here. It will take the whole church to bring out what Christ is, to express all His traits, for the church is His fulness. It is not

trying to be like Him by efforts of our own, but deriving from Him who is the Head.

“He is the beginning,” I dwell upon that word. The first ray of light revealing Christ to our souls shone out of heaven where He is who is our life. Necessarily He is the beginning, but He becomes so to us by being Firstborn from the dead. I know how easily we can look at the other side, and take up a word like that in Psalm xxiii.: “Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,” that is the finish of a path here, and all right and blessed; but what I get in Colossians is a new beginning with life out of death, and that life hidden with Christ in God. We can bear witness of the truth of His word: “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” and of His sustaining grace in the wilderness path; but light out of heaven shews us Christ sitting at the right hand of God and the things which are there and which are to be brought out when Christ appears, all characterised by Himself who is to fill all things, and the church His fulness. In order to enter into this, our souls need to get hold of the truth that He is, as Head, the fountain of everything to us, and that we are complete in Him. The aspect of the mystery in Colossians is not union with Christ in heaven, but Christ in us down here. We

cannot separate the one from the other; but the important point for us while still down here is, that as saints we do not derive from the first man, but from Christ as Head in resurrection; and the formative power, so that the traits of the Head should be brought out in the body, is Christ in the saints. If we had more sense of this, it would give quite another habit of thought to us: nothing coming to us from this world, and everything coming to us in the power of life from the Lord Jesus Christ as Head. It would be a new start with many of us, and it would come out both in our homes and in the assembly.

Now a word about reconciliation. (Ver. 20.) "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." It is to reconcile everything to the fulness. It has been said, that in the first creation man was the last thing created, no doubt all had been created in view of man, but he was created last and set in it as the centre. In the new creation the Man comes first. The universe of bliss will bear the stamp; and be characterised by the blessed Man who fills all in all. The traits of that blessed One are to fill the whole creation, and this will be through the church

as "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Hence we finally see the church as the tabernacle of God with men. In the eternal state the new Jerusalem descends out of heaven from God; everything in heaven and earth has been headed up in Christ and brought back to the fulness, reconciled by Him, and God will be all in all. The apostle in verse 20 refers to this reconciliation of all things, whether on earth or in heaven. It is a reference to the day of atonement, when the tabernacle and its vessels were reconciled through the blood of the sin-offering. (Lev. xvi. 35.) The tabernacle, which was a figure of the universe, was first anointed (Ex. xl. 9) before the priest. It shews that in the purpose of God the universe was set apart to be the scene of the display of God's glory by the anointed Man, who is the image of the invisible God; all will be suited to God, but for this the putting away of sin by the blood of the cross was needed, for sin has defiled God's creation. Verse 21: "And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Mark where we are at this present moment. "You... *hath* he reconciled." It is not now merely as it was in the case of Adam. God visited Adam to talk with him, and Adam was suited in innocence to the position in which he was

placed; but reconciliation means that I am brought to God, as suitable to *Him*. The character of the reconciliation is that I am not merely a justified man on earth, but suitable to Him in the scene where He is—it is “in the body of his flesh through death,” which takes out of the estate and condition of Adam altogether. The actual presentation in its absoluteness is future, but the reconciliation is now, and—in view of this—“to present you holy and unblameable and unprovable in his sight.” I am to be according to Himself, and reconciled in order that it should be so. The feeblest saint must see that this is far beyond what man could be in himself, were it possible that he could attain to righteousness; all is effected in Christ. The best robe is the suitability for the Father’s presence, and belongs to the house from whence it was brought forth. The old estate is gone through the death of Christ, that we might be in a new one in Him.

There is one more thing which I notice in connection with Paul’s ministry. He was minister of a world-wide gospel preached to every creature under heaven, and also minister of the assembly. In this character he says (ver. 24), “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you [Gentiles especially], and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in

my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." In this verse we see how Paul was fitted to enter into the love of Christ for the church. He was made to pass through the same character of sufferings which Christ had known as rejected and hated by the earthly people, in order that He might possess the church according to eternal counsel. Cast out by His own upon earth, He received in that way the gift of His Father, a heavenly people for the affections of His heart, when His own refused Him a place in it. He loved the church and gave Himself for it, that is blessedly true; but I do not speak here of atonement, but of a peculiarity of suffering for the church. Paul tasted this. Another thing characterises I think the wonderful love of Christ to the church, He sees it and thinks of it as the vessel which will be the display of His own beauty and perfection as the sent One of the Father. John xvii. 22, 23 shews this, and it will be verified in the new Jerusalem. The holy city will answer to Himself, for He came down from God, out of heaven into this world, bringing into it divine love and perfect affections—the affections of the Father to His Son become a man. The Father's love will be known by the millennial saints through the church. The church is the pearl in which Christ sees His

own beauty; it expresses what is of Himself, His fulness as Man, the wondrous display of what God is. The earthly saints will learn through the heavenly saints. You cannot think of Christ's love to the church without seeing that it corresponds to Himself. What we get in Colossians is that everything of Christ is to come out in the saints, Christ is everything and in every one. One has to feel one's own nothingness so that Christ should be everything—to bid good-bye to self, as those filled full in Him, filled with the fulness of that blessed One.

May the Lord transfer every soul more to this ground. May we be more transferred from the thought of being taken care of in *this* scene, to be as those taken out of it, and made happy in another; to be part of His body, which derives from Him—its Head. Every trait of what Christ is will come out in His body, and oh! to think of it! that is what God has now laid hold of us for. It is blessed to know that already we are connected with that scene. If we entered into it more, we should like to be nothing and filled out of His fulness.

T. H. R.

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# THE JUDGMENT OF THE FIRST MAN.

(GEN. III. 17-19; 2 COR. V. 14-21.)

I RISE to speak tremblingly, with the deep conviction that God brought before us this morning truth specially suited to the moment. The keynote was struck, and I would seek to keep in tune with it, for I think it is a subject God will more and more press upon us.

No doubt the servant of Christ should bear the sorrow arising from the actual state of the people of God in his heart, and minister *all* the truth of God faithfully; but the question which has been exercising me of late may nevertheless be asked, whether any special truth, or aspect of the truth, is ignored to-day, which would account in great measure for the present state of things in Christendom. The truth judges everything, and so does a divine position or a company of saints formed by the truth, where the truth is maintained. There is a chasm between that and everything around in Christendom, everything opposed to Christ. The truth of God will combine with nothing. Do we believe it?

I am not talking about parties or persons, but about the *truth*, and that the Lord can keep His

people together in the power of the truth; so that, in spite of all their failure, they know that human association, or human combination of any kind, is impossible. It is not a question of man's will, but of the truth which judges man, and sets him aside, and reveals God in grace in the Person of His Son. I would not put position forward as such, but insist that, where the truth is held in power, there must be a true position corporately before God. The object, therefore, of the servant is, that souls should be grounded in the truth, that is, in Christ, so that they should find, and know they have found, a true position corporately before God which will combine with nothing. Nothing can be more important than to insist that the effect of the truth upon the soul is to discover to the soul a path in which the truth which characterises the dispensation is known, held, and enjoyed, and that there will be such a path to be trodden until the end.

Now I believe there is an aspect of the death of Christ which is simply unknown and ignored in Christendom, and that, if this truth is not understood and accepted, the truth, in connection with what the church is, cannot be understood or enjoyed.

We had this morning a fault pointed out, that, in the preaching of the gospel, God's side was not sufficiently presented, and that everything

is levelled to the human side, man's mind, and man's need, so that we do not get how God views things, what His object is, and the soul is not brought to God.

Now, I believe, this is greatly owing to the fact, that the aspect of Christ's death, which brings before us the condemnation of sin in the flesh, the termination of the history of the first man, and his being set aside for ever, is not accepted. Now if it be true, that the non-acceptance of this aspect of the cross accounts for a great deal of what we see around us, it is important to ask, how far a truth commonly ignored or unknown has its true place in the souls of those truly gathered to the Lord's name.

I believe people may hold a good many truths in a certain way, without being really separated to God, and in the current of His mind and present thoughts. I only instance a few truths, such as the atonement, free grace, peace with God, assurance of salvation, liberty of ministry, and of meeting together, the one body, the coming of the Lord, and other fundamental doctrines, most important in their place; but if the soul is to rightly understand the truth as to the nature of the church, he must accept the truth as to the moral end of the first man, and the end of the old order of things before God at the cross.

Now let us look at two things shewing us what God's thought of sin is. We will begin with the first man, Adam, when he had committed one act of disobedience, and see what God said in the passage which I read.

God comes on the scene, after the creature He had made had dared to sin against Him, and set aside the authority of His word, and pronounces the judgment: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." It is a most solemn verse. I need hardly say that "dust thou art" refers to his body. The spirit returns to God who gave it. The complete man is composed of body, soul, and spirit; but here the "thou" is connected with the material body, in which he had acted and sinned.

Our brother was saying this morning, that God spent 4,000 years in bringing out all the evil that was in the first man; but we see here that the judgment rested on him from the moment that he sinned, and was never lifted off him. God knew the end from the beginning, and that there was no remedy. The man, in the earthly condition in which God made him, become a sinner, must return to dust. Death must blot him out from God's eye in time, though his responsibility as a creature did not

cease while he lived, and after death is the judgment.

The more we see the nature of the sentence on the man as result of this first act, the more we marvel at the endurance and the patient forbearance of God, who could go on dealing with the responsible man for 4,000 years, until the final test brings to light the whole truth of his irremediable condition.

I thought that was a most important remark this morning, that Satan's object was to deface the image of God in the first man; and how well he succeeded we understand, when we connect the fall, and the entry of sin into the world, with the result of the final test of the first man when Christ came.

Now we have the second thing which gives us an idea of God's thoughts about sin. The second Man has come, the Object of God's delight, and is presented to men for their acceptance. In all His path of service, He perfectly presents God to man on the one hand, and on the other hand He perfectly sets forth in the first order, in the likeness of sinful flesh, all that man was in perfectness before God.

Yet, notwithstanding all this perfection in a man, Godward and manward, the spotless, obedient Man, in whom every beauty, human and divine, was displayed in this world, must

die. He was born into the world to die in the world and out of the world because of sin. In love for sinners surely, and as the Substitute for His people bearing their sins; but I am looking at sin in relation to God's being and glory. The only place the perfect Man could take before God, when sin was in question, was death, and death under God's judgment. Living obedience could not meet the case. What a testimony to what sin was in God's sight! The Son of man must be lifted up, for the judgment that lay on man must be borne, and God must be vindicated, if man is to be relieved of the judgment that lay on him, and be brought to God.

Now the lifting up from the earth of the Son of man, when He bore the judgment of God, was, by the hands of men, the measure of their rejection and hatred of the One who was sent out of heaven, and came in love to save. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; but man's hatred only came out in presence of God come down in love. Everything was there in perfection in Christ, everything that was calculated to draw and attract man, if there was anything in man to be attracted; but there was nothing but hatred. Jesus, come as Saviour, was the final test of the first man; and His rejection *proved* that there was no remedy, which God knew from the beginning. So the cross is the end of the history

of the first man, and the place where the judgment of death which lay upon him is borne by Him who was the last Adam.

Now think of all that Jesus was before God, setting forth what man should have been down here! But He takes the place of death, for man in Adam after the first order must end in death; and Jesus, come in flesh and partaking of flesh and blood after the first order, cannot be united to man in sinful flesh, nor man in sinful flesh be united to or have part with Him in incarnation. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone."

In the passage I read, 2 Corinthians v. 14-16, the apostle proves the state of all by the death of one: "If one died for all, then were all dead." Then we get the living, and Christ's resurrection: "That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." Directly he touches the truth of resurrection what does he say? "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

What does "after the flesh" mean? Why, it means the state or order in which man exists as alive in this world, the first creation order: "They that are after the flesh mind the things of

the flesh." Christ, having risen, life in Him is of another order, heavenly in character and connected with the new creation, where all things are of God; and, in that life, the apostle knew "No man after the flesh." The application of the words "after the flesh" to the Lord, shews that He took part in flesh and blood after the first order, sin apart; but there could be no union with Him in incarnation; death must close all connection between Christ and man here. No doubt the first man after the flesh was judged in Christ's death, because of sin in him; but the words "after the flesh" refer to man after the order of the first creation; hence the apostle adds: "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation; old things have passed away, and all things have become new, and all things are of God."

The doctrine of "union in incarnation" has long since been condemned; but a far worse doctrine is that of connecting the *first* man with a *risen* Christ. Christ risen supposes the judgment of man in the old order in his death; yet we have the intolerable notion that the first man "after the flesh" can have some status in connection with a risen Saviour. I do not say it is stated in so many words, but, if the truth of the judgment of the first man in the cross is not admitted, the first man will be acknow-

ledged or tolerated in some shape or form. But Christianity, as a revelation of God, is connected with a risen Man beyond death, who could not be connected with man down here, and with whom there is no association till after He had been made sin on the cross, and had borne the judgment which lay on the first man, and ended his status and place before God. If any man be in Christ he belongs to the new creation where all things are of God.

What I have been speaking about are facts which are seen in the cross of Christ outside of us. Death ends a state, and we must not confound this with blood, which meets guilt. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

But now we have to apply these facts to ourselves. In the first place we have to learn practically what the old thing is in us which has been condemned. I must learn that I have no strength to overcome the old thing; next, that it is not I but sin that dwelleth in me; and then, that I am delivered from its power by having died out of the state described as "in the flesh." The experience leading up to deliverance is described in Romans vii. The presence of a new nature and a renewed will does not deliver from the old nature, but it

brings about the conflict which ends in deliverance from the law of sin and death, which applies to man in the flesh. This is not the experience of a Christian as such, but of one born again not in the liberty of the christian state. Liberty is in the life of the One risen out of death, who died to sin once and liveth to God.

After deliverance is known, we often get the discipline of God putting us into circumstances to break the back of self, for we must part company with the old man practically, not merely own the truth that we have put off the old man and have put on the new. The old man brought to an end, and put out of sight at the cross, must be practically kept out of sight. We must go to the root of things. What do "I will" and "I will not" mean in a Christian but unbroken will, the first man unjudged, and the principle of an independent will in man allowed? Nothing can correct it, and nothing but the application of the cross in the power of the Spirit delivers from its working. If we do not judge it, God must. In 2 Corinthians xii. you get God helping Paul to keep the flesh down with a thorn in the flesh, that Paul might be cast upon grace in his weakness, and thus be a vessel of Christ's power.

The Lord grant that we may understand that

the first man came to an end morally before God at the cross, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that we should not be the slaves of sin.

A difficulty is sometimes raised about the relationships of time, which belong to the first creation and not to the new order; but, though the old man is crucified and the believer is dead to sin and the world, he is not dead to nature, and has to take up the natural relationships in a new power and after a new pattern. It is not to deny that man in the old order has failed, and has been judged and set aside, or that the Christian belongs to the new order; but, whilst walking in the power of the heavenly things and heavenly relationships, he is to bring the new power into the duties and relationships which God owns in the individual, as still in the body and in the world, and so walk in them to the glory of God.

In the following verses we get the ministry of reconciliation. God has not only settled the question of guilt and sins, but the death of Christ, made sin and bearing its judgment, so glorified God about sin, the root and state, that the ministry of reconciliation is based upon the fact; and, where made good in the soul, we reach His heart who has accomplished it all, in a state through grace where no question of any kind remains to be settled, or to hinder our

entrance by faith into the new scene where all things are of Him, according to His eternal purposes in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May He help us to remember that, if the break with the old man and the world is not practically realised and made good along the way, we are bound sooner or later to get out of the path of true testimony to a rejected Christ!

J. S. O.



# THE BRIDE.

(REV. XXII. 17.)

THE subject I desire to speak on is the bride, the relationship in which the church is to Christ. The marriage is the display of the relationship. I have read the passage where we get the word bride. The body is of Christ, properly "the Christ." I desire to shew you the nature of our relationship, and how it is known, before the marriage takes place. Before the marriage it is said, "His wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. xix. 7.) The Epistle to the Ephesians could not be effectual if we did not know union. "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." The Epistle to the Ephesians is that you might *know* that you are united to Him; it is conscious knowledge. Every believer is united to Christ in heaven, but the apostle prays that they may know it. You cannot understand the relationship of the bride until you know union. You cannot be in that peculiar concert with Christ which the name of bride expresses. If you say the bride is only future, you ignore the words, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come," which is present, though it

is after the marriage in Revelation xix. that she takes her place for Him on the earth.

There are three stages to be passed through (I use the word stages for want of a better) before you are conscious of union with Christ. It is a matter of the deepest moment, for if known it would have a wonderful effect on us here. When I know that I am united to Christ I am so identified with His interests that they are paramount with me. Few know it. Every distinct truth has its own characteristic. Christians in general are characterised by the knowledge of Christ as their Saviour; they praise God for the blessings of salvation, but the leading characteristic of union is, that your individuality is merged in Christ; you belong entirely to another. The bride is merged in the Bridegroom.

As to the three stages, turn to 1 Peter iii. 18 for the first; "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." I need hardly say much about this stage, but the point is, that the man under judgment has been removed in judgment, and you are brought to God. All that stood against you has been cleared away to God's infinite satisfaction, and you are brought to God, and like the prodigal son, you are at home in the Father's house. The Son of God has accomplished this great work. You must know this

first. Here you must begin. There is a grievous leaven in Christendom, a great defect in preaching the gospel. Christ's death is presented to the soul after the manner of the sacrifices under the law, where the pious Jew found relief for his immediate sins, but he still retained the flesh which is enmity against God. The illustration of a man pressed for the army, and finding a substitute to stand in his stead is not the gospel. The gospel is that you were under the judgment of death, and that Christ, the Son of God, has borne that judgment, not that you should keep the man who was under judgment, but that you should be completely severed from him in Christ's death. The being who sinned must go in judgment. It is not renouncing your bad works; every Christian would be ready for that. Are you ready to see all that is nice and amiable in you under the judgment of God? It is an immense moment to your soul when you learn that you are crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that Goliath is not driven away, but dead, judicially ended, and therefore cannot be righteously revived; there is no reviving of it on God's side, "There is no more offering for sin." You ask, Do I not sin? Yes, but there is no more offering for sin. If you do not judge yourself for reviving what He has judged and condemned, He will judge you

the thing that did the sin will suffer for the sin; hence in Corinthians we find a man "delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." As God has got rid of that man in the cross, He will not tolerate him in you. "*Our* God is a consuming fire." The man who was under the judgment of God has been judicially terminated in the cross, and the Man Christ Jesus so glorified God in the most distant spot, that He was "raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." He is glorified, and now God is free to go out to the most distant spot, to a Saul of Tarsus, and receive him to Himself.

The next thing is—Is the man who was under the judgment of God, and who is gone from God's eye in the cross, gone from *your* side? Read Romans v. 12 to end. It is not only that you believe that God has raised Christ from the dead, and that you are on the field of battle as clear as Christ is. "As he is, so are we in this world." Jonathan was in the victory of David on the battle field, so are you in the acceptance of Christ who fought the battle. Now it is no longer a question of your sins, but of sin in you. How are you free—"free from sin"? (Rom. vi. 22.) You have died with Christ. You have changed your man; you have passed from Adam to Christ. You have died with Him who died, and you are in Him who is risen. Hence

in chapter vi. we are told, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Most beautiful! There you touch life, the abounding grace, for the first time; you touch it for relief; that is liberty; hence in chapter viii. 2 we read, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." You have the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the second Man. You are free. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Now we read, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.) For years I was distressed, I had not this liberty, though I knew I was fully clear in God's eye. At length I found that I was trying to improve the flesh, instead of walking in the Spirit. If you are walking in the Spirit you are outside the flesh; it is "mortify the deeds of the body;" take no notice of the flesh, walk outside of it. I do not say mortify the *body*, as a monk would do, but mortify the *deeds* of the body. You are under another rule, like Jonah in the whale's belly; he was alive, but under the will of another. The Christian is under Christ's rule, and glad to be so. In the Spirit you are experimentally and practically clear of the flesh. I do not say you will not have conflict, but "walk in the Spirit, and ye

shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." If you do not walk in the Spirit you will walk in the flesh. If you are under the government of Christ you will be directed by Him. If you are walking in the Spirit, you fulfil all your duties to your fellows in divine power. In Romans nothing is said of your family, but in Ephesians, where you are viewed as united to Christ in heaven, you come out in your family, in every relationship, in the grace of Christ. The nearer you are to God the better you maintain the ordinances of God.

So far is the first stage. Now I turn to the second stage. (Heb. ii. 11.) "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." If you have changed your man, if you are severed by death from the first man, you are in the life of the Man by whom you have been severed, and it ought to be easy to accept that you are of one stock, if I may so say, with Christ, "all of one." This is not union. In Hebrews we have nothing about union, but there is companionship; and for it as well as for union there must be the same kindred, one stock. There was only one thing Abraham's servant was sworn to, in seeking a wife for Isaac, that she must be of the same lineage. It is not only that the first man is ended, but

nothing that is not of Christ could be in company with Christ. We come *from* Him; we do not *add* anything to Him, we derive from Him; He could not be complete without His body; the body derives from Himself, the complement of Himself—the display of Him. Every beauty of Christ will come out in the church—you a bit, and I a bit. Nothing that is not of Christ could be united to Him.

It is an immense thing to lay hold of the truth, that we derive from Christ, it is necessary even for companionship. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," or many grains. (John xii. 24.) The grains are of His own order. Thus you understand what Christ Himself is. The divisions among us all spring from not understanding the mystery, and the nature of Christ; they are intimately connected. If you do not understand the nature of Christ, you do not understand the nature of His body. Some lose sight of the Lord as *Man*; each member of His body is of His order. The first error in Plymouth at the first division was that the church was to go through the judgments, and the result of this was that Christ was made to go through all the experiences of the remnant in the Psalms, which disclosed heresy as to His nature. Christ's

body is identified with Him. When Christ moves, His body moves; when He moves from the throne, the church moves; she is then removed from this scene. The moment He moves off the throne, christian blessings will cease. I do not say there will be no more conversions, but the church as a parenthesis will end; church ministry ceases, and all not of Him in Christendom is spued out of His mouth.

The next division was caused by the denial virtually that Christ bore the judgment of God. It was asserted that when He died He did not give up the life to which sin could be attached, and this was culpable ignorance of His nature. Years after, it was maintained that an offence done to the church was not an offence done to the Head. The plea for this perversion was, that if you say so, you make the church equal to Christ. The truth is, that you must not separate them; we have no idea of the evil working of this leaven.

The last division was caused by those who insisted that eternal life was given to the man *here* on believing, which is really on the same principle as under the law—"This do and thou shalt live." They did not see that, as the man under judgment has gone in judgment, you must be severed from the man under death by Christ's death, in order

to be brought into life in Him. In a word, that the life did not come to the man under judgment, but that the man who was under judgment, being delivered from it in Christ's death, has life, not in himself but in Christ; Christ is his life.

In Romans you are dead to sin, and to the old man; you touch life for your own relief. But in Colossians you have died with Christ to the world, you are outside of everything here, outside of the place where the man is, and you come to where there is nothing but Christ, "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all"—Christ only. Then you know the Head; there is no human voice,

"Where only Christ is heard to speak,  
Where Jesus reigns alone."

What a moment for the soul!

Now for the third stage turn to Ephesians i. 19. The first fourteen verses shew how you are made fit to be united to Christ, as Rebecca was by lineage and grace made fit for Isaac, and then was conducted by the steward to the presence of Isaac. It is the Holy Ghost who conducts you to the presence of Christ: verses 18, 19, "That ye may know what is

the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power"—that is conscious knowledge. In the purpose of God we are all raised up with Christ. As the feathers in a bird, all go up together. The beauty of Christ should be exhibited by the church on earth. The apostle says, "To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." We have seen in Romans that you are clear of the man under judgment, and are of the second Man—Christ; but that is not union. In Hebrews you are of His lineage, and companions with Him. He comes to you in the lowest spot and bears you up to the brightest spot—the holiest of all—in company with Himself; but that is not union. You do not get to heaven in Hebrews, and you cannot be united till you are brought to the place where He is, raised up together with Him. I see it with delight of heart, it is delightful to get a glimpse of it. Would that I were more in it, and that I could convey it better! In Genesis ii. God took a rib out of Adam, and out of it

He builded a woman. Then He brought her unto the man. If you make the bride only future, you know nothing of the great results of union *now*. You are united to Christ by the Spirit and you are brought into conscious knowledge of that union by the Spirit. I cannot conceive anything more explicit than the type—He *“brought her unto the man.* And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” I say to every soul here, Have you been brought to Christ where Christ is? I see the steward conducted Rebecca to the place where Isaac was. If you do not know union with Christ in heaven, you cannot come out in the power of the heavenly Man to act for Him on earth, to be descriptive of Him. You cannot be heavenly by effort. Many seek to be heavenly by prayer, reading the word, devotedness, &c.; but the only pathway to it is to be brought by the Spirit to realise union with Christ. You are heavenly by union. In Colossians you are outside earth, but not in heaven. In Ephesians you are in heaven where He is. What was Eve’s thought when her eye first rested on Adam? To be brought to Christ in glorified bodies is future, but we are brought to Him now by the Spirit. The prayer (Eph. iii.) is to bring you into the realisation of

it: "Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

"And see the Spirit's power  
Hath ope'd the heavenly door,  
And brought me to that favour'd hour  
When toil shall all be o'er."

Then follows the effect of union. The first is, "That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith." You have the Christ the Guest of your heart. It is "by faith," not by sight. Your individuality is merged. Does it not fill you with rapture and delight? Next, you are brought to scan the range of His glory, to "comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height." And lastly, to crown all, to "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." I lament that I know so little of it, but I have an exquisite sense of the depth of that eternal love which has brought me into any knowledge of it.

You are called to act for Christ now in three spheres. The first sphere is the assembly; Christ is your Head; you endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; you seek the edifying of the body. The second sphere is your own house—the domestic circle, all comes under the heavenly rule. And thirdly

you confront the whole force of Satan, you are called to stand against the wiles of the devil. You could not stand unless you were in Christ's power. All the power of Satan is against the heavenly man; you must put on the whole armour of God to stand. The armour of God is for the heavenly man. Some speak and write of the armour who have not put it on. You have not put on the armour of God unless you confront the foe in the place from which Satan will be expelled—the heavenlies.

May the Lord enlighten us to understand something of the unspeakable blessedness of the relationship of bride! It is only in the sense of that relationship that you can say to the Lord, "Come." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come."

J. B. S.

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# CHRIST KNOWN TO THE SOUL AS THE WORD OF LIFE.

(DEUT. VIII 3; 1 JOHN II. 5.)

WHAT I want to bring before you is the way in which we practically come to know that nothing will do for us but Christ, how the Lord leads us to know it, and the way in which He becomes everything to us. I turn to these verses in Deuteronomy, because I think it will give us the first thought. The children of Israel had been brought out of Egypt, and the Lord could say, "I have borne you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself." Peter, too, in his epistle speaks of being brought to God (1 Peter iii. 18): "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might *bring us to God*, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." When they were brought to God, their deliverance was complete, for He had done it. Nothing could be more blessed for them had they known it, for He was now to be their portion. The next thing was, what was to sustain them with Himself? Verse 3 gives that: "And he humbled thee and suffered thee to

hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know ; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." They were brought into the wilderness where there was not one single resource, nothing from the earth for them, they had only God and what came from Him. They were not yet in Canaan, but they had God ; they were to be in the wilderness with Him. What would sustain them there with God is the manna. The Lord refers to it here when He says (ver. 16), " Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know." The meaning of the word " manna " is, " What is it ? " They did not know what it was, and the answer to that question could not be given till Christ came, and having been lifted up in death, can now be fed on as the support of the life of faith. Manna was food from heaven come to them from God to sustain them with God in the wilderness. It figures to us the heavenly grace in Christ. They did not understand its character, still it was there for them, though they knew it not ; and we do not understand its import for us until we have fed upon the Lord Jesus Christ in death.

I would now pass on to another scripture in

Numbers xxi. They murmured against God and against Moses, despising the manna and calling it "light bread." They despised it, and then God let them find out what the nature of this murmuring is; He sent fiery serpents among them, and let them feel what the bite of the serpent is as the poison of sin in them. I have a nature which has not one atom of taste for Christ, and as we have heard, that man must go in death. Do you believe that the old nature in you has not one bit of taste for Christ, none at all? Ishmael mocks at Isaac; and Israel not only did not understand, but they despised the manna; so when Christ was here the Jews said of Him, "We know not whence he is;" flesh never does. They hated Him without a cause. As a natural man there is not a single thing in me that has one bit of taste for Christ. As I look at the blessed Lord lifted up, I am thankful that evil nature has been judged. A wonderful relief it is, that the man who has not one atom of taste for Christ is gone for faith in judgment and death. How truly we can endorse what has been said, that nothing can be suitable to Christ but that which is of Him.

Now to return to Deuteronomy viii. 3. "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." The Lord came down

here, and used this verse when the enemy sought to get between Him, as an obedient man, and God. He is the One who could say, for it was true in Him, "Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word of God:" a new source of life is there revealed. God led Israel through the wilderness to take them off the ground of man entirely, and in order to their receiving from another source—the word of God. I cannot conceive anything more blessed, God the source of everything to me, and that by His word. Every word that proceeded out of His mouth expressed what He was. The Lord Himself was the Word, He came down here as man to meet the power of the enemy who had got in between man and God, seeking to debase him. Man gave Satan his ear, and Satan got in between man and God, and whoever gets your ear you are servant to, under his power. When man lent his ear to Satan he fell under the power of Satan. You see the figure in the Hebrew servant (Exod. xxi.), he was brought to the door and his ear bored; that ear belonged henceforth to his master. Satan tried to get the ear of the Lord in the beginning of his path of service, but He who was the Word, as a man lived by the word. He had taken the place of man, and He knew that the source of blessedness for a man was God alone. He says, "Man shall

not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

I would now seek to answer the question as to the manna—What is it? The answer is found in the Lord Jesus Christ, for He as the revelation of God in love is the source of everything to us: grace and truth came in Him. Whether it be for the wilderness, or as the bread of life, I must get everything from and in Him, but it can only come to me through death. Christ who has died for me, is now my life. Christ is the bread of God come down; He is the One who is the revelation of what God is. Turn to Matthew xvi. 5-12, and see there how Christ is everything. The disciples had taken no bread, it was allowed that they should be brought into a place where they are entirely shut up to Christ. The Lord warns them against that which would corrupt the simplicity of their faith in Himself—the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees; but they turn round to their deficiency. (Ver. 7.) That is like us, we get occupied with our deficiency instead of seeing where the supply is. There are two ways in which leaven works. In our day it is ritualism and rationalism. Ritualism seeks to improve the flesh, and rationalism to make the natural man contribute to Christ. The moment the Lord warns them against leaven, the disciples get occupied with their own de-

iciency, instead of turning to Him and resting in Him. They say, "It is because we have taken no bread." How like ourselves! If we feel there is a defect, the tendency is to be occupied with the defect, as the disciples were here, instead of seeing what we have in Christ. It was carelessness not to have taken bread, and they think the Lord is chiding them for it; but no, He had allowed them to be brought into a place where they had nothing but Himself and from Him. What He implies is—Do not you know that you have everything in Me? Take care you do not leaven that. Have we been brought to that spot where Christ is indispensable to us, and we cannot do without Him? It is no use looking at yourself, you get everything in that One. You have not a resource in yourself, it all comes from Him. Do you not remember, He said, the miracles of the loaves? Do not you know that you have got Me? The danger is that I should bring in a bit of leaven, and spoil that. Is it not blessed that He brings us to a place where we are shut up to Himself? The true character of the assembly is, that it is the place where Christ is everything. One wonders at oneself, that when such fulness is presented to us we should ever turn away from it, and yet we do. Israel did. They said, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

It is a blessed thing to realise that I am in company with the One in whom are such heavenly springs, and that the man who can tempt Christ, and murmur, and turn away from Him, is set aside in the cross. Look at John vi., we have been told that the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand in this chapter is the same as we get in Matthew xiv., to which the Lord refers in chapter xvi. I would just allude to verses 56, 57, not to attempt to open out what is in these verses, but to shew that we cannot enter into what the manna is—the heavenly grace come down to us in Christ—unless we have eaten of His flesh and drunk His blood.

I must take home to my own soul the death of Christ. It is not only that He died for me, and that the man is gone from the eye of God; but I must really take His death home to my own soul, or practically I shall revive that man for myself. There is no way of having Christ as the food of my soul, of living by Him, He being everything to me, unless I take His death home to my soul and feed on it. If you look at the rending of the veil in Matthew xxvii. 57, you will see that the moment Christ died the veil was rent on God's side—the way was laid open for Him to come out in blessing; but it is not only that He has come

out, but I can go in through the veil. I must take the death home to my own soul as the means of my approach to God. In Hebrews x. 19, 20, I see that is the way *I* have to go in. You do not get the *rent* veil spoken of there, because there the point is our entering in—the veil *is* rent, and we go in, understanding what the death of Christ has effected for us. I have to go that way—to take up the death myself, and enter by it. That is the way I have to go. I must take this death of Christ home to myself, or I shall be trying to attach Christ to myself as a living man in flesh, and that will not do; all that is gone for faith in His death, and as we appropriate it we shall know the taste of heavenly grace, and understand the answer to the question, “What is it?” We must not confound the manna with providential care, that is with mere relief afforded to me in my circumstances. By the death of Christ we find ourselves morally outside this scene. He is no longer seen by the world, but He says, “Because I live ye shall live also;” and again, “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” We thus become acquainted with Him in the scene where He is, and find our springs in Him there, and then we know the heavenly

grace in Him which can sustain us where there are no springs of God.

I would just note another passage, John xvii. 3. It is very apparent that a distinct moment had come in the Lord's path, indeed it had come in chapter xiii. "Jesus knew that his hour was come." It is not the hour of His being on earth here. "He lifted up his eyes to heaven," and says, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." He had set forth the Father on earth, and could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In chapter xvi. He said, "The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall *shew you* plainly of the Father." *He* had set forth the Father on earth, but the moment had not come when He could *shew them* plainly of the Father; it was impossible while He was here with them on the earth. He knew they did not understand. They knew He had come from God, but did not know Him as the One who came forth from the Father. But the hour was coming when He would shew them plainly of the Father. Now in chapter xvii. the hour is come to take His place on high, and give effect to this. He asks the Father (ver. 1), "Glorify thy Son," in order that He might bring those the Father

had given Him into the knowledge of verse 3: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" it is knowing the only true God, that is, revealed as Father by the Word, the sent One of the Father.

To return to Deuteronomy viii. "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." There is the beginning; the word coming from God Himself. Nothing is more contrary to man's heart, and yet nothing more blessed than for man to live by the word of God. It is the revelation of God to the soul. We have seen the full character of such a revelation brought out through the Lord taking His place on high. Further on in John xvii., the Lord says (ver. 6): "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." And again, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me:" they were the communications to Him as a Man upon earth, and in which as knowing them intimately He lived, and He would bring them into the same blessedness with Himself before the Father, for He, as Himself revealing the Father, had given them the Father's word.

Now look at 1 John ii. 5: "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him." I would seek to lead on in this line of truth. How do we *know* that we are in Him? It is in keeping His word. It has often been said, that in John's epistle you cannot separate between Christ and God, and here "His word" is doubtless the word of God; but it is that which Christ is, and He is the communication of that word which we have to keep, and keeping it, God's love is perfected in us, for Christ is the perfect revelation of that love. When the Jews said to Christ, in John viii. 25, "Who art thou?" He replied, "Altogether that which I also say to you." Every word that comes to us to form us is presented to us in Christ. We often make Christ a law in order to correct ourselves by; but no, I must live by Him in order to be like Him: He is my life. The law in the future will be presented to Israel in Christ. In the Psalms the exercises which the remnant are put through are in order to form the spirit of Christ in them, which will prepare them to receive Him. The law will be written in their hearts. They will see it no longer on tables of stone, but in that blessed One; and so they will keep His word. It is a wonderful moment when the eye rests on

Christ, and says, all I can want is presented to me in Christ. Verse 5: "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." All the fulness of the love of God is thus brought into the heart. The blessed Lord lived as a man in the communications of the Father's love; He lived by the word of God, and in keeping His word, the love is in us, and we get the full truth of Deuteronomy viii. 3. It is wonderful that He should communicate to us His word, what is in Christ. It is no longer the tables of the law kept in the ark, a figure no doubt of Christ; but what is true in Him kept and treasured in the heart. He has communicated to us what is of Christ, and gives us grace to take it in and to treasure it. What does it bring into our hearts? It brings the fulness of God's love. It is a wonderful thing that He should present to us all that God is in love, and to know that we are in Him. The climax is in chapter iv. 16: "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."

I have only sought in a feeble way, beloved, to shew you the way that God would conduct our hearts into such a blessed portion.

T. H. R.



# THE CHURCH IN CHRIST'S ABSENCE.

(1 CORINTHIANS IV. 8-13; 2 CORINTHIANS XI. 1-3.)

I THINK when the Lord leads us up to the highest point of privilege and blessing, as He did this morning, it is well afterwards to look a little at the other side, namely, our own responsibility. We had before us the wonderful and unique place in which the church is set, as united to Christ, and what it is to have in our own souls the sense of being united to Him. Eve was brought to Adam and presented to him. Rebecca was brought to Isaac and presented to him; and the church is brought to Christ and united to Him by the Holy Ghost.

We like ministry that will relieve us, but we should be thankful for truth that leads us to a due sense of our responsibility.

Duties, as another has said, flow from the place and relationship in which we are set. Now, what is the church's responsibility in reference to the place in which she is set? What should we look for and expect from the church, if she had been true to Christ? We get at the beginning of the history of the church the first fall, the secret spring was discovered which no one could detect but the Lord Himself. All that was outward went on.

as usual: yet He says, "Thou hast left thy first love." He who loved the church had ceased to be the one commanding object of her affections. Outward decline is a mere consequence of this fall.

We have looked at the cross as bringing all that is of the first man under judgment, and terminating his history. At the same time the ground is laid for the glorifying of the second man. Before we can understand truth as to the church, we must accept the cross in that aspect, as relief to us from the judgment which lay on us. How can any one enter into the thought or idea of the church, as belonging to the new creation, who has not understood the entire setting aside of the first man, the old order of things?

Now let us see what would have characterised the church if she had remained faithful. The scene in which she was left is the place where her Lord died. What association could she have had with the world where her Lord was put to death, if she had maintained the sense of His death? His cross would have kept her in total separation from the people who put her Lord to death, and from the place where He died. In the place where He died His rights were also denied. The church, in separation from the world, should have waited in ex-

pectancy and longing for Him to come and take His rights where His rights had been denied. But she lost her first love, and down she settles under the patronage of the world. All sense of His coming was soon lost.

We see the actual result of tolerating the flesh in the Corinthians. The apostle has to say: "Ye have reigned as kings without us," and before the time of reigning has come, and that in the scene where Christ was rejected. Christ crucified had no place practically at Corinth; and the toleration of flesh, and reigning as kings is the result. The apostle maintained the truth of Christ's rejection in his pathway, and, in verses 9-13, gives the characteristics which marked his path, before he warns his beloved sons and exhorts them to be followers of himself.

One other thing. Where the servant enters into the truth as to the place in which the church is set, there is the taking up in faith what her relationship to Christ is, and the refusal of what is inconsistent with it. The apostle says: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ." All the labours and efforts of his soul were to present the church as a chaste virgin to Christ. His energies were absorbed in that one object.

In the enjoyment of true relationships, the

Lord's death is not looked at as benefit nor relief from judgment, but remembered in the affections, thus recalling how He was treated. If I have a sense of what this world is in relation to Christ, I do not set to work and try to make myself unworldly, for I have discovered what He is worth in Himself outside it. I have the positive side in what I have found in Himself up there.

Then comes the other thing in Revelation xxii. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." This is the expression of the affections of the bride in the sense of her relationship to Christ. True separation from the world goes along with the attitude of waiting; and separation and walking in heavenly relationships does not shut up the heart in relation to others around. So we have, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The church knows *the heart* of Christ while in absolute separation from the world, and while waiting for Him to take His rights and reign.

The last "Come" is very beautiful: it is the heart of the church acquainted with the affections of Christ, going out to all around, and saying: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is one who has drunk into the streams that flow from His blessed Person, saying: "Let him that is athirst come." Separation never shuts up the heart. The more

separate the soul is from things here the more would it go out to others, and the deeper the sense of the purity of those streams the more will the heart be saying to others: "Come and drink."

The Lord give us, as we mourn over the history of the church—a sorrowful history of decadence—to take comfort in this: that there has been moral restoration as to those things that should have marked the church here. As the eye is on Him and drinks more deeply into those streams, these characteristics will be seen. The Lord give us, in our little feeble measure, so to enter into what the church is to Christ, that these characteristics may mark us—that we are refused in the place where He died, and His rights were denied, and are waiting for His coming and His kingdom; and, while waiting, may we enter into the depth of that word, "Come," and may it be the true expression of our hearts. Can you conceive any word more precious to the heart of the waiting Bridegroom than that one word "Come" from the bride on earth?

If we enter by faith into the nature of the relationship of the church to Christ, what should have characterised the church in His absence will at any rate in some small measure characterise us, though all be outwardly in ruin and decline.

J. S. O.

# “STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS.”

(HEB. XI. 13, 14.)

It is that word *plainly* I would speak on. Are we giving a plain answer to the grace that has been given us ?

It is not the church here but individuals, and the road they are treading—the pathway of faith ; this is the road we too are treading.

I want to speak of the answer, the plainness of the answer, our Lord seeks from those who receive such grace, those who are set in the path of faith.

Their confession, here in these verses, was that they were “strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Is that our confession—yours and mine ? We have just been hearing about the cry that goes up from hearts that desire to be with Him, and in that connection I will quote a verse .

“ But ah ! the Master is so fair,  
His smile so sweet to banish'd men,  
That he who meets it unaware  
Can never rest on earth again.”

Is that the reason we cry “Come” ? What is it makes this world a wilderness to us ? It should not be the troubles and trials in it ; but because the One we are waiting for, and to whom we are brought in such wondrous

nearness and blessing, is no longer here. We are treading the path to the place where He is, and therefore should *declare plainly* that we are “strangers and pilgrims” here.

There is a real difference between the thought conveyed by those two words—“strangers and pilgrims”: I *am* a stranger here, we are all strangers in this world, “they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” But is there not a danger of our very soon finding ourselves at home, getting at home in the world?

What should make me a pilgrim there?

Well, I am going away to-morrow, I have my home and home ties in another place, for “where your treasure is there will your heart be also.”

A Christian is both a stranger and a pilgrim; we are strangers because we do not belong to this place, and pilgrims because we are going home; home ties and home calls known and felt will make us really pilgrims, “They that say such things *declare plainly* that they seek a country”—“declare plainly,” or make manifest, not so much by what they say, but their lives declare it.

Is it so with us? Are we so walking that those around us may see we are seeking a country? But, before we can thus declare plainly,

there are two other "*plainlys*" which we must know the power of; the first is in Exodus xxi. 5, 6, "If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free."

The Lord is the One who speaks here, He is the Antitype of the Hebrew servant; He declares He "*loved the church, and gave himself for it.*" But there is a higher thing too, that He came to do the will of His God. "I love my Master" is the first thought of the One who said, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God;" then follows, "My wife and my children, I will not go out free." The One who has made God so known in this world had *God* before Him before He had *us* before Him; but then comes next the "*wife,*" type of that church for which He gave Himself; and then the "children," figure, I believe, of us as individuals—"Behold I and the children which God hath given me," "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me." He will never lose one of His own. Oh! that wondrous plain speaking at the cross, laying the basis for the blessing that follows, and which we see revealed in John xvi. 25, "I shall shew you *plainly* of the Father." Does not this passage speak to us of the One whose love was so plainly told out at the cross; nothing between Him and death here, nothing between Him and the cross with all its

shame; but what does *He* say? "I shall shew plainly of the Father." Was not this a joy to Him? There are two kinds of knowledge; conscious knowledge means my knowing the Person, not simply knowing about Him.

As we really enter, in any little measure, into the wondrous relationship into which we are brought, we shall realise more the present thought of the Lord for us, the desire of His heart, to shew us "*plainly* of the Father," no longer now in "proverbs" or parables, but "*plainly*."

Well, we have these three things—first, on the cross He said *plainly*, "I will not go out free;" the start for us is there. Secondly, "I shall shew you plainly of the Father."

We belong to Him in that bright place where He is, and He seeks to wash our feet to bring us consciously into His present place, that "He may shew us *plainly* of the Father. Then thirdly, as these truths become realities to us, the response from the youngest would be to own, and to own it to Him, that we want to go through this world for Him, drinking in from Him, declaring to all around, by life even more than by lip, *declaring plainly* that we seek a country, that we are strangers and pilgrims here, and that our country is where He is, for He has become dear to our hearts. J. R. B.

# READING.

(THURSDAY AFTERNOON.)

(JOHN XIII. 1-17.)

J. S. O. In John the Lord is out of the world, though in it. The aspect is different to the other gospels. The links are different. He came from heaven, is going to heaven, and what is heavenly and divine is seen in the Son as Man on earth.

Q. Would you say the shadow of death was on the Lord's heart from chapter x. and onwards—specially so when He speaks of giving His life for the sheep?

D. L. H. He is looked at as rejected from the outset in John's gospel, and His death referred to.

T. H. R. I hardly think you get that line of thought in John, "the shadow of death on Him."

Q. It is rather His going to the Father?

T. H. R. Yes. He had come from the Father, and then leaves the world to go to the Father. He is the One men have given up. Rejected by man He ascends up where He was before.

J. S. O. In John He returns to the Father in glory, having given up His life; His going out of

the world is an act of obedience, as accomplishing the Father's will.

Q. What is the difference between His going to the Father and going to God ?

T. H. R. In the one it is more as Son ; in the other as Man. As the Son He goes to the Father ; and as Man He goes to God.

J. A. T. Going to God makes man's new place before God ; going to the Father makes the new relationship for man.

T. H. R. In verse 3, He replaces Adam. In a certain sense Adam had come from God (Luke iii. 38), but he left God. Everything in this world was put into the hand of Adam, but he dropped it all. Now Christ takes a place, in the consciousness of having come from God, and that He was going to God, and that the Father had put all things into His hand. He rises from supper, as the One into whose hand everything was put. Everything must depend on Him now.

Q. Is there not a link between verses 3, 4, and 5 ?

T. H. R. He must do everything now, even if it is to wash a foot for a disciple. He takes the place of service for His own, the Father having put all things into His hand, it is He who must do it. He goes to God, and in this place of service there is nothing too small for Him to do for His saints.

Q. Would this include everything that is in Psalm xl. "Lo I come to do thy will, O God?"

T. H. R. Yes, I think so. He did not actually take this place of chapter xiii. till resurrection.

F. H. B. These chapters suppose His resurrection.

D. L. H. Is it not here a question of the Lord bringing His disciples into part with Him?

T. H. R. Yes. Man gave Him up, the devil had put into the heart of Judas to betray Him; that is the heart of man. The hour was come for His departure out of the world. "Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father;" and the Lord is conscious that the place of the last Adam had been given to Him by the Father. As man He takes up everything for God, that is the fresh start. He begins with washing the disciples' feet that they might have part with Him, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

F. H. B. Was it not dependent on His being able to link His own with Him?

J. A. T. From the highest place of exaltation He stoops to the lowest service. (Vers. 3, 4.)

Q. Does this chapter answer to Numbers xix.?

T. H. R. I think this goes beyond Numbers

xix. There you do not go outside the wilderness, or wilderness circumstances; here in John you do. You are to have part with Him. In Numbers it is sprinkling; in John it is washing, and belongs to a new order of things.

F. H. B. This service is connected with the new order of things?

T. H. R. Yes, "the hour was come," that was a new departure, a new point had come. Man gives Him up, and "the *Father* had given all into His hand," and now He takes up the service suited to the order of things. He is to take up all the *Father's* counsels of glory, and the first thing before Him is that His own were to have part with Him, as Man, in what He was about to enter.

Q. Is not the key to it, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end," and is not the washing meeting us in our wilderness path?

J. A. T. In Numbers it was for actual defilement, it would be limiting this chapter to apply it as Numbers xix.

T. H. R. There is a principle in this washing; it was connected with having "part with me." As a fact, there is no record that when the Lord washed their feet the disciples had contracted any actual defilement. They must have been ceremonially clean to eat the Passover,

which they *did* eat with Him; but He rises from supper—from that order of things to which the Passover belonged. He was leaving the earthly order of things altogether.

J. S. O. You would say the *world* and not the *wilderness* when speaking of John. The wilderness implies more journeying through the world as strangers and pilgrims, as in Peter and Hebrews, the rest of God to come; but that is not the ground of John. Both in his gospel and epistle we are left in the world as such, "the whole world lieth in the wicked one," a defiling scene, but not so much the idea of a wilderness journey. John is heavenly things brought into my heart on earth.

T. H. R. J. N. D. has said that we need washing as a principle to have part with Him, though we may not need our feet washed for any particular thing. The Lord addresses Himself to this service to clear those given to Him by the Father from all of earth. He brings them into a new order of things entirely; it is not any particular defilement you have got into. There were connections which were right for them as Jews, but they were now to be put on entirely new ground.

D. L. H. Do you mean that even a Jew who was clean as such would require this washing?

T. H. R. Yes, a Jew ceremonially clean

would need this washing to have part with Christ.

Q. Would John xvii. 14, 19 throw a light on this? Does not what He says to His Father there describe His action here?

J. A. T. Is there not a difference between sanctification in that passage and washing in chapter xiii. Here it is in view of all that would bring in a shade of reserve between the heart and Christ; it is not exactly sanctification which is the truth of all that Christ is in the place which He has taken in glory to form us like Him. But, having to leave us in a defiled and judged world, out of which He has had to depart absolutely to the Father, the washing here is to provide for our enjoyment of His presence where He is gone.

T. H. R. There is a principle in the washing of chapter xiii., it is always going on. You might not have a thing on your conscience. The Lord is engaged in clearing you from *this* scene for the other. He is removing *what hinders* your enjoying this place of intimacy. In chapter xvii. the truth connected with His own place before the Father, and into which He brings His own, sanctifies.

Q. Can we not hinder this work?

T. H. R. We can refuse to put our foot into His hand.

D. L. H. Peter resisted ; he refused to put himself into this position.

T. H. R. Yes, nothing more retards than our trying to do it ourselves.

F. H. B. Does not the second washing keep up the sense of the first washing ? Would you say a word as to the first ?

T. H. R. The first washing in the full sense of it would bring home to us the death of Christ as ending us here.

E. C. Do you connect it with the priest being washed all over, and then there was the washing of the hands and feet afterwards at the laver ?

T. H. R. There is an allusion doubtless, but the washing here is to have part with Him.

J. A. T. Would not that miss the place the Lord takes us to here ? The laver had to do with the priests entering in—going to *God* ; here the washing is connected with His going to the *Father*, and the relationships and intimacies thus to be enjoyed ; still there is an analogy.

J. S. O. There are two words used as to the washing of the priests in the LXX. (See Exod. xxix. 4 ; xxx. 15, 19) never interchanged ; they are used here with the same distinction. In Hebrews x. 22 it is the same word as is used here for the first washing, it is “washed all over.”

Q. What is the difference between the Advocate, and what we get here ?

J. A. T. I think we have suffered as to the sense of the passage here, in the way of limiting it, by connecting the work here with the action of the "Advocate with the Father," where it is a question of sin. It would tend to limit it to what the conscience could take cognizance of as sin, where as here, it is what the *Lord* takes cognizance of as that which could bring in a cloud of moral distance between us and Him, or hinder communion with Him in the new place He is taking, that is, for man.

E. C. One is introductory, the other restorative.

R—d. It is not necessarily failure. Advocacy supposes sin, this does not.

T. H. R. In reality, they were actually sitting at supper with the Lord, ceremonially clean, having communion with Him in an earthly way; but now He says—I must wash you to have "part with Me." It must have astonished them to hear they needed washing. It was for their entering on a new scene.

J. S. O. They did not understand the break, and therefore did not understand the washing. When we are in the place we understand what is unsuitable to it and the need of the washing.

Q. What is it to wash another's feet?

J. A. T. If we entered more into the character of the feet-washing as the Lord brings it

before us, it would help us in the service He commits to us for one another. This feet-washing is necessary for capacity for the new scene.

Q. Why does a man washed all over need to have his feet washed ?

T. H. R. The feet contract defilement ; they touch the earth.

J. S. O. You are walking down here in the world still outwardly in the old creation, and that is where you touch death, and get defiled. The slightest thought may interrupt communion, and earthly things, though necessary, are not heavenly.

F. H. B. The very nature of the things with which we have to do here tend to dissociate us from heaven, tend to weaken our communion, and we need this ministry of the Lord's to give us the enjoyment of "part with Him." Business associations and natural duties tend to defile us, not that there is anything in these things which is of itself defiling, but because of our weakness the tendency of these things is to connect us in spirit with the earth, and so to hinder our enjoyment of heavenly things.

R—d. In cases of discipline we get defiled and need the washing.

T. H. R. Yes, but that is connected with Numbers xix. 21, 22 ; here it is to be brought into intimacy with the Lord where He is. If

you own that you belong to this place of intimacy, and that you have part with Him, you will find many things disturb you that you never had a conscience about before. Anything that would hinder me from having communion with the Lord in His things needs to be removed.

J. S. O. Things that are right; the business of this life, may be gone through rightly with God, or no one could be in business, but the heart's home and rest is in heavenly things.

T. H. R. Yes, the business then would be the strange thing to you, though you fulfil it. "As hireling fills his day." You would do the business as a hireling, glad to turn to your own things when the day's work is done. Often the business is our interest, instead of doing it merely as for wages. If we knew what "part with me" is, we should feel the business irksome in a sense, though doing it faithfully, instead of being at home in it. We should be glad to be out of it, however prosperous, to get to His things, to be with Him. If we do not get on that line we shall not understand this washing. We need not leave the place of communion because we have to do our business. I would like to do my business as one in communion with the Lord—as a heavenly man. The one should affect the other.

J. S. O. Having the business to do does not

necessarily make the defilement, but how I do the business? Having to do with the old order of things, it is easy to get defiled if we are not watchful, for the heart gets into them. If you get interested in your business you are in danger of getting down into it.

T. H. R. You get at home in it. The danger is, I *like* to be in the business; I am prosperous in it. Suppose a man works for wages, he does not feel that with which he is occupied to be his own. What *is* mine is in another scene. I do not see how a servant could feel that business is his own though he does it heartily unto the Lord, and should be more faithful than another.

Q. How does the Lord practically bring it about with us; what is the way that He helps us?

T. H. R. By delivering us to death, as in 2 Corinthians iv. He makes us feel the pressure of death in things here, that is to help us. But in this chapter He makes us conscious of His own service to us. He applies to us by the word what is of Himself.

D. L. H. What is meant by defilement is not necessarily sinning.

Q. May communion be broken and yet there be not sin?

J. S. O. I cannot conceive anything defiling

or interrupting communion that has not the nature of flesh and sin in it.

Q. Are we not trying to bring the two spheres together?

T. H. R. I think so. If we had the sense of "part with me," and knew what the Lord was bringing us into, we should have no difficulty, and we should readily feel everything that interfered with it. The washing is in order to take away anything that interrupts it. Fellowship is community of thought, joy, and feelings.

Q. Is communion a positive thing, or only condition?

T. H. R. "Part with me" is not exactly communion, it is better to keep to the words "part with me."

Up to this time He had had a part in the Jewish order of things, now He is quitting this scene, going to the Father; His solicitude for them is that they should know it. He wants them to have part with Him there. This washing was to relieve them of their associations here. If He were not going to another scene, and they to have part with Him, they would not have needed it.

There is an entire break with everything here. He wants to clear them from all the old associations. He "*rises from supper,*" it

gives character to it. The hour was come, and He was going to depart out of this world to the Father.

D. L. H. Does not "part with me" in its full thought carry us on to the future—to our being ultimately with Him?

T. H. R. I think so.

F. H. B. What is going on now is in view of what we shall enter into fully when He comes.

T. H. R. If the Lord had remained here with them they would not have needed this character of washing; their association with Him here would have continued; but He says, as it were—I am going to another scene—I must wash you to have part with me there. He would have them enjoy their portion there till they should see Him again.

J. A. T. It all takes its character from those words, "part with me."

T. H. R. Everything must take its character from the glory where He is. Things could not go on as they were. He was rejected and about to depart out of this world to the Father.

E. C. Would everything in this scene defile or hinder our entering into that scene? I ask that to shew it is not necessarily *sin*. Is it my fleshly use of present things or the things themselves that defile? If I use it rightly, would it defile me?

T. H. R. No.

E. C. I was looking at the word "defile" in Mark vii. 2, "unwashen" or "defiled" hands: the word means "common," they were engaged with common things; in order to have to say to divine things they had to wash their hands. I think everything in this scene would hinder my passage into the other scene. I must in my mind get quit of it as a hindrance, not of course as duties. We have to say to a Man in a new scene and in a new order of things. The washing of the feet clears us as to walk. We should have the sense of having to do with another scene, and importing from it, so as to live in the Spirit in this.

T. H. R. The great thing is to have the sense of what I *do* belong to. I *belong* to that order of things. The washing is to remove anything that hinders the sense of this—that would drag me down. Do let us keep that before us, that *I belong* to that scene. The washing is to *keep* you in touch with it. It is an immense thing to know that you belong to that scene where He is; only let that be enjoyed and we shall desire to have all that hinders removed.

Q. Why are riches called the "mammon of unrighteousness"?

T. H. R. Simply because Christ is rejected

and denied His rights here. The moment the Lord was rejected the riches of this world became the mammon of unrighteousness. Nothing can be right here if the Lord has not His rights.

E. C. We must begin from the top, we must *come down* to things of this life; but we belong there.

T. H. R. Here it is transition; the Lord was bringing out the new place into which He was about to enter for us, and the washing needed to have part with Him. Now we belong there, and the washing goes on with us on the same principle; to know I *belong* there is a great start.

Q. Would that be the force of chapter xvii. 18. I belong to that place and He sends me from it?

R—d. Elisha came from the place where his master had gone, and went on in the power of it; he was a heavenly man going through this scene.

T. H. R. We get the Lord's service in this chapter to fit the disciples to have part with Him. He is always occupied about us. The washing is not to bring me into the new scene; I am there; but to remove all that would be a hindrance.

D. L. H. In many things we all offend, and

there is an affinity in us to what is defiling; but there is no necessity for its being contracted.

J. A. T. If we were walking in the Spirit we should not be defiled.

R—d. As to fact we are really in the following chapters, xiv.—xvii., where this applies, and we need chapter xiii. to keep us in the power of those chapters.

T. H. R. The thing is, how am I going through the world—with all my interests in it, or with my interests in the world where Christ is? Let that be settled in the soul, and that will shape our whole course. We shall not be picking up things in this world then, but dropping them, and the Lord will help us to do this.

J. S. O. He has no part in anything here now, and I am to have part with Him where He is.

Q. What is the force of "they are in the world"? (Chap. xvii.)

T. H. R. That they are simply going through it.

J. S. O. It is clear that this washing is by the word, and that it is the application of His death to our actual state. The service is the fruit of the love and spring of His own heart to "His own."

J. A. T. Yes; and He takes a towel and

wipes their feet; it gives the sense of the completeness of His service. If the feet were left wet, they would be more exposed to defilement.

T. H. R. The linen towel was that with which He was girded. It conveys to me the sense, not only that the disturbing element is removed, but that He ministers to me what is of Himself.



# READING.

(FRIDAY AFTERNOON.)

(JOHN VI. 26-71.)

Q. What is manna?

F. H. B. Did you not say it was the heavenly grace in Christ which enables us to live to God down here?

T. H. R. Yes; but I do not think you must come to John vi. for manna; it is referred to to bring out the contrast, that is, "the bread of God."

Q. Does the manna ceasing (Josh. v. 12) apply to us?

T. H. R. We must look at ourselves in a mixed condition to answer that. There are two aspects in which you may look at yourself; as down here, and also as in Christ, connected with all that is heavenly.

F. H. B. There is our life in flesh, and our life in Christ—eternal life.

Q. Is the "bread of God" Christ on earth?

T. H. R. The bread of God is an incarnate Christ, He who came down out of heaven.

J. A. T. How do you distinguish between the manna, and Christ in this chapter, as setting it aside and contrasted with it, as in verses 49, 50, 58?

T. H. R. He brings in the food abiding to eternal life at once in the beginning of His discourse here. He had been feeding the multitude with bread to sustain life in this world. It is remarkable that in chapters vi. and vii. the people connect the miracle of the loaves and what the Lord says as to living water, with the Prophet which should come into the world: that is, they connected both with Christ as spoken of by Moses, the Messiah of Israel. Their thoughts revert to Moses. Moses gave them manna, and they say, "What sign shewest thou?" or what do *you* work? That serves to bring out the contrast. He says, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." It is Christ incarnate sealed with the Holy Ghost, man after another order altogether—out of heaven.

Q. Would you say that manna is connected with life that perishes?

T. H. R. I believe there is the antitype to the manna, but this is the contrast to the manna which was wilderness food. He had fed them

with bread that perishes, but the Lord is leading us on here. The manna is for the wilderness, in order that you might live *to God* there. It is not mere help in difficulties. We need to apprehend the divine side of the gospel—that we have been brought *to God*, not merely set free from Egypt bondage.

Q. Where is the antitype to the manna found?

T. H. R. I believe in Galatians *ii.* 20. The apostle had said (ver. 19), "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live *unto God.*" He then adds, "I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me" (New Trans.); and in Romans vi. it is said, Christ "liveth unto God." Living unto God in a certain sense has nothing to do with living in the flesh; but as a fact we are living in flesh. Hence the apostle adds, "In that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me." There is, I believe, where the manna comes in.

Q. In what sense is manna a type of Christ now?

T. H. R. It is that heavenly grace in Christ which enables me to live to God in the wilderness.

F. H. B. I never understood the manna till I

got a little idea of it this morning, that it is by the grace of Christ we can live to God.

J. S. O. But you must connect that grace with a humbled Christ in wilderness circumstances.

T. H. R. Yes; the manna came down to sustain them where there was no natural sustenance. God had brought them to Himself. We could not walk down here in newness of life, nor serve in newness of Spirit, as those brought to God, unless by Christ; but eternal life is outside this scene.

Q. What is Philippians ii. ?—is it manna ?

T. H. R. It is more the meat-offering character, I judge.

F. H. B. I have often remarked that the meat-offering and the manna are mixed up together. The meat-offering presents to us the Godward aspect of the life of Jesus down here; only priests could eat of the meat-offering. The manna was for all the people.

T. H. R. They are not the same, though connected. The meat-offering is everything in Christ as a Man that delighted the heart of *God*, but the manna is what sustains *me*, though I, as a priest can enter into what He is to God as the meat-offering.

J. A. T. That is a clear distinction; the meat-offering is for God, the manna what sustains me.

E. C. If manna is the grace of a humbled Christ in earthly circumstances, where should we look for it in the gospels?

T. H. R. That brings us to the very point: I do not think we really enter into that which the gospels present till we know the epistles. The epistles ground us in the bearing of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not get hold of the manna in the gospels till we feed on Him in death.

E. C. Is it not manna here then?

T. H. R. No; it is the food of eternal life here, the *contrast* to the manna, the bread of God come down out of heaven. It connects me with the sphere which is proper to it, and whence it came. It is by feeding on Christ that we know and enter into what Eternal Life is. We first appropriate His death, then "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

E. C. Is there any antitype here at all of the manna?

T. H. R. I think it is contrast, the analogy is to bring in the contrast.

R—D. I remember something of J. N. D.'s, where he says the Psalms are the great storehouse of manna.

T. H. R. The Spirit of God supplies to the remnant in the Psalms the exercises and feelings suited to them, so that they are formed in

the Spirit of Christ. The point of the chapter is, He is carrying them, in contrast to earthly blessings, into an order of things which He brought out of heaven by incarnation; the food endures to eternal life. Hence, in verse 35, it is not a question of meeting our needs, but of having none: "Not at all hunger," "Not at all thirst."

J. S. O. It is what is presented in His Person, as come down from heaven, before you come to the question of His death.

Q. How does John vi. lead up to Eternal Life?

T. H. R. The whole truth and reality was in Christ's Person, as come down here; but we must accept His death to have any part in it. He is the second Man out of heaven—the Bread which came down from heaven—and that immediately connects you with a sphere outside of this one. In this chapter you touch counsel and purpose in the One who came down here to do the Father's will. The manna is for a people on earth, and in the type their journey ends figuratively in the millennium. (Ex. xviii.)

Q. Was it the bread God gave?

T. H. R. Yes; but we have more here. It is the bread of God. The manna is brought out to lead on to the other.

R—D. It is the bread come down from God

out of heaven. An eater lives for ever, it is characteristic of the one who is an eater; it is contrast, yet analogy.

Q. Is the manna Christ sustaining us in our circumstances down here?

T. H. R. It is grace that comes from heaven, heavenly grace—brought to us in Christ to sustain us with God in the wilderness.

J. S. O. You would make a distinction between the old corn of the land, which is connected with a glorified Man, as food for a heavenly people in heavenly places, and in conflict there, and the manna which is heavenly grace for a people here in earthly circumstances to sustain them in them, and is connected with Christ in humiliation on earth?

T. H. R. Certainly.

Q. Is not eternal life connected with heaven and heavenly things?

T. H. R. Yes; but it came down. When Christ came down here, He was the Eternal Life, it is all there in Him; but He had to die in order that we might have it. When He was here life was here, and they touched it in a certain way in Him. The end of Matthew iii. gives you God's pattern Man; His delight in Him, and sealed. You get that blessed Man here, "Him hath God the Father sealed." They asked for a sign that they might know and believe Him.

(Ver. 30.) The sign was Himself. They could have no greater sign than Himself come down here ; but He *must die*, and we must appropriate His death to have eternal life.

J. S. O. They could not have it in an incarnate Christ.

Q. Could you have manna except through His death ?

T. H. R. No ; I do not think we can have anything without entering into His death. The meaning of the word "Manna" is, "What is it?" The question had never been answered. Now I know what it is ; now it *is* answered ; it came from heaven—heavenly grace in Christ. The manna of old came down to men, suited for the sustenance of God's people on earth ; but they called it light bread, and we do not get any appetite or taste for manna till we get the other side of Christ's death. I do not think relief in our troubles or worries here is manna. I must understand what it is to be alive to God through Christ's death and resurrection before I get to know the taste of manna. You do not get manna till you get the other side of the Red Sea.

R—D. J. N. D. said we needed the manna in earthly circumstances, business, sick wife, &c., we need manna for that.

T. H. R. I quite go with that ; but the

question is—is the world a wilderness to me because of the troubles and many trying things, or because Christ is not here and I have been taken out of it by His death? I may come to a death-bed, and what is of God in my soul may have been sustained by heavenly grace all the way through, and yet I may have never understood what the manna is. Israel was in a wilderness of wandering for thirty-eight years, and though the question, “What is it?” was never answered, they were sustained by manna.

We may fret ourselves, and find it then a wilderness of wandering, but after all God’s people are sustained by the grace in Christ, though they do not know what manna is. We only get to know that as having been brought out of Egypt and brought to God. We should not then pass through wilderness circumstances, as getting through things, but as bringing God into them. Are we willing to take the place of intimacy with Christ clear outside of the man here, and connected with another Man in another place altogether? We shall never understand what the wilderness is till we are.

Q. Where do we pick up manna?

T. H. R. It all comes from heaven.

E. C. If our reading is on John vi., and there is no manna in the chapter, why are we talking

about manna instead of what is in the chapter ?  
Is verse 38 manna ?

T. H. R. We are talking of the contrast to the manna. In verse 38 He came to do the will of God, to carry out the Father's counsels of grace.

Q. What is His giving His flesh for the life of the world ?

T. H. R. The world there is simply that it was not limited to a Jew ; what characterises the bread out of heaven is that it is life-giving to the world, not merely to Jews.

Q. Was it propitiation ?

T. H. R. Life is a positive thing ; propitiation is to clear you of the old thing. If He comes down in this character of living bread out of heaven, it must go world-wide.

Q. Is not John vi. the fulfilment of Exodus xvi., and John vii. of Exodus xvii. ?

T. H. R. I do not think so, both chapters go beyond it. In Exodus xvi. and xvii., the state of things contemplated ends in the millennium, and the Gentile comes as a Gentile to praise God for His deliverance of Israel. (Chap. xviii.) Israel will get the fulfilment of it by-and-by. There is an application of the manna, &c., to us looked at as in the wilderness.

J. S. O. You would say you have the food of life *here* (John vi) and the Spirit in chapter vii. ?

J. A. T. There is a feeding on Christ personally, "he that eateth *me*," when death is known. And that helps as to the difference between what manna gives the contrast of here and 2 Corinthians xii.; there it is a ministry of grace by and from the Lord, but not the Person of the Lord Jesus as here. The bread of God is never reached by us in that character till we eat His flesh and drink His blood, and then we begin to enter into God's delight in the humbled One here, the food of eternal life. It seems to limit what is here if we make it the manna instead of contrast. The bread of God is not for sustainment in wilderness life: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Q. What is the hidden manna?

T. H. R. That is nearer the meat-offering, but it is all the same Christ, and you must not disconnect or separate anything in the blessed Lord.

F. H. B. The manna meets me down here, it is my help in things here, the bread of God connects me with a life apart from this scene altogether; it connects me with another, an entirely new order of things.

T. H. R. Yes. J. B. S. says we lose the power of passages by limiting them to our side. Take for instance that passage—My sheep shall never

perish; that is taken as if the security of the sheep was the object in the passage; it is what is assured to *Him*, the Good Shepherd. If we take things on God's side we shall always get a great enlargement of the truth. The more you get the divine side the more you would get comfort. J. N. D. used to say of the Good Shepherd in John x., I will have my sheep in spite of you, that is, *Christ* will have what belongs to Him.

D. L. H. If we get the food of God here, and communion with God in His delight in Christ, what is the difference between that and the meat offering?

J. A. T. Is not the meat offering the devotedness of Christ in life to God, as the burnt offering is His devotedness in death? You do not get the thought of Christ come down here in the meat offering; it is more His whole life going up to God, the sweet savour of the perfection of it under every form of testing. When all was ended here in man's judgment and He had ascended up to where He was before, then Christ becomes available to us, as the once humbled One here on whom we feed, entering into God's delight in Him.

J. S. O. You do not get here either the one place or the other as you get in Paul, neither the wilderness as such, nor the heavenly places as such.

T. H. R. No, because John never takes you to heaven, he brings heaven down to you. You do not go to John for manna, for in John Christ is the sent One of the Father, revealing heavenly things.

J. S. O. We have been trying to bring the manna and the old corn of the land into the line of truth in John. Manna and the old corn are more Paul's teaching in the wilderness epistles and in Ephesians.

T. H. R. Yes. If you do bring in Paul, Colossians runs along with John, the out-of-the-world condition. You are not gone to heaven, but you are out of the world morally in John.

J. S. O. John's writings differ from Paul's, and the types of manna or the old corn of the land do not go with the former, because you have not got the Christian looked at either in heavenly places or in the wilderness journey to God's rest, as in other scriptures. In John it is more the Son of God, the heavenly Man who brings down what is heavenly into our hearts, having closed in His death the old order of things, the condition we were in. We have communion with Him in an out-of-the-world condition of things though still on earth.

Q. What is the difference between the bread come down from heaven and His flesh given us to eat?

T. H. R. What staggered the Jews was the fact put before them of His having come down out of heaven, because they knew Him as born in this world (ver. 42), therefore they could not understand His flesh given for the life of the world; they were looking at it in a material way. His words were spirit and life. If men could have received Him come down from heaven, everything would have been set up; it would have been a kind of millennium; but it is appropriating His death which brings into eternal life.

F. H. B. The bread come down out of heaven is His own Person; His flesh given—what He was in death.

J. A. T. It separates from all that is of the first man and his world, as I identify myself with and feed on His death, and so helps the soul to enter more and more into the new order of things, of which He was the revelation in His Person as come down out of heaven. His death has brought in the breach, and eating His flesh and drinking His blood now maintains the breach in my soul, and thus I dwell in Him and He in me.

J. S. O. This really is the subjective side in us which answers to the new place in resurrection in which the Lord appears in chapter xx. He comes into the midst of the disciples and as

the last Adam breathes on them the power of life, connecting them with Himself in heavenly associations. On our side, there is no living in the true sphere of eternal life without eating His flesh and drinking His blood, or in other words, appropriating His death as that which delivers out of the old condition.

T. H. R. It is more the Jordan character, though I do not exactly bring it in here; you are not in the land but beyond death.

J. A. T. It is a help to remember that last message of J. N. D.'s to us, "Let not John's ministry be forgotten in insisting on Paul's. One gives the dispensation in which the display is; the other, that which is displayed." You cannot bring dispensations into John.

J. S. O. In John you have the power of the Holy Ghost in connection with eternal life. In the wilderness journey and conflict in heavenly places, *we* are a good deal prominent. In the wilderness it is a question of our needs. In Canaan, the armour and the foe. In John it is the revelation of the Father in the Son by the power of the Holy Ghost in connection with eternal life. We are out of our depth on our side here, and we cannot be prominent when we have divine Persons before us. Who is to know anything about the Father and the Son but in the power of the Holy Ghost? "He that eateth

my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." It is not dispensational position, but the power of communion with Himself.

Q. What is verse 57: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me"?

T. H. R. It is characteristic. You must have an object. *He* did not live apart from the Father, and *you* could not live apart from Him. It is not living *by* Christ, but "on account of" Christ.

E. C. He is the source and object?

T. H. R. Yes. He lived on account of the Father.

J. A. T. And we are brought into that: eating Him, *He* becomes the cause and object of our new existence.

T. H. R. Yes, the nearest illustration to it is as a husband would say, "My wife is dead and I have nothing to live for now." It is a poor illustration, but it shews the object of life. Now you see we have not manna nor the millennium here.

J. S. O. Yet we have the food of life.

T. H. R. Yes, the way we *do* live; we could not live by any other way than by eating, or we should be independent creatures. The more you meditate on that verse the more wonderful it is, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every

word of God." Christ is the Word of God. Everything is presented to me in Him as come down out of heaven, the sent One of the Father. Now He has ascended where He was before, and we get the full witness by the Spirit of Eternal life in Him.



# READING.

(SATURDAY MORNING.)

## THE SPIRIT'S WORK.

(ROM. VIII. 1-27.)

T. H. R. It has been said that what we have actually now is the clearing away of all our sins by the work of Christ, and the indwelling of the Spirit of God. These are the two things we have in actuality. We have not got things in actuality yet, but we have the Spirit of God connecting us now with all that is ours, and leading us into the enjoyment of it—though we have not got it in actuality.

R—D. So that while in the life of the flesh we can realise it as ours.

Q. What do you mean by not having it in actuality?

T. H. R. You have not it actually, though you realise it by the Spirit. For instance, we are not in heaven yet, but our place is there. It was said in Exeter that "Christianity is a system of realities and not of actualities." I am not actually in heaven, but the Spirit

brings me there. If I know the power of the Spirit bringing me there, I have the enjoyment of it; it is a reality to me; so with everything.

T. H. R. Chapter viii. is the opening out of the subject at the end of chapter vii., where you reach deliverance; but deliverance is not all; it opens the door for me to go out; but deliverance opens out into liberty. The Spirit brings me into liberty. Liberty is a step beyond deliverance. In the end of chapter vii. the door is open, but I am in liberty in chapter viii. as having the Spirit.

Q. Is not the end of chapter vii. christian thanksgiving?

F. H. B. Yes; he thanks God because he sees the door to deliverance; but he is not out yet, he sees the light as through a tunnel.

T. H. R. The Spirit conducts you to Christ—He brings you in.

Q. We possess all we can now?

T. H. R. Yes; we have now the greatest gift we could have—the gift of the Spirit. It is important, and it would be a great help to us, if we saw distinctly what the work of the Spirit is on our side, and that is especially what we get in chapter viii. In chapter v. we get the Spirit on God's side, to shed abroad His love into our hearts, or we should not know

it (ver. 5); but it is most essential to see the service of the Spirit on our side, to conduct our souls into all that is ours in Christ.

He is the earnest of the inheritance, not of the love.

F. H. B. Clearly whatever belongs to the Christian can only be made good to him by the Spirit of God.

Q. What is the difference between reality and actuality?

T. H. R. Though not actually in heaven, yet in spirit I can enjoy heaven now; heaven becomes a blessed reality to my soul by the power of the Spirit of God; it is not a thing in the air—a mere sentiment. It is with many a floating sentiment. Ask them what they know of heaven, they could not tell a bit about it. Many make it a better kind of earth. Why? Because you cannot touch a single christian blessing apart from the Spirit of God. In this very chapter we are waiting for sonship—waiting for adoption; we are not in actualities yet, we are not in the *place* or state of sons, but we have the Spirit of sonship. I am a son, that is a reality; but I am not yet in the place of a son, that is, conformed to Christ in glory; the body is not in the power of redemption yet, but the Spirit enables me to know what belongs

to me ; He is the Spirit of adoption, so that I can say, "Abba, Father."

R—D. Realities become actualities when we get to glory.

E. C. So that one may say that in Romans viii. we have the reality of christian life and position while here in actual circumstances of flesh and blood.

Q. Will a Christian be ever more a child of God than he is now ?

T. H. R. No ; I said *son*, not child. I prefer the word "sonship" to "adoption" (ver. 15) ; sonship implies conformity to Christ in glory. We are not that yet.

Q. You mean you are really a son now, though not actually in the circumstances of a son.

T. H. R. Yes ; you have everything by faith now.

Q. Is there any christian blessing you have in actuality now ?

T. H. R. You have the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Ghost.

Q. Are we not said to be translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love ?

E. C. The kingdom of God is a moral thing, and therefore actual in that sense.

T. H. R. The Son is now sitting on His Father's throne, not yet as Son of man on His

own throne, and we are in the kingdom of the Son of His love; that is the form it now takes for us; it is the heavenly side as now known, and we are brought into it.

In verse 2 we have two principles; the law of the Spirit of life, and the law of sin and death. Take life. Where is it? Where does the Spirit give me to know it? In the second Man—in Christ Jesus; that is the first work of the Spirit brought out here. It is how we first really touch life; but it is not in myself, but in Christ. Where I touch it is in Christ Jesus. The Spirit is life, and He gives me to touch it in Christ Jesus. It is the first thing as to the Spirit here. He is the One who enables me to understand where and what life is. It is said, "The Spirit is life," because I am not actually in it as to the body; but on the contrary, I am as to actuality in a body of sin and death.

E. C. It is all actual in Christ, and because it is so there comes all the conflict in us to make it real to us.

F. H. B. Would you say that the Spirit of God links our souls with what is true in Christ actually?

T. H. R. Yes; in John iii. you get the work of Christ, and the ending of the first man, and on God's side everything brought in—God's love. I could not get more—His love is an ocean.

Then in chapter iv. you get the work of the Spirit—the well of water. He acquaints our souls with what is true in Christ, making it true in us. Romans viii. is the opening out of John iv. in detail. The Spirit makes true *in* me what is true *of* me in Christ. I want Christ brought home to my heart. The “well of water” is the Spirit as the spring in me—the source of all holy affections and thoughts that are of Christ, and hence Christ in me.

Q. Has the believer eternal life?

T. H. R. The believer has eternal life in the Son. You cannot enter into or enjoy it apart from the Spirit. John xx. is the way they got the Spirit of life then.

Q. What is the Spirit of life?

T. H. R. The Spirit is the One who makes you understand what life in Christ is; life is revealed to me in that blessed One. I am not actually conformed to Christ in glory, I am down here in a body of death. He is the Spirit of life, because, though it is life in Christ Jesus, yet the Spirit being in me it is practically my life.

R—D. It is a cause of torture in souls trying to find in themselves what is only actual in Christ.

F. H. B. It is only by the Spirit we live; that is, living in the sense of enjoying life. If we

grieve the Spirit, we have no sense of the enjoyment of life.

