

# DUBLIN ADDRESSES,

AS DELIVERED AT SEVERAL OF THE

HALF-YEARLY BELIEVERS' MEETINGS  
IN DUBLIN,

From 1862 to 1872.

*With an Outline of their History.*

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EDITED BY C. R. H.

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## PREFACE.

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**I**N sending forth, with much prayerfulness of spirit, this volume of collected Addresses, delivered at the half-yearly Believers' Meetings in Dublin, we do so with the earnest hope that they may prove a means of increased blessing to those who, having first had the privilege of hearing them delivered, may now peruse them with fresh interest; and to doubtless many others, who, from various circumstances, could not share in this privilege at the time. That this may be the case, we ask the fervent prayers of every Christian reader. As to the meetings themselves, it would be quite impossible to give a just conception of their character, or adequately convey to those who have not attended them an idea of their practical value.

Sometimes, in large gatherings of saints, we seem to realize a little of what will be the joy of the eager, happy crowds of Israel's elect, as they go up to

worship the Lord in Jerusalem, and to partake of the blessed fellowship to which they will be called in the time of their in-grafting and fulness; for though in many respects our fellowship is of another and higher order, in some others it is of a similar kind. Though our worship is where we are seated—in the heavenlies—we are yet *strangers on earth*, with pilgrims' experiences. Often isolated from each other, and not unfrequently sorely pressed with trials and toils, or faint in the spirit of watching and waiting for their coming Lord, the saints of God—many of them at least—find such half-yearly gatherings as these, a real feast of fat things for the soul. Not only are they profitable on account of the truth taught (though for this we may well be grateful), but also in the fellowship enjoyed with the Lord and with each other, which cannot fail to be productive of the most blessed fruit to God's praise, and the profit of each.

The manifested love of the saints, the hospitality shown—according to their measure—by many others than the beloved servant of Christ, through whose love and bounty the people of God are invited together each February and July, with the conferences on practical subjects in walk and work, and the united prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, render these gatherings some of the most delightful it has ever been our privilege to attend,

or even hope to enjoy, till the greater and final meeting of believers in the heavens. The following

BRIEF SKETCH OF THEIR HISTORY

has been kindly furnished by one who has happily shared the responsibility of their arrangement from the time of their commencement in 1862.

“With the extraordinary and supernatural revival of spiritual interest and enquiry that was felt throughout Ireland in the years 1859 to 1862, there arose, naturally enough, the desire for some mutual conference and intercourse among those who were engaged in the work of the Lord. For some time the work in Ireland had been so entirely ‘from above,’ that those engaged had, for the most part, no knowledge one of another, although the gospel meetings, as to their objects, conduct, and results, were very much alike in the various scenes of awakening.

“There were many questions of doctrine on which it was felt that communion one with another among the workers would be helpful. There were also considerations about the best manner of conducting meetings, and dealing with the anxious. In this way it came about that at first the Dublin Believers’ Meetings were intended to be for conference and consultation over God’s Word, with prayer and such addresses as might lead to the promotion of truth and wisdom in the conduct of the gospel work.

“ One of the first and most important matters of detail, was the question, Who should be invited to the meetings. It was felt that only the children of God, and those who professed and manifested that character, could be profitably admitted. This opinion was entertained and acted upon from the first meeting up to the present time, and to it is traced in a measure the great success that God has graciously given to these gatherings.

“ Although some, failing to understand why there need be any such distinction, were a little offended at the question being raised, it has been very generally felt, that considering the great attraction presented by the addresses of many gifted persons from distant places, if such care were not exercised, the result would soon be, that, by the presence of large numbers of unconverted persons, the character of the meetings would be entirely changed and their object defeated; and therefore, with as much grace as possible, and endeavouring to avoid wounding the feelings of any, it is sought still to maintain as far as possible this distinctive character in the meetings.

“ After the first Conference in the Pillar Room of the Rotunda; Dublin, on June 3rd and 4th, 1862, it was manifest to all that the discussion of spiritual subjects on so large a scale before so many auditors, was fraught with such temptation to

undue excitement, that the benefit of mutual counsel was very much destroyed.

“The result was, that the following half year the element of ‘conference’ gave place to those of ‘Prayer, Praise, and Exhortation,’ which have from that time till now been the object and intention of the assemblies. That is to say, Prayer for the continuance and deepening of the work of awakening and conversion, for places and persons as yet unaffected by the wave of blessing; and for an increase to the number of evangelists; Praise for the wonderful grace of God in thus awakening and saving souls; and Exhortation and Teaching for those many new-born souls whose attendance at the meetings was sought with diligence.

“It was the object of the conveners to found no sect, to strengthen no party, to teach no new creed; but recognizing one body, one Lord, and one God and Father of all true believers in Jesