



THE
WORK AND PRESENCE
OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BY
E. H. CHATER.



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THE WORK AND PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

*Simple Outlines of His varied operations in the
past, the present, and the future.*

1. THE TRINITY.
2. OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN
OLD TESTAMENT TIMES.
3. THE BIRTH OF CHRIST, AND HIS LIFE
AND MINISTRY IN THE SPIRIT.
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HOLY SPIRIT.
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THE CHURCH.
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The Trinity.

GOD is Light. (1 John i. 5.) God is Love.
(1 John iv. 8.) His Name is Holy. He in-
habiteth eternity. (Isa. lvii. 15.) "In the

beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. i. 1.) He also "created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." (Gen. i. 27.) There are three Persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. The finite mind cannot comprehend this marvellous truth, but the Christian with reverence bows, and believes the wonderful revelation that God has given us of Himself. There are many natural things around us which we see, and hear, and know, and believe, but which we cannot understand. God created and made them all. What man can understand his own being, the wonderful union of spirit, soul, and body? So it is; we know it; we believe it. God is, and there are three Persons, yet only one God; we believe, and we know Him. Let us repeat it, The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

The Holy Spirit, then, who is the subject of this paper, is *the third Person* of the Godhead. His operations may be traced

throughout Scripture. *His personal Presence on earth*, with its effects and results distinguishing the present hour of grace, are made known to us in the New Testament.

Operations of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament Times.

A passage of Scripture in the book of Job brings before us the first operation of *the Spirit of God* on record. "By *His Spirit* He" (God) "hath garnished the heavens." (Job xxvi. 13.) This speaks of the exercise of His power at creation, of which we read, in the sublime statement at the commencement of the Word, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. i. 1.) The second verse describes an after condition of the earth, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Then follows the further statement, "And *the Spirit of God* moved" (or hovered) "upon the face of the waters." After this came the seven days, during which God created and made many things, and man, resting on the seventh day. Psalm civ. 30 says, "Thou sendest forth *Thy Spirit*, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

Man, created in innocence, disobeyed God; sin entered, and the world became a scene of violence and corruption. "And the Lord said, *My Spirit* shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." (Gen. vi. 3.) The striving of the Spirit of the Lord here spoken of closed at the end of that period. It is often erroneously applied to the exercises of souls under conviction of sin now, but clearly only referred to the hundred and twenty years. After that judgment came, and the whole world was submerged by the flood, Noah and his family alone being preserved in the ark. During those years Noah was a preacher of righteousness to the world of the ungodly. *Christ by the Spirit* went and preached to them in Noah, but being disobedient they were drowned, and their spirits are now in prison awaiting the final judgment of the great white throne. (1 Peter iii. 19, 20; Rev. xx. 12.)

We read further that "God . . . at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by *the prophets*," &c. (Heb. i. 1.) And "*the prophets* have inquired and searched diligently, who

prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" (Christians): "searching what, or what manner of time *the Spirit of Christ* which was *in them* did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," &c. (1 Peter i. 10, 11.) And again, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but *holy men* of God spake as they were moved by *the Holy Ghost.*" (2 Peter i. 21.)

And there is also abundant Scripture teaching to show that *the Spirit* constantly operated by different persons throughout Old Testament times; but with all this He had not yet come as *a divine Person to dwell* upon the earth. David, who wrought mighty acts by the power of *God*, when judging himself, and confessing his grievous sin, said, "Take not *Thy Holy Spirit* from me," language quite out of character for a believer of the present time, who has *the Spirit of God dwelling in him*, since He is now in us as *the abiding Comforter*. We are therefore exhorted as Christians, "grieve not *the Holy Spirit of God*, whereby ye are" (or have been) "*sealed unto the day of redemption.*" (Eph. iv. 30.) But we shall have occasion to allude to this again further on.

*The Birth of Christ, and His Life and
Ministry in the Spirit.*

In coming to the pages of the New Testament, the next point we must notice in connection with our subject, is the birth of Jesus into the world. The angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin named Mary, espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, to whom he announced that she should bring forth a Son, and should call His name Jesus, &c. And he further added, "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*" (Luke i. 26-35.) And it came to pass, when Mary and Joseph were at Bethlehem, where they had gone to be taxed, that, "while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son," &c. (Luke ii. 6, 7.)

But some six months previous to this, another remarkable child had been born into the world, whose name was called John, and he was the forerunner of the Lord. Now, we are expressly told that this child

should be *filled with the Holy Ghost*, even from his mother's womb. (Luke i. 15.) And we also read of both his parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, being *filled with the Holy Ghost*; but wonderful as it was that they should be thus filled, yet this is not the same thing as that which was later on promised by our Lord, that *the Holy Ghost* should come and *dwell as a divine Person on the earth*, and which He distinctly said would not take place unless He Himself went away. (John vii. 39; xvi. 7.)

Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke ii. 52); and when He was thirty years of age He went forth upon His public ministry. John was then baptizing in Jordan, and men were musing in their hearts whether he was the Christ or not. But "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall *baptize you with the Holy Ghost*, and with fire, &c." (Luke iii. 16.) And then came Jesus to John to be baptized of him; and "the heaven was opened, and *the Holy Ghost* descended in a bodily shape *like a dove*

upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased." (Luke iii. 21, 22.)

After this, "*Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*" (Luke iv. 1), when He was forty days tempted of the devil; and as we trace through the Word we find that His whole path was in *the power of the Holy Ghost*. He was "*justified in the Spirit*" (1 Tim. iii. 16); He was "*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness*" (Rom. i. 4); He said, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*" (Luke iv. 18.) He cast out demons by *the Spirit of God*. (Matt. xii. 28.) And yet, notwithstanding all this, we find Him teaching His disciples *to ask* their heavenly Father *for the Holy Spirit* (that gift being then still future—Luke xi. 13); but after *the Holy Spirit* was *given* at Pentecost, men are no longer taught to pray for Him. (See pages 25, 26.) It is *by His power* they receive the gospel. (1 Thess. i. 5.)

The Testimony of Christ concerning the Holy Spirit.

In the gospel of John, the rejection of Christ is mentioned in chapter i. : "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." (John i. 10, 11.) In chapter iii. Nicodemus came to Him by night, and the Lord spoke to him of the new birth, saying, "Except a man be *born of water and of the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is *born of the Spirit is spirit*. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is *every one that is born of the Spirit*." (John iii. 5-8.) Now Nicodemus ought to have known from such scriptures as Ezek. xxxvi. 21-38 that God had promised to sprinkle clean water on His people Israel, and to cleanse them from all their filthiness, and to give them a new heart, and put *His Spirit* within

them. And, too, that they should dwell in their cities; for the Lord would make their land as the garden of Eden. But he did not understand these earthly things connected with the kingdom. How then could he understand the heavenly things, of which the Lord went on to speak, saying that "the Son of man must be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but *have eternal life.*" &c. (John iii. 13-21.) And, in chapter iv., we have the further truth that *the Holy Ghost* should be in him also. "Who-soever," said the Lord, "drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but *the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up* into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.) And in John vii. 37-39 He also spake of the reception of the Spirit by believers, with the additional truth, that rivers of living water should flow out from them to others. God now gives these two inestimable gifts to every one that believeth.

Passing on to chapter xiv., where the Lord is speaking to His disciples in view of His departure from them and from this world, we find Him encouraging their

hearts by the promise of the gift of *the Holy Ghost, the Comforter*; and He speaks of Him as being *sent* both by *the Father* and also by *Himself*, thus showing the love and care both of the Father and the Son towards the children of God during Christ's absence from the world at the right hand of God.

1. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another *Comforter*, that He may abide with you for ever; *even the Spirit of truth*; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv. 16, 17.)

2. "But *the Comforter*, which is *the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 26.)

3. "But when *the Comforter* is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even the Spirit of truth*, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (John xv. 26, 27.)

4. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for

if I go not away, *the Comforter* will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment," &c. (John xvi. 7, 8.)

5. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, *the Spirit of truth*, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John xvi. 12-14.)

Many different truths come out in these five passages of Scripture in connection with the promise of the Spirit's presence.

First, the Lord speaks of Him as *another Comforter* (or Paraclete, which signifies one who undertakes the cause of others). He Himself had been one, undertaking the cause of His own whilst with them hitherto; but now that He was about to leave them, He would pray the Father, and He would give them *another, even the Spirit of truth*. And He would be given as the *abiding One*. Christ had come, but was going away.

The Comforter would come and *abide for ever*. As long as the saints who were to share the prepared place in the Father's house remained on earth, *the Spirit* would be with them. The world would not receive Christ. They saw Him, but they knew Him not. (John i. 10.) Neither could they receive *the Holy Ghost*; for they could neither see Him nor know Him. But those who know Christ, know *the Spirit of truth* also; "for," added the Lord, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." We shall see the fulfilment of this in treating of the accomplishment of the promise.

Secondly, when *the Holy Ghost* should come, whom the Father would send in the name of Jesus, He should teach the disciples all things, bringing to their remembrance whatsoever He had said unto them. He had spoken many things to them when with them, but they understood comparatively little. Wonderful words of grace and truth had fallen upon their ears from His blessed lips, which filled their hearts and minds with wonder. But when *the Holy Ghost* should come, He would and did teach them in a marvellous way; and men were surprised at the testimony that came from

men who in themselves were unlearned and ignorant. There were many other things, too, which Jesus would have taught them, had they possessed the capacity to understand; but He has to say, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye *cannot bear them now.*" (John xvi. 12.) In John xvi. 25-31, too, the Lord further told them that the time would come when He would no longer speak to them in parables, but show them plainly of the Father, and was even then misunderstood by them. But it is remarkable what progress in divine things souls now make, when *subject to the teaching of the Spirit of truth*, and often apart from human ministry (though that, of course, is of God). (1 Cor. xii. 4-11.) "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye *need not that any man teach you*: but as *the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.*" (1 John ii. 27.)

Thirdly, the Lord further instructed His disciples that when He should *send the Spirit of truth* from the Father, He should testify of Christ, and the disciples themselves also should bear testimony. They

had been with Him from the beginning of His ministry; and when this promise was fulfilled (as we shall see) at Pentecost, *the Holy Ghost* bore testimony of Christ in glory, instrumentally by the apostles. They received *power*, after that *the Holy Ghost* had come upon them, and were witnesses unto Christ both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts i. 8.) And Paul, in 1 Thess. i. 5, says, "*Our gospel* came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and *in the Holy Ghost*, and in much assurance," &c.

Fourthly, when *the Comforter* should come, the Lord said that He should reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because the world believed not on Christ. The fact of *the presence of the Comforter* showed plainly that Christ had been rejected; for He said that if He went not away *the Comforter* would not come. And therefore the world was clearly guilty before God. Of righteousness, because Christ went to the Father, and was no more seen by His own. The fact of *the Spirit's presence* here was a witness of God's righteousness; that the glory of the Father

had claimed the Son—the Man who had glorified Him in death, but whom the world had refused. Of judgment, because judgment rested upon Satan, the prince of this world. He had done his worst, having led the world on to reject and crucify the Lord of glory. *The presence of the Holy Ghost* was a demonstration to the world that the Son of God was risen and in glory, and that the power of Satan was broken, judgment resting upon him, though the *execution* of it is still future.

Fifthly, when *the Spirit of truth* should have come, He would guide the children of God into all truth, &c. All the truth would be revealed, and now has been, and *the Spirit* would give spiritual understanding, and He would show them things future, glorifying Christ, receiving of His, and showing it to them. Hence, in the apostolic writings, we have the full completion of the revelation that it has pleased God to give of Himself in His Son in *words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*. (1 Cor. ii. 13.) And in 1 Cor. ii. 9 we read, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God

hath revealed them unto us *by His Spirit*: for *the Spirit* searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but *the Spirit of God.*”

And there is one other point of immense moment for us to lay hold of, before we pass on to the fulfilment of the promise as to *the gift of the Holy Ghost*, and that is, that *He is a divine Person*, and not a mere influence. It is perfectly true that He influences, and that powerfully; but it is the influence of *a Person*, and that Person God. Every man influences his fellow, but it is the influence of a man, a person. Christ was a divine Person on the earth, and *so also is the Holy Ghost*. But the Son of God became a man (without sin), that holy thing (Luke i. 35), in flesh and blood visible to men. He promised that *the Holy Ghost* should come also, and He came, only *to dwell here invisibly*. And invisibly He still remains here, though it is true that there was a visible manifestation on the day of Pentecost; for when *the Spirit* was given, there was a sound as of a rushing, mighty wind, and cloven tongues like as of fire

sat on each of the disciples. The language of our Lord, as to *the personality of the Holy Spirit*, could not be plainer—"Howbeit when *He, the Spirit of truth*, is come, *He* will guide you into all truth: for *He* shall not speak of *Himself*; but whatsoever *He* shall hear, that shall *He* speak: and *He* will show you things to come. *He* shall glorify me: for *He* shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," &c. (John xvi. 13, 14; see also Acts v. 1-11.)

The Gift of the Holy Spirit.

The promise of *the gift of the Holy Spirit*, which is a distinct and special characteristic of the present dealing of God, was to be fulfilled when Christ should have gone away to the Father. But first the Son of man must be lifted up. (John iii. 14.) Hence He goes to the cross and the grave. Having glorified the Father, and finished the work that He had given Him to do, by His obedience unto death, He was buried in the sepulchre. (John xix. 41, 42.) But the power of God came in and raised Him, as man, from the dead. All three Persons of the Godhead in varied scriptures are spoken of as having part in this wondrous act.

“Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.” (Rom. vi. 4.) Jesus said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . He spake of the temple of His body.” (John ii. 19–21.) “Christ also hath once suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh, but *quickened by the Spirit.*” (Rom. viii. 11; 1 Peter iii. 18.) The glorification of the Son of man, and the gift of the Holy Ghost from an ascended Christ, form God’s answer to the cross, showing His estimate of the infinite worth of the sacrifice of His Son.

Raised from the dead, upon the first day of the week, Jesus came and stood in the midst of the assembled disciples, when the doors were shut, and said, “Peace be unto you.” And also breathed on them, saying, “*Receive ye the Holy Ghost,*” &c. Thus He identifies them with Himself in resurrection in the power of the Spirit. (John xx. 19–22.) The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam (Christ) *a quickening Spirit.* (1 Cor. xv. 45.) God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life; Christ, in risen life, breathed upon His disciples. And, according with this, the apostle writes to the saints at Rome, “The law of *the Spirit*

of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.)

Shortly after this He ascended to the glory, and being by the right hand of God exalted, and having *received of the Father* the promise of *the Holy Ghost*, He shed *the Spirit* forth. (Acts ii. 33.) A hundred and twenty disciples, tarrying at Jerusalem for the fulfilment of Christ's promise, when *the day of Pentecost* had *fully come*, were all with one accord in one place. "And *suddenly* there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (or a violent impetuous blowing or hard breathing), "and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it *sat upon each* of them: and *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, and began to speak with other tongues, as *the Spirit* gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 1-4.)

And when this was noised abroad, a multitude came together—Jews, devout men, of every nation under heaven; and they were amazed when they heard the Word in their own languages; but others, mocking, said they were full of new wine. (Acts ii. 6-13.) Then Peter rose up, and told them plainly that it was that which

was *spoken by* the prophet Joel (not fulfilled then; but it was the thing spoken of by that prophet. The fulfilment is yet future, at the commencement of the reign of Christ, as we shall see later on): “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out of my Spirit* upon all flesh,” &c. And then he calls upon Israel to repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the rémission of sins, and they should *receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; for the promise was to them, their children, and all afar off whom the Lord our God should call. Some three thousand bowed, and were added (Acts ii. 41–47); and afterwards Peter was used in blessing to Gentiles also (those afar off), and they too *received the gift of the Holy Ghost*. (Acts x. 34–48.) Now, on the day of Pentecost, the hundred and twenty disciples were *all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and all made to drink into one Spirit* (1 Cor. xii. 13); and from that moment forth *Christ, the Head of the Church in heaven, had a body on earth*, all who composed it being *united to Him and to one another by the Holy Ghost*. All who believed the testimony from that moment onward—first

Jews, and afterwards Gentiles—*received the Holy Ghost*, and were thereby brought into this same unity (besides having their place in the house of God on earth, *where the Holy Ghost dwells*). Henceforth, then, the saints on earth had, and have, not only an individual responsibility, but also a corporate, being united in *one body by the Holy Ghost*.

Throughout the Acts we have set forth historically the wonderful *action of the Holy Ghost*, using the apostles and others as instruments to make known the glad tidings concerning Christ in glory. And we see the fulfilment of our Lord's words in John vii. 37, when He stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But *this spake He of the Spirit*, which they that believe on Him should *receive*: for *the Holy Ghost was not yet given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)." *At Pentecost they received the Spirit*, a gift that was withheld until Jesus was glorified, and *rivers of living water flowed out from them to a dry and thirsty world*. In marvellous power, even *the power of the Holy*

Ghost, they announced the glad tidings to all creation. *Rivers* of blessing flowed out, and thousands drank and lived. (Acts iv. 4; v. 14.)

Turning to further Scripture, we find *the Holy Ghost as a divine Person* on the earth *speaking directly* to the saints of God. For instance, in Acts viii. 29 we read, "Then *the Spirit said* unto Philip, Go near," &c. In chapter xiii. 2, as certain prophets and teachers ministered to the Lord, and fasted, "*the Holy Ghost said*, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being *sent forth by the Holy Ghost*, departed unto Seleucia," &c. Again, in 1 Tim. iv. 1, Paul writes, "Now *the Spirit speaketh expressly*, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," &c. And in Rev. ii. and iii. seven times we have the warning, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what *the Spirit saith* to the churches." (Also Acts xvi. 6; xx. 28; xxi. 11.)

All this shows plainly how wrong it is for Christians to *pray now* to God to *send the Holy Ghost*, or to *pour out His Spirit*. *The gift of the Holy Ghost has been poured*

out both upon Jews and Gentiles, and *He is here*. It would have indeed been strange for the disciples to have prayed to God to send His Son, when Jesus was there with them. It is equally strange and unintelligent for Christians now to pray for the sending, or giving, or pouring out of *the Spirit*. A right thing doubtless is often meant; but it is all-important to get scriptural thoughts, and not to speak to God foolishly. To pray to God for a *greater manifestation of the power of the Spirit, who is here*, in the salvation and building up of souls, is *most blessed*; but it is losing sight of *the truth of His presence* to pray for Him to be poured out again. It is in fact by Him that we pray. Romans viii. 26, 27 is clear and plain—"Likewise *the Spirit* also helpeth our infirmities: for *we know not what we should pray for as we ought*: but *the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is *the mind of the Spirit*, because *He maketh intercession for the saints according to God*." Here we find Christians *praying by the Spirit* who is in them, and *who intercedes for them*.

And if we are praying for the unconverted, it should be that they might repent and believe the gospel, and *receive the Spirit* (Acts viii. 15), and *not* that He should be poured out from heaven. We have already seen how the Lord said, *speaking of the Spirit*, that they that believe on Him (Christ) should *receive Him (the Spirit)*. (John vii. 39.) And again, "In whom also, *after that ye*" (or *having*) "*believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.*" (Eph. i. 13.) All who receive Christ by faith *receive the Spirit also*. Many awakened souls too are often found crying to God for *the witness of the Spirit*, and all the time *questioning* the word of God. Some go on for years thus, tormented with doubt and fear; whereas if they believed God, receiving Christ by faith, *He would give them the Holy Spirit*. Suppose, for example, you wanted a sovereign, and a friend said to you, "There is one; receive that, and I will give you another," what would you do? Why, believe him, to be sure. You would accept the one, and he would give you the other; but if, instead of believing him, you waited to feel the second sovereign in your hand before you took the first, you would not have

either. And so also, if you are waiting for God to give you *the Spirit*, before you believe His word, and receive His Son, you will remain without either knowing that you are a child of God, or having *the Spirit of God*.

Some too are found who pray to *the Holy Ghost*, but we never get a prayer so addressed in Scripture. We pray to God, and there are the three Persons in the Godhead, it is true; and it is right so to pray, as a multitude of scriptures testify. But there is not a single instance in the word of God of anyone praying to *the Spirit*. Jude's epistle, at verse 20, says, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, *praying in the Holy Ghost*." And, in Eph. vi. 18, Paul exhorts the saints to be "praying always with *all prayer and supplication in the Spirit*." We should pray *in the Spirit*, and also sing *in the Spirit*, not to *the Spirit*.

The Holy Ghost will remain, as dwelling here, until the Lord Himself descends into the air to fetch His saints. (1 Thess. iv. 15-18.)

Present varied Operations of the Holy Spirit.

The operations of *the Holy Spirit* in relation to men during this period of the

grace of God are manifold. The following are some of the chief :

1. The new birth by *the Spirit*.
2. The renewing of *the Spirit*.
3. Sanctification of *the Spirit*.
4. *The Spirit* a witness to us.
5. *The Spirit* a witness in us.
6. The indwelling of *the Spirit*.
7. The first-fruits of *the Spirit*.
8. The unction of *the Spirit*.
9. The sealing with *the Spirit*.
10. The earnest of *the Spirit*.
11. Access by *the Spirit*.
12. Shedding of love by *the Spirit*.
13. Walk in *the Spirit*.
14. Hope through *the Spirit*.

Let us now gather some brief thoughts from the Word in relation to these truths.

1. THE NEW BIRTH BY THE SPIRIT. Except a man be born again, both of water and of *the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John iii. 5.) This is an absolute necessity. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye *must* be born again" (John iii. 7), were our Lord's words to Nicodemus. Whatever a man's moral character, whether openly wicked, or moral,

or religious, "they that are in *the flesh* cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.) That which is born of the flesh is *flesh*, and utterly corrupt. But "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is *born of God*." (1 John v. 1.) He receives a new, spiritual life, communicated *by the Spirit*. He is born of water (the Word) and *of the Spirit*. He is born of incorruptible seed, "by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter i. 23.) "And that which is *born of the Spirit* is *spirit*." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*." (John iii. 8.)

2. THE RENEWING OF THE SPIRIT. This truth is closely allied with the first; an operation commencing at the same time as the new birth apparently, but expressing an additional truth. We read, "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and *renewing of the Holy Ghost*; which He shed on us

abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour," &c. (Titus iii. 4-6.) You get three things in this verse—the washing of regeneration, *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, and the abundant shedding on us of *the Spirit*. The first appears to set forth our passing out of the old state, as of Adam, into the new, as of Christ. The second, the new beginning of the believer, *the Holy Ghost* giving a new start, and continuing to unfold the things of Christ to us. The third, *the Spirit* abiding, that in His power we may enjoy the new state of blessing into which we are brought.

3. SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT. Sanctification signifies *setting apart*. When *the Spirit of God* first operates in the soul, He sets us apart to God. We are set apart in Christ (1 Cor. i. 2), in virtue of the efficacy of His one offering on the cross (Heb. x. 10), by the operation of *the Spirit*. (1 Peter i. 2.) Peter speaks of saints as blest according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through *sanctification* (setting apart) of *the Spirit*, unto obedience, which follows; that is to say, to obey as Jesus Christ obeyed, as the passage goes on to show. *Progressive sanctification*, as it is often termed, follows upon the *sanctification*

of the Spirit here spoken of. We are set apart, and complete in Christ at starting. "Ye *are* washed, ye *are* sanctified, ye *are* justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by *the Spirit of our God.*" (1 Cor. vi. 11.) And then, as we obey the Word, applied to our hearts and consciences day by day by *the power of the Spirit*, we grow in practical holiness. (1 Thess. v. 23 ; Col. iv. 12.)

4. THE SPIRIT A WITNESS TO US. This we get in Heb. x. We are there viewed as set apart to God by *His will* (Heb. x. 10, 14, 15) on the ground of *Christ's work*; and *the Spirit is the witness*. "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof *the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us.*" Not a witness *in* us here, but a witness *to* us. His presence is a witness to believers to the fact that God hath perfected them for ever by the one offering of Christ, according to His own will. If the offering had not been accepted of God, and the One who offered Himself seated in the glory, *the Holy Ghost* would not have been given thus.

5. THE SPIRIT A WITNESS IN US. In

Rom. viii. 14–16 we read, “For as many as are led by *the Spirit of God*, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received *the Spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. *The Spirit itself* beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,” &c. The world lieth in the wicked one, and is led captive by him. (1 John v. 19; 2 Tim. ii. 26.) As many as are *led by the Spirit of God*, they are the sons of God, and not of the world. And again, “If ye be *led of the Spirit*, ye are not under the law.” (Gal. v. 18.) And being brought into this wondrous position of sons, we are delivered from all spirit of bondage, and have received *a spirit of adoption*. We are no longer under law, but under grace, and are enabled to address God as Father. And this is further confirmed in Gal. iv. 6, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth *the Spirit of His Son* into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” And not only so, but *the Spirit*, who is in us, *bears witness* with our spirits that we are the children of God. Hence we have, as Christians, both the position of sons, and the relationship of children. Blessed portion!

6. THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT. We have already seen how the Lord, in promising the gift of *the Comforter*, said, "He dwelleth *with* you, and shall be *in* you." This was fulfilled at Pentecost. *The Holy Ghost* dwells with the people of God, and *in them*. It is of this latter we now speak. "What? know ye not that your body is *the temple of the Holy Ghost* which is *in* you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. vi. 19.) "Know ye not that *your bodies* are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. vi. 15.) "He that is joined unto the Lord is *one spirit*." (1 Cor. vi. 17.) And Paul, writing to Timothy, says, "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by *the Holy Ghost* which dwelleth *in* us." (2 Tim. i. 14.) And again, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in *the Spirit*, if so be that *the Spirit* of God dwell *in* you. Now if any man have not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His. . . . But if *the Spirit* of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell *in* you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *His Spirit* that dwelleth *in* you." (Rom. viii. 9-11.) Lastly, "Hereby we know that He" (God) "abideth *in* us, by

the Spirit which He hath given us." (1 John iii. 24.)

7. THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT. In Romans viii. 23 we read, "Ourselves also, which have *the first-fruits of the Spirit*, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." In Joel the Lord has promised to pour out His *Spirit* in the last days upon all flesh. (Joel ii. 28, 29.) The fulfilment of this will be at the commencement of the millennial reign. That will be *the harvest*. (Rev. xiv. 15, 16.) But Christians antedate the blessing (and blessing of an infinitely higher character), receiving *the Spirit* consequent upon having faith now. *We have the Spirit* before the harvest. This is *the first-fruits*. And those who have *the first-fruits of the Spirit* are spoken of by James thus: "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be *a kind of first-fruits of His creatures*." (James i. 18.) And we wait for the redemption of the body. (Rom. viii. 23.) *Christ* became *the first-fruits* of them that slept, and afterwards they that *are Christ's* at His coming. (1 Cor. xv. 20, 23.)

8. THE UNCTION OF THE SPIRIT. The

unction or *anointing* would denote the fragrance, blessing, and spiritual power and knowledge connected with the Presence of *the Spirit* in us. God *anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with *the Holy Ghost* and with power; who went about doing good, &c. (Acts x. 38.) God *hath anointed* the Son with the oil of gladness above His fellows. (Heb. i. 9.) And in 2 Cor. i. 21 the apostle says, "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and *hath anointed* us, is God," &c. And in 1 John ii. 20 we read, "But ye have *an unction* from the Holy One, and ye *know* all things." And in verse 27, "But *the anointing* which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same *anointing* teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

9. THE SEALING WITH THE SPIRIT. In John vi. 27 our Lord, speaking of Himself as Son of man, says, "Him hath God the Father *sealed*." And now that He is on His Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21), *believers are sealed* with *the Holy Ghost*. There are three passages where the term is used. In 2 Cor. i. 22, "God; who hath also *sealed* us." In Eph.

i. 13, "In whom also, after that ye" (or having) "believed, ye were sealed with *that Holy Spirit of promise.*" And in Eph. iv. 30, "And grieve not *the Holy Spirit of God*, whereby ye are" (or have been) "*sealed unto [for] the day of redemption.*" A seal is put to a letter or document, when complete, and no one may break it but the rightful owner. The believer is saved, complete in Christ, accepted in the Beloved, sealed by God Himself. *The Holy Ghost in us is the seal.* And we are sealed for the day when He who has redeemed our souls will redeem our bodies also.

10. THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT. There are also three passages which speak of *the Spirit* as "*the earnest.*" In 2 Cor. i. 22, "God; who hath also sealed us, and given *the earnest of the Spirit* in our hearts." In 2 Cor. v. 5, "Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us *the earnest of the Spirit.*" And in Eph. i. 13, "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with *that Holy Spirit* of promise, who is *the earnest of our inheritance,*" &c. When one man purchases, say a sheep, of another, it has often been the case that he has given him a

certain amount of the purchase money, as an earnest that he will complete his purchase by paying the whole of the amount promised when the sheep is brought home. This is a simple illustration of the truth that God gives us *the Holy Spirit as an earnest* that He will fulfil His promises when He takes us to the glory. *The Holy Spirit is the earnest; a present earnest* of our future portion.

11. ACCESS BY THE SPIRIT. Through Christ we both (Jews and Gentiles) *have access by one Spirit* unto the Father. (Eph. ii. 18.) In Old Testament times the Gentiles were far off, without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) Israel had a place of privilege, and a means of approach to God by sacrifice and priesthood, but could never *draw near*. There was *no access* for the people into the presence of God; but Christ having slain ~~the~~ the enmity between Jew and Gentile by the cross, came and preached peace to both. (Eph. ii. 16, 17.) And through Him both now have *access*. There is no difference. One Spirit unites all believers, and all have one common title to draw near. Gentiles worshipped idols; Israel worshipped Jehovah, the God of Israel; but all Christians

have *access by one Spirit* unto the Father. All alike can draw near and worship Him ; though there must be, of course, a right state of soul.

12. SHEDDING OF LOVE BY THE SPIRIT. The *love of God* is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy Ghost*, which is given unto us. In nature there is nothing there, as regards God, but hatred. Our hearts and minds are alienated from God, and filled with enmity against Him. But *His love* in the gift of His Son breaks the soul down, and having believed, *the Holy Ghost* is given to us, and *sheds God's love* abroad in our hearts. And, too, *we love Him*, because *He first loved us*. (1 John iv. 19.) And, moreover, "every one *that loveth Him* that begat, *loveth him also* that is begotten of Him." (1 John v. 1.) And *this love* should be active ; and will be so, *if His love* is enjoyed. But it must be *love in the Spirit*, and not after a fleshly sort. (Col. i. 8.) And "this is *the love of God*, that we keep His commandments." (1 John v. 3.)

13. WALK IN THE SPIRIT. *The Spirit of God* is the only power for Christian walk. "If we *live in the Spirit*, let us also *walk in the Spirit*." (Gal. v. 25.)

“*Walk in the Spirit*, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” (Gal. v. 16.) And “*the fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” (Gal. v. 22, 23.) Again, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy *in the Holy Ghost*.” (Rom. xiv. 17:) “Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead” (being dead to that) “wherein we were held; that we should serve in *newness of spirit*, and not in the oldness of the letter.” (Rom. vii. 6.) Christ was justified *in the Spirit* (1 Tim. iii. 16); walking as a dependent man upon earth in *the power of the Spirit* throughout His pathway. He “suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should *follow His steps*,” &c. (1 Peter ii. 21.) And “he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also *so to walk, even as He walked*.” (1 John ii. 6.)

14. HOPE THROUGH THE SPIRIT. As long as we are unconverted, we have *no hope*. Being saved by grace, we are saved *by* (or *in*) *hope*. *In hope of the glory of God*. (Rom. v. 2; viii. 24.) It is God that gives us *this hope*. We are called to a place in

the Father's house (John xiv. 2, 3), and to His kingdom and glory. (1 Thess. ii. 12.) It is *good hope* through grace. (2 Thess. ii. 16.) *This hope* will be realized at the coming of Christ, and God would have us live in expectation of it. Paul says to the saints at Rome, "Now *the God of hope* fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may *abound in hope*, through *the power of the Holy Ghost*" (Rom. xv. 13), from which we learn that it is *through the Spirit's power alone* that we are enabled to keep *the hope* of the future before us, and to abound therein. And in Gal. v. 5 we further read, "For we *through the Spirit* wait for *the hope of righteousness* by faith." And "if we *hope* for that we see not, then do we *with patience* wait for it." (Rom. viii. 25.)

The Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

We have already alluded to the fact that when *the Holy Ghost* was given on the day of Pentecost, the Jewish disciples were baptized into one body; and Gentiles added afterwards. "For *by one Spirit* are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or

free; and have been all made *to drink into one Spirit.*" And not only so, but by *the same Spirit* all are united to Christ in glory. God "gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 22, 23.) "He is the head of the body, the Church." (Col. i. 18.) "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." (Eph. v. 30.)

This wonderful union of Christ and the Church is called in Scripture "*the mystery of [the] Christ.*" In Eph. iii. 3-6 Paul says, "How that by revelation He made known unto me *the mystery*; (as I wrote afore in few words; whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in *the mystery of [the] Christ*;) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now revealed* unto His holy apostles and prophets *by the Spirit*; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel," &c.

And we are not only members of Christ's body, but we are also viewed as a building. The Christ, the Son of God, said, "Upon this rock *I will build* my Church," &c. In

Eph. ii. 21 we have the growth of the whole building, unto an holy temple in the Lord ; and in verse 22 all who compose the Church on earth at any given moment, living stones, are viewed as *builded together for an habitation of God through (or in) the Spirit*. The truths concerning the Church are *revealed by the Spirit*, and it is God's habitation *in the Spirit* so long as it remains on earth. Eph. ii. speaks of this habitation as *builded of God*.

But in other scriptures the same building is seen entrusted to *man's responsibility* as a builder ; and man fails in everything he touches. "Know ye not that *ye are* the temple of God, and that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?*" (1 Cor. iii. 16.) And in connection with this we get man's work, and how it will be tested in the future. Every man's work shall be tried of *what sort it is*. (1 Cor. iii. 13.) And what has man built ? A mass of rubbish, with here and there a little good material mixed in with it. He has departed from God's design revealed in the Word, and the present state of confusion in Christendom is the result. In another aspect of it, in 2 Tim. ii. 20, *the house of God* (which is the Church of

the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, as seen in the first epistle, chap. iii. 15) is illustrated as *a great house* with various kinds of vessels in it—some to honour, and some to dishonour. It sets forth the present state of Christendom, and instruction is given how to act faithfully to the Lord in the midst thereof. (2 Tim. ii. 19–22.) But though there is much and gross evil in the house of God, and which will surely come into judgment, *the Holy Ghost still dwells there*. It will continue to be the house of God until the true Church is translated, when *the Holy Ghost* as a divine Person, the Comforter, will also depart. (2 Thes. ii. 7.)

To return to Ephesians. After three chapters, in all of which the truth of the Church is more or less developed, in the third verse of the fourth, saints are exhorted *to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace, which, with those things mentioned in the first and second verses, is to characterize the spirit of those who seek to obey. (Eph. iv. 1–3.) Chapter iii. is parenthetical, and this exhortation at the opening of the fourth is based upon the close of the second.

The vocation, however, includes all that God unfolds in relation to it. We are not exhorted to make unity or union, but *to use diligence to keep the unity* which exists amongst Christians *by the presence of the Spirit*. It is *one* building, and all form part; and it is followed by the statement, "There is *one body* and *one Spirit*," &c. (Eph. iv. 4.) All are members of the body who *have the Spirit*. But we are not told to keep the unity of the body, nor of the building, else all should be together, of whatever doctrine or practice; but we are to keep *the unity of the Spirit*. If all were *subject to the Spirit* the unity of the body and the unity of the Spirit would be the same; but this is an exhortation for practical guidance as to our fellowship in relation to the Church on the earth. Hence there must necessarily be the disallowance and repudiation of all independency, self-will, evil doctrine and practice, every one being responsible to keep clear of all evil, of *everything contrary to the Holy Spirit*. All who seek to do so, according to God, must walk together in practical fellowship, as members of the body of Christ, wherever they may be found.

Now, at the commencement of the Church's history on the earth *all were together*. For the time there was a manifestation of the unity of the body, many continually being added; but very soon varied evils came in from without, and rose up from within, and *the unity of the Spirit* ceased to be kept. Schisms, divisions, evil doctrines, and practices, &c., have rent the professing Church into hundreds of pieces; but whatever the confusion, our responsibility remains the same. The word of God does not alter to meet man's failure (though it provides in event of failure); hence all saints are responsible till Christ comes to *endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace. All who do so must necessarily return in self-judgment to the original ground departed from, falling back upon God and the word of His grace; and without attempting to set up anything, or seeking to rebuild that which is broken down, keep to the Word, thankfully enjoy every privilege, and use every gift that remains, walking together *in the Spirit of grace*, and thus endeavour to please Him in His own house, where *He by the Spirit dwells*.

And all who so obey the Word, gathering

to the Lord's name, *owning one body and one Spirit*, and endeavouring to keep the unity of *the Spirit* in the bond of peace, ~~are~~ on *the true ground* of the assembly of God, however weak they may be. And when gathered together in the Lord's presence, *the Holy Ghost*, who is in the Church, is the power by which the hearts of the saints are led out in worship and ministry to edification. The true nature of worship and ministry has been sadly lost sight of. The word of God is our infallible guide. Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, *believe me*, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when *the true worshippers* shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. *God is a Spirit*: and they that worship Him *must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*" (John iv. 21-24.) These words are true for Christians to-day as ever. Such alone are true worshippers who have eternal life and the Holy Ghost. The natural man cannot worship God. Worship

flows to God, the Father, and the Son, in the power of the Holy Ghost, from hearts happy and free. The recognition of an earthly sanctuary and priesthood is a return to Judaism. Worship in spirit and in truth must be by divinely-appointed worshippers, drawing near with *a true heart* within the veil, in the holiest of all, in *the true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched, and not man. (Heb. x. 19-22; viii. 1, 2.)

Now, the Lord's table is pre-eminently the place where Christians worship. The commemoration of the death of Christ is that which fills the soul with adoring praise to God for all that He is in Himself, and all that He has wrought for His own glory, and our blessing through the gift of Christ. And when the saints of God are gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus around His table, Himself in the midst, to remember Him, and to show His death, *the Holy Ghost* is the power by which the hearts of the saints are led out in worship, praise, and thanksgiving. And likewise whenever the saints come together in assembly.

In 1 Cor. xii. we are taught that "*the manifestation of the Spirit* is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is

given, *by the Spirit*, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, *by the same Spirit . . .* but all these worketh that *one and the selfsame Spirit*, dividing to *every man severally as He will.*" Some of the gifts there enumerated are not now bestowed, but others are, and it is our privilege and responsibility both to use and profit by those that are still given. The whole teaching of this passage is in opposition to the idea of one man assuming authority to be sole minister in the assembly of God. This is further confirmed in 1 Cor. xiv., where we have the saints assembled, and the various gifts in exercise. (See also 1 Peter iv. 10, 11.) And in Philippians iii. Paul also says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God *in [by] the Spirit*, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

To refuse *the manifestation of the Spirit* through any Christian brother in the assembly is to *quench the Spirit*, which the apostle exhorted the young saints at Thessalonica not to do. (1 Thess. v. 19.) But whilst recognizing the presence of the Lord in the midst, and *the working of the Holy Ghost* in the assembly (1 Cor. xii. 11), it is all-important that the saints should not believe

every spirit, but try them "*whether they are of God*": because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the *Spirit of God*: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (1 John iv. 1-3.)

There is another point in connexion with *the presence of the Holy Ghost* in the Church which it is also important to be clear about, as much confusion exists in many minds in relation to it. It speaks in Hebrews of its being impossible to renew to repentance those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, &c., if they shall fall away. (Chap. vi. 4-6.) And also of "doing despite to *the Spirit of grace*," &c. (Chap. x. 26-31.) To understand these passages we must bear in mind that numbers of Hebrews had made a confession of Christianity, and turned from Judaism, and having thus cast in their lot with Christians, they were in that sphere

where *the privileges* connected with the faith of Christ and *the presence of the Holy Ghost* were known and enjoyed. *Outwardly* they were made partakers of them.* But if after a while they should give up their confession, deny Christ, *do despite to the Spirit of grace*, and openly turn their backs upon the truth of God, what was there left? They had renounced Judaism, and now they renounced Christianity; there was nothing left but the vengeance of God, which shall devour the adversaries. (Heb. x. 30, 31.)

Now both those in chapter vi., who are said to crucify the Son of God afresh, as well as those spoken of in chapter x., are of this class; and they answer to the stony-ground hearers who endure for a while, to whom our Lord referred in Matt. xiii. 20, 21.

In Heb. ii. 3, 4 the apostle says, "How shall we escape, if we neglect *so great salvation*; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and *gifts of the Holy Ghost*, according to His own will?" Thus the powers of the age to come were manifest before them in various

ways. (Acts ii. 7, 8.) They were greatly privileged; but if they fell away it would show that they had never participated in *the salvation of God*. To be enlightened, and to taste of the heavenly gift, and to be *made partakers of the Holy Ghost in an outward way*, was one thing; but to have eternal life (John vi. 47), to eat the flesh, and to drink the blood of the Son of man by faith (John vi. 53, 54), and to be *indwelt by the Holy Ghost*, is quite another. The apostle, however, continues; "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that *accompany salvation*, though we thus speak." And in the next verse he enumerates them, enjoining upon the Hebrews the importance of diligence in continuing therein. Both this passage and chapter x. show how far people may go with an outward profession, and yet after all have no part nor lot in the matter. Continuance in the things which accompany salvation are an evidence of reality.

To turn again to the epistle to the Ephesians we shall find further exhortations for the saints in connexion with *the Spirit of God*. First we are exhorted, "*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, whereby we are"

(or have been) "sealed to" (for) "the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.) And this is in relation to our practical moral conduct and walk. (Eph. iv. 25-32.) Then in chap. v. 18, we are also exhorted, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but *be filled with the Spirit*; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. v. 18, 19.) And in chap. vi. 10-19, after the bringing out of the character of the conflict that we are called to sustain with the powers of evil, when by faith we have accepted our true heavenly place before God now, we get detailed the varied pieces of defensive armour which we are exhorted to put on, closing with the only offensive weapon which we are to take and use against the foe, "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*: praying always with all prayer and supplication *in the Spirit*," &c.; *i.e.*, to be always dependent on God. Nothing else, and nothing short of this all-powerful weapon, will enable us to wage successful warfare with the powers of darkness and evil. Many Christians often fail to meet the enemy with this, and are sensible of having sustained a more or less

severe defeat, because they have used their own natural abilities and reasoning powers instead. May we then be found putting on the whole armour of God, *using the word of God in the power of the Spirit*, that we may thus be enabled to stand against all the wiles and subtleties of the foe, and overcome in an evil day.

And next we would call our readers' attention to *two grievous sins* spoken of in the New Testament—the one “*lying to the Spirit*,” and the other “*blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*.”

The case of Ananias and Sapphira, recorded in Acts v., is a most solemn instance of the former, ensuing in their immediate death. “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints” now, as in the assembly of Israel of old. (Ps. lxxxix. 7.) In lying they were *lying to the Holy Ghost*, who dwells in the Church. *Taught by the Holy Ghost*, Peter knew of the lie, saw it was the action of Satan filling their heart, charged them with the sin, and both of them in turn fell dead; and great fear came upon all the Church. Knowing these things, how careful we should be how we behave ourselves in the assembly of God,

The latter was spoken of by our Lord in Luke xii. 10: "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto *him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost* it shall not be forgiven." And in Mark iii. 29 the language is even more solemn still. The scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth HE out devils." And Jesus answered them in parables, adding, "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but *he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost* hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." In Matthew's record of the same circumstance we find the Lord speaks of casting out devils by the *Spirit of God* (Matt. xii. 28), and adds to the awful threat against those who *blaspheme against the Holy Ghost*, that "whosoever *speaketh against the Holy Ghost*, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world (or age), neither in the world (or age) to come." (Matt. xii. 32.)

Many persons have become lunatics, and

others have destroyed themselves, from thinking they had committed the unpardonable sin; but it may be clearly seen in Mark iii. that no person can now commit the sin as the scribes and Pharisees did. They *SAW the work of the Holy Ghost*, and said it was the work of Satan.

And *because they said* it was by the power of Satan that the devil was cast out from the man who was blind and dumb there was no forgiveness for them. Nor will there be forgiveness for any who thus sin when the same power is manifested in the "age to come."

Many Christians have been made unhappy for years by confounding *grieving the Spirit* with *blaspheming the Spirit*. And many think that *the Holy Spirit* may be taken from a Christian; but the word of God says that a believer is sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. iv. 30.)

And before closing this part of our subject we must also call the reader's attention to the grievous sin of one Simon, a sorcerer, in Acts viii. 9-24, who thought that *the gift of the Holy Ghost* could be purchased for money, and money that he had probably obtained through his devilish arts. Peter

perceived his true state, notwithstanding that he had been baptized, and called upon him to repent of his wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him, &c.

Future Operations of the Holy Spirit.

We have seen that *the Holy Ghost*, having come to the earth at Pentecost according to the promise of Christ, has remained as *the abiding Comforter* dwelling in the temple of God. When the Lord Himself shall descend from the throne of God to fetch His heavenly saints, *the Holy Ghost* ceases to be present in the same way. *His presence as a divine Person dwelling here* characterizes *the present interval* of the calling out of the Church of God *only*; but He will operate among men afterwards, as He operated among men before, as we have gathered from the Word.

Already in the days of the apostles Satan was seeking to counteract the testimony of the Church of God on earth by the working of *the mystery of iniquity* (or lawlessness). (2 Thess. ii. 7.) This evil is pointed out as that which would culminate eventually in open apostasy and the revelation of anti-

christ, but that there is *a restraint* upon it for a time. "Ye know *what* withholdeth." (2 Thess. ii. 6.) "*He* who now letteth, will let, until *he* be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked" (one) "be revealed," &c. (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8.) It is widely accepted, and we apprehend rightly so, that *the Holy Ghost* is both *the Person* and *the power* that restrains. The powers that be are ordained of God, and evil is to an extent kept down, and *the presence of the Holy Ghost* maintaining good amongst the saints on earth, is also a check to the terrible tide. But soon after the translation of the heavenly saints to glory, *the restraint being removed*, and Satan having been cast out to earth (Rev. xii.), things will rapidly head up to open revolt against God, and a time of unparalleled evil, and judgment in consequence, come upon the world. (2 Thess. ii. 3; Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.)

Now, in the book of the Revelation, where the number *seven* is much used, and is, in fact, a characteristic of the book, we find *the Holy Ghost* also viewed in a manner different to that in which He is viewed in other portions of the Word. It speaks in chapter i. 4 of *the seven Spirits of God* before the throne; in

chapter iii. 1 Christ is "He that hath *the seven Spirits of God*;" and in chapter iv. 5 we get seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God, which are *the seven Spirits of God*. And lastly, in chapter v. 6, the Lamb standing in the midst of the throne, "as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are *the seven Spirits of God* sent forth into all the earth."

The presentation of *the Holy Ghost* thus, sets forth apparently His varied operations of governmental power. In chapter iii. they are in relation to the Church on earth, but in chapters iv. and v. in relation to the circumstances which will transpire on the earth after this present interval. And it is blessed to find that, notwithstanding the awful character of the hour that will then be ushered in, and which will close with the manifest personal intervention of the Son of man in judgment on the nations, that *the Spirit* will operate in the hearts of a remnant of the Jews, who will be raised up and sent out to the nations with the gospel of Messiah's kingdom. A great multitude of Gentiles will be blessed under this fresh dealing of God. And in Rev. vii. ; xiv. 1-5 ; xv. 2-4 ; Matt. xxiv., &c., we have

the different companies, both of Israel and of Gentiles, who will reap blessing at that time, and some of whom will be preserved for millennial blessing on the earth; whilst others who meanwhile die in the Lord, or are martyred, will be raised for heavenly blessing over the earth. (Rev. xiv. 13; xx. 4.) But though the latter shall share the glory of the heavenly sphere of the kingdom when displayed, they do not form part of the Church, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, any more than do the saints who fell asleep before Pentecost. But it is blessed to know that during the terrible scenes of these last days of the age, when Christians shall already have been glorified, that *the Spirit* will raise up another testimony for the glory of Christ.

And then, when the Son of man shall come in power and glory, to the utter discomfiture of all His foes, He will deliver the spared remnant of the Jews, reunite with them a spared company also of the ten tribes, and they shall be one nation in the land (Rom. xi. 25-27; Ezek. xxxvii. 19-22), spared Gentiles being likewise blessed. (Rev. vii. 9-17.) All Israel shall then know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.

(Heb. viii. 11.) “**They** people also,” saith He, “shall be all righteous.” (Isaiah lx. 21.) “A new heart also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of *flesh*. And I will put *my Spirit within you*, and cause you to walk in *my* statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them,” &c. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) “And it shall come to pass afterward” (after the hour of trial), “that I will *pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will *I pour out my Spirit*.” (Joel ii. 28, 29.)

And in Rev. xxii. 1, after describing the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, as the holy city over the earth in the millennial day (chap. xxi. 9–27), it adds, “And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,” &c. This appears also to be a figure of *the Spirit of God*, who is like a river of living water, which is the means of blessing wherever it flows. (v. 2.)

At the close of the millennial reign, Christ will give up the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all. In the description of the eternal state the three Persons of the Trinity are not severally mentioned, but simply God.

Finally, in chapter xxii. 16, Jesus says, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star;" a passage which brings before His people both His earthly and heavenly glories, which will both be displayed in the future. And then follows an invitation to Him to return. From the glory He utters these words; and *the Spirit*, now on earth, and with Him the Bride, unite in saying, "Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." And then, in view of His speedy advent, a final gospel appeal goes out world-wide. "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.)

"Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. xxii. 20.)

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