Q. Is verse 2 equivalent to the life of Christ made good to me by the Spirit?

T. H. R. I would not like to say that. The Spirit conducts me to Christ, and I get away from self: that is the first step in liberty. It is a great thing when my soul touches it. The Spirit conducts me to Christ. It makes me *free*. I touch what is in Christ in my own soul. It does not say "life" but "Spirit of life." My soul touches it, it is not merely standing. You understand by the Spirit what life in Christ is.

Q. Is Christ looked at here as risen only, or as glorified?

T. H. R. As risen. Verse 2 is the first thing you get by the Spirit. Your soul touches life in Christ; death was on me and condemnation; now I have touched a well-spring of life in Christ by the Spirit.

R—D. J. N. D. used to say that verse 3 is not consequential but collateral; that is, not a deduction from the previous part.

Q. Is this John xiv. 19: "Because I live, ye shall live also"?

T. H. R. Well, that goes beyond; here it is freedom from the law of sin and death. It is a great thing to own that death was on me and condemnation; now I have touched a well-

spring of life in Christ Jesus; it must be in the power of the Spirit; no mental effort could give it.

R—D. You touch a new state in Christ. No mental apprehension could give it you.

E. C. Faith must be in exercise; it must be by faith, not feeling.

T. H. R. People think they have life in themselves instead of in Christ. The Spirit conducts them to Christ Jesus. Literally in the original it reads "the law of the Spirit of *the life* in Christ Jesus."

Q. Is this the same as John xx. ?

T. H. R. That is where it began. It is a great thing to see where it began; it began in John xx.; we get the character of the life there; Christ breathed into them the breath of life. It was the life of the One who had been into death, but was risen. I see there how it began. I could not say exactly that Christ breathed into me; but we have got that same life as having the Spirit.

R—D. If we are on terms with God, it must be by the Spirit. In Romans v. God is on terms with us; but then what terms are we on with Him ?

T. H. R. It is only by the power of the Spirit of God that we can enter into things. Romans v. brings out the love of God to you.

You could not be brought higher on God's side; there is no limit to the outflow of God's love. The Spirit only makes you enter into it, sheds it abroad in the heart. Chapter viii. is our side, the Spirit characterising. Chapter v. 1, 2 gives the result of the work done for us, a standing in the favour of God, and the Spirit makes me to enjoy God's love. The intervening chapters from v. to viii. deal with *your* state. Everything is complete on God's side; but the root must be reached before you can get into chapter viii.; the first man must go. You could not be brought higher than chapter v. Israel as to their own state were not free of Egypt until they were over Jordan, though by God's power they were brought out at the Red Sea. There was no need of the wilderness or Jordan on God's side, but it was needful for them for their side, for although they were out of Egypt, Egypt was not out of their hearts. So with us, when you come to our state there is a need for the whole thing to be cleared away; the old man is condemned. Sin and death are no more a law to him, though still in him; he is free as having another law, that of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus.

R—D. Man in Christ is a new headship. Romans vi. is really the drill. You are not sent into battle without being drilled. It is the

experimental drill of Christians; it is mixed up with a foundation of doctrine.

E. C. Romans v. and viii. join on, but the intervening chapters, vi. and vii., are two independent treatises, and give the detail. You could not reckon yourself dead, but by the power of the Spirit.

T. H. R. The Jordan was no part of God's deliverance. Had it not been for the state of the people when they came to the mountain of the Amorites they might have walked into the land. On God's part deliverance was complete at the Red Sea.

Q. Is Romans viii. experimentally entering into my place in Christ?

T. H. R. Yes, so far as it affects our own state and relationship with God individually; we do not reach union here. It is most important to see what has been lately said—"We cannot be as to the state of our souls one bit beyond the work of the Spirit in us." Not one of us, no matter how much we know, are one atom beyond what the Spirit has given us. It is all ours in Christ. I may see it all, but do I know it? Have I touched it in reality in the power of the Spirit in my own soul?

E. C. There is no growth but in Christ, and that only by the Spirit.

Q. The standing and state coincide. Is not verse 10 a question of displacement?

T. H. R. Now we come to that. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead." The body is a corpse because of sin. I must treat it as a corpse without a will moving; it is to be under the control of a new master. We may gather the idea of it from a Jesuit; he treats his body as a corpse and places himself completely under the control of a superior; it is under the will of another. If Christ be in you, the body is a corpse because of sin; the Spirit life (because of righteousness). It is not a question of how far you treat the body as a corpse, or realise the power of the Spirit of life; but the "Spirit is life because of righteousness." It is the characteristic state "if Christ be in you." Christ being in you, there would be a clash with your own will if the body be not a corpse. The Spirit is the only power of living Christ who is in you. Thus practical righteousness is produced.

F. H. B. That being so, Christ is the only spring of life.

Q. What is the difference of walking by faith and walking in the Spirit?

T. H. R. If I walked in the Spirit I should walk by faith. Walking in the Spirit must be a life of faith, for all the operations of the Spirit are through faith.

E. C. What is the point of the "*body* is dead?"

T. H. R. Because it is the seat of will. Will is the very opposite of walking in the Spirit. When God brought His people Israel out, He said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant." That was the law. He gives them the law to prove them; but as a principle of conduct for them it was to be the will of God. There is nothing more blessed for us than the will of God, but the flesh will not have it; that comes out in verse 3 of this chapter. Israel missed all the blessing of being subject to the will of God, because they would not have it. The body is the seat of that will which will not have God's will. If we do not hold it as dead we shall not know the power of the Spirit, and we shall lose all the blessing of His will. We walk now not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Now instead of the law we have the Spirit; we are over the Red Sea in chapter vi., and now what have I? Not the law, but the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Q. In what way is "Christ in you?"

T. H. R. It is by having the Spirit of Christ. There is a distinction between Christ in us and the Spirit of God in us. We have two expressions—the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. It is the Spirit of Christ in verse 9. The Spirit

of God in us has that form ; it is the Spirit of Christ, because He reveals Christ in me. If it is *Christ's* Spirit in me then Christ is in me.

Q. Why are the terms changed in verse 9 from Spirit of God to Spirit of Christ ?

T. H. R. Because it characterises *you* now. If I say the Spirit of God dwells in me, I think of myself as His temple. If the Spirit of God dwells in you, your body is His temple, and He works in it in power. This Person is not yourself, but you cannot separate yourself from His action in you. *You* are characterised by His action as the Spirit of Christ. He produces thoughts, affections, feelings in you ; they are yours, but they are the feelings and thoughts and affections of Christ. The christian state is characterised by the Spirit of Christ. Christ in all His moral characteristics is formed in us by the Spirit. The Spirit forms Christ in us. The Spirit that was in Him as Man down here, and by which He lived and acted, is now in us, and He forms Christ in us.

R—D. In John xx. redemption had been accomplished, and He breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" that was the Spirit of life not as given at Pentecost. He breathed that Spirit into them, and they were equipped ; they only wanted Pentecost to be in full power.

Q. Is John xiv. 20, "At that day," &c., the fulfilment of it?

T. H. R. John xiv. 20, is in order to place us in this world for Himself. The Spirit gives us the knowledge of Christ being in the Father, and then He adds, "Ye in me and I in you." Christ being in the disciples down here took the place of His being here to reveal the Father. (Compare ver. 11.)

Q. What is the difference of Galatians ii. 20?

T. H. R. It is much the same. Paul could say, "Christ liveth in me," but as to the Galatians, he travailed in birth until Christ was formed in them. Look at the importance of it. Here am I, a poor creature conscious of being nothing. Perhaps I see that everything is in Christ, but think I shall not get or enjoy it till I get to heaven; but I *do* get it, as another has said of the woman of Samaria—"when the vessel was empty Christ poured Himself in;" this is now by the Spirit. It is not only that there is a wonderful object before me, but by the power of the Spirit I *have it*. It is not Christ outside myself, but in me. Else it could not be said, "Shall never thirst." John xiv. 20 is to put you in His place down here. "I in you" is collective. I do not say corporate, it would take all of them to represent Him down here, but in Romans viii. it is individual.

Q. Why is the Spirit not mentioned in Romans vi., if you cannot have what is Romans vi. except by the Spirit?

T. H. R. The object of chapter vi. is to develop the doctrine of how we get deliverance. Chapter viii. is liberty. You must get the Spirit to get liberty. You do not reach liberty till chapter viii., "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free," &c. Chapter viii. is entering by the Spirit into the deliverance you have. If only occupied with deliverance you are occupied with escaping from evil, and then you get nothing positive. When you reach chapter viii., the Spirit brings you into what is Christ's. It is not one bit of use stopping at the death side; you will never find liberty in that way. You must go on to the positive side to know liberty. Many, no doubt, try to find it by reckoning themselves dead, but if the Spirit does not conduct your soul to Christ, you will never get into liberty. It is no use stopping to correct flesh. You had better leave the flesh behind altogether, as condemned in the cross of Christ, and come on into liberty, come on to chapter viii., and touch life in Christ.

R—d. It is the renewing of the Holy Ghost as you get in Titus; that leads us out—on to other ground.

T. H. R. The Spirit, in chapter viii., carries

you beyond the thing you have got to reckon dead.

R—d. A soul who is always “reckoning” is not in liberty.

T. H. R. In chapter vi. you have to reckon according to the verification of the truth in Christ. He died to sin, He lives to God, but you do not stay there, or you will never get away from reckoning as to *yourself*. You do not get on to liberty, because occupied with yourself; but when you come to the life side (chap. viii.) you are beyond continual reckoning about yourself. It is a reckoned thing—dead to sin and alive to God.

E. C. In chapter vi. 12 the body is only mortal, while in chapter viii. it is dead, a corpse—*νεκρον*—they are different words.

F. H. B. What I see in chapter vi. is my title to take up chapter viii.—how the deliverance has been wrought for us in Christ.

T. H. R. J. B. S. has said, “You may knock the old man to pieces as long as you like, but what do you put in its place? If you have not got another man, what is the good of it?” I must have another man altogether, and that is chapter viii.

Q. Is chapter viii. the divinely given state, or is it our experimentally entering into it?

T. H. R. It is the characteristic of having

the Spirit. The body as God sees it is a corpse. It is an absolute statement. It is characteristic when you see as God sees.

Q. Why is it not flesh instead of body ?

T. H. R. Because the Spirit dwells in the body. In chapter xii. the body is to be a living sacrifice.

R—D. J. N. D. said, "It is the lifeless instrument of the Spirit of God."

T. H. R. If Christ is to come out in us, and the new man be displayed, there is nothing more important than the body. It was what Satan tried to debase. Man, in a body, was made in the image of God; that body must be changed; but it is in the body that the display of Christ, who is the image of God, is to come out. We should not allow it to have a will. The body is to be glorified; it is to be conformed to the image of Christ; that is what makes the body so important. It is a great thing to recognise that the body of the believer is not only the temple of the Holy Ghost, but the vessel for the display of Christ.

Q. What is 2 Corinthians iv. 11 ?

T. H. R. The "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus" comes in in another connection. I think the thought there is, the weakness of the vessel. The body is looked at as a mere earthen vessel, and the point is, it is liable to be broken;

but having a wonderful treasure in it, God preserves it for the sake of the treasure which it carries. The bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus is that the Lord died out of this world, and all in this scene went down in death. I do not expect success where He died, but then I see the life of Jesus displayed in victory over death. I see how the Lord can come in and sustain everything for Himself in a power not of man at all, and the manifestation of the life is "in our body," says the apostle. The burning bush gives you the idea. You say, "the bush will be burned." No, it is not, for God is there. That was a figure of weak Israel and God's power, for they were God's witnesses. (Compare Is. xliii. 2-12.) Look at the two expressions in the next verse, "the life of Jesus" and "mortal flesh," there could not be two expressions in greater contrast. Mortal flesh means subject to death. The life of Jesus could be manifest in that. If the body is not a corpse sin will come out.

