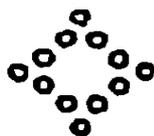


GOOD NEWS FOR MEN.

By A. A. E.



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**THINGS THAT
REALLY MATTER.**

PRICE ONE PENNY.

GOOD NEWS FOR MEN.

EVERY man who thinks at all has a feeling that there is *something wrong* with the world; things are not what they ought to be, or what anyone would like them to be. Instead of peace there is unrest and even war, instead of happiness there is trouble and misery, and instead of people being contented they are grumbling

and wanting to get something different from what they have got. And it is not only the poor who are discontented, the rich are just as much so, only in another way.

Money does not seem to make anyone happy, and almost everybody finds out that even when he does get the things which he has been trying to get for a long time, the things he gets do not make him as happy as he expected. There is always some drawback and something else to contend with. But let us ask ourselves :

WHAT IS THE CAUSE
of the trouble? Many
answers have been given by

different people to this question, and most people are fond of putting the blame upon somebody else. The rich blame the poor, and the poor blame the rich; the educated people blame the uneducated, and the uneducated blame the educated; some godless people blame religion, and some religious people blame the godless. But is there not a *real* cause? Of course there is, and we need not go very far to seek it. The answer may be put into one little word, and that word is

SIN.

Everybody who reads this little book will admit that

he has not been what he ought to be ; he has not always done everything that is right, and he would not dare to say that he has never done what is wrong.

But that does not go far enough ; if we want to get on the right road we must go deeper, and we must be ready to confess that the cause of the trouble is not simply a little human weakness but it is something which is much more serious, something which not only causes trouble among our fellow men, but something which is hateful to God.

Sin came into the world soon after man was created, and has been here ever since,

it is deeply rooted in the heart of every man, and it is the one and only cause of all the trouble in the world. Sin is the cause of every worry and sorrow which has been felt by both the reader and the writer, and the sooner we admit that this is so the better.

But let us look at the matter a little closer and ask ourselves

AGAINST WHOM

have we sinned? Most of us, at some time or another have done something which has hurt some other person, but no one really understands what sin is until he sees that it is *God* against whom he

has sinned. God is holy, and we are not ; God has laid down what is the right sort of conduct for men, but we have come short and have not carried out His commands, much less His wishes. By nature we much prefer to do our own will and please ourselves, and it is a very great step in the right direction when we wake up to learn that to do our own will is to sin against God. Saul of Tarsus was a good-living man, but when he got into the light he found he was the chief of sinners.

May we now ask the reader—What about yourself? Have *you* found out in the presence of a holy God that

you are a lost sinner? Do not let pride keep you from owning this; do not think that because you may be respectable and even religious you are not quite so bad as that. Remember that even if you have committed only one sin, you are a sinner. You know quite well you have committed many more than one, but do not comfort yourself with the idea that others have committed more than you have. You may owe only fifty pence and your neighbour - may - owe five hundred pence, but neither he nor you can pay the debt you owe to God.

God has blessing for sinners and not for self-righteous

people, so that unless you come to Him as a sinner, you cannot get any blessing. "God be merciful to me a sinner" was the cry of the publican who got the blessing.

Perhaps, however, this may fall into the hands of a

BLACK SHEEP,

one who has gone far astray on the wrong road, and has no difficulty in admitting that he is a sinner, and a bad one too. To such an one let us repeat the words of the Lord Jesus when He said: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men". None are too bad for Him. He is able to deal with the,

hardest cases, and if the reader is one like that, we can tell him there is good news for him as well as for others.

But let us ask ourselves what are the results of sin? We have spoken of some of the results which are to be seen all around us in the world to-day, but what about the future? Let the word of God answer the question. "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this

THE JUDGEMENT."

Make no mistake. Men have all sorts of ideas about the future; some think one thing and others think another, and we could give long lists of theories which different

people have formed. But let us ask all these people a simple question: How do you know that your thoughts are right? The thoughts of one set of people are just the opposite of those of another set, and both cannot be right—so where are we?

The truth is that we know nothing about the future except what God has made known in the Scriptures, and all men's thoughts on the subject are not worth a brass farthing. But God *has* told us about the future. He tells us that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, and that everyone must give an account of himself to God. He

tells us too that there is eternal judgement as well as eternal redemption. If we believe in one we must believe in the other, because the same God has told us about both.

It is most important that every man should own that he is a sinner so that he may get right with God for the rest of his life in *this* world, and it is just as important that he should do so in order that he may escape the judgement which in the *next* world will certainly be the eternal portion of all who die in their sins. But how can I get my

SINS TAKEN AWAY ?

Here again our own thoughts are of no use, the Word of God is our only guide: so let it speak for itself.

1. "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 38).

2. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sins" (1 John i. 7).

3. "I write unto you little children because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 John ii. 12).

In the first verse we see that it is *God's wish* to forgive. His desire is that forgiveness should be preached to all men. Man is a sinner and God hates sin, but He has no hard thoughts against the

sinner. He has forgiveness waiting for him. He takes the deepest interest in every man, He knows every thought every word, and every deed, and although He knows the wickedness of every heart, yet He is only too willing to make it known that He is able to forgive everyone who wants to be forgiven. He sends His good news to every kind of man.

In the second verse quoted above we see *how* God can cleanse. Many think God will just pass over sin and let people off, but that is quite untrue. There could be no forgiveness if Christ had not died. Why was it needful for Christ to die? Death

was the first part of God's judgement for sin: "The wages of sin is death", and if the judgement is to be taken off any man who deserves it, it can only be by someone else bearing the judgement instead. No one else could do this except Christ, because He was the only Man who never deserved to die. He had never sinned, and so He alone could die for others; His blood alone could atone to God for our sins. Men cannot atone for their own sins by dying, even if they die for a good cause.

Men must die, whether it be quietly at home or on a battlefield, or elsewhere, because they have sinned, but

Christ died because *we* had sinned, and it is because He bore the judgement which we deserved, that we can go free. Moreover sin is looked upon as a stain, and it is His blood, shed at His death, which cleanses us from every sin.

“Without the shedding of blood is no remission.”

There is no forgiveness or cleansing apart from the blood of Christ. Nothing which we can do will put our sins away; saying prayers, reading the Bible, attending a place of worship, all may be very good, but these things cannot put away a single sin. Nothing but the blood of Christ can do that.

The third verse quoted above shows us that *all* Christians in the early days had their sins forgiven and knew it. They did not *hope* it or *think* it, but *knew* it as an accomplished fact.

“Your sins *are* forgiven you for *His* name’s sake.”

It was after Christ had died and risen again that the apostles went about everywhere preaching the forgiveness of sins, and why could they do it? Because Christ had *risen*, He had gained the victory over death, He had defeated Satan, He had said on the cross, “It is finished”, so that the work of redemption was done, and the apostles knew it was done because He

had risen from the dead. They could thus proclaim God's good news to men that "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. viii. 12). God is moreover able not only to forgive but to

JUSTIFY

the one who believes in Him. A king could pardon, but could not justify a criminal. God can not only clear the sinner from his guilt, but can count him a righteous man. Christ "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." How then can we get the benefit of this? *Faith* is necessary. The work of

Christ is for all ; He gave Himself a ransom for *all* ; but each person must have to do with God by himself, and faith believes God and accepts what God offers. The person who believes on the God who raised Christ from the dead is justified, and as a result he has peace with God. " Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ " (Rom. v. 1). He knows that the great question between his soul and God is settled, because the work of Christ has settled it. He can look up to God, not as one whom he dreads or hates, but as the One who has commended His love to us by

giving Christ to die for us. What a wonderful blessing it is to have this peace! If the conscience used to accuse the troubled soul, he can now point to Christ and say *He* has taken up my case, *He* has borne my sins, *He* has set me free from the judgement my sins deserve, *He* has died to satisfy the claims of a Holy God against sin, and *He* has been raised again so that I may be completely cleared from all my guilt. In the death of Christ, God has a righteous ground on which he can justify the believer. And more than that, God has now taken the believer into His favour, and He has also given him His

Spirit, so that he can enjoy His grace and love, and so that he can have a new power to live so as to please God instead of living to please himself (see Rom. v. 1-11).

But someone may say, "Is it right to be quite sure about such things? Is it not more humble to *hope* that it will be all right in the day of judgement? Can any one be sure till then?" We can answer at once that this great question can and must be settled in *this* life. When a believer is raised from the dead he will immediately be taken to be with Christ, and how could Christ first take him to Himself to be ever with Him, and later on decide

whether he is to go to heaven or hell? That is impossible. The dead in Christ and living believers will be caught up together to meet the Lord, "and so shall we be ever with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 17). No one will have an opportunity of getting blessing in the next world if he has missed getting it in this world. Now is the time and here is the place to get blessing. Immediately after death there is a "great gulf fixed" over which none can pass (Luke xvi. 26).

If the forgiveness of my sins depends upon anything I can do, I might well be filled with doubts and fears, because I could never be sure

I had done enough, and if I were honest with myself I should admit I had *not* done enough. In fact, when I really repent I admit that I am a sinner unable to do anything at all, or to put a single sin away, and I find I have to trust myself wholly to *Another* who has done a work which is perfect and to which I can add nothing. God's Word tells me of Him and His work, and faith says, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me".

To doubt God or His Word is not faith, and God's word gives witness everywhere to the *perfect* work of a sinless Person, who alone could bear the sins of others because

He had none of His own to bear. He alone could bear the judgement which others deserved, because He alone deserved no judgement Himself, His resurrection is a proof that His work was completed to the satisfaction of God, and God now presents Him to the reader and writer as a living Saviour. Why not trust Him ?

But someone else says, " My heart is still so bad, I wish it would get better. I am so disappointed since I first trusted the Saviour, because I so often fail and my heart seems almost worse than before."

Well, that is the experience of many ; and it will help

you to be assured at once that God knew the worst about you when He took you up in grace. He has never found anything worse in you than what He knew was in you when you first turned to Him in repentance. He knew, in fact, that your heart was "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked", and that the 'flesh' in you would not improve.

But what is to be done with it?

This question also has been settled in the cross of Christ. In the death of Christ, God not only took account of what I had *done* but also of what I *was*. The sins I had committed were the fruit of

an evil tree ; God calls it 'sin in the flesh', or 'our old man', and in the cross of Christ this evil thing was not forgiven, but judged and condemned, and put out of God's sight. "God condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). Christ not only bore our sins, but He was made sin (2 Cor. v. 21). Just as the serpent of brass was lifted up in the wilderness so as to give life to those who had been bitten by the serpents, so the Son of Man was lifted up on the cross, so that we might believe on *Him* and be saved from the effects of the Serpent's bite, and enjoy eternal life (John iii. 14-17).

The Apostle Paul, in the seventh of Romans, describes the bitter experience of a person who was learning what he *was*; trying to do good and unable to do it. He learnt at last that in him, that is in his flesh, there was no good, but that God did not look at him any longer as in the flesh, but as connected with Christ, and that he could now look outside of himself for what was good. Christ thus became his Deliverer not only from the judgement of his sins but from the power of sin. Leaning on His strength he learnt to walk in newness of life and no longer to look for improvement in himself. Everything

that was in him, that is, in his flesh, was bad; all the good was in Christ.

If the reader learns this he will breathe freely; he will have the sense that he is free from condemnation, because God looks at him as in Christ Jesus, and of course in Christ there is nothing to condemn. *Every* question which could disturb his conscience is thus settled, and he is set free by Christ; no longer to be occupied with his past history or the incurable badness of the flesh, but to be occupied with Christ and all that is to be found in Him. He thus learns to travel out of the land of slavery and distance from

God, into a position where there is freedom and nearness to God.

He has the Spirit of God, Who enables him to understand and enjoy things which he could not understand or enjoy before, and he finds that he is not alone in the blessing, but that he is one of many who have got the same blessing, and he can thus have company on the road to heaven. In the meantime, before he gets to heaven, he seeks to walk well-pleasing to God, and the more he has the sense of the grace of God which blessed him when he never deserved it, the more will he seek to live soberly, righteously

and godly in this present world.

What a victory, for God will be seen in such a person ! Not only is he sure of going to heaven, but here on earth he is a living witness to the power of God which does not reform the old bad thing, but creates something entirely new, and thus makes it possible for a man, once the slave of sin and self-will, to live so as to do the will of God, and thus to please God while here on earth.

This is a little of what is presented in the Gospel, that is in God's Good News to Men : there is much more which we cannot include in a small booklet such as this,

but we hope that those of our readers who have never yet tasted the blessing which the Gospel presents may get their first taste at once and without any delay, and that those who have already started on the course may desire earnestly to get to know as much of the revealed mind of God as it is possible to know, and thus not only to enjoy fullness of blessing and joy for themselves, but to be here for the glory and pleasure of God.

A. A. E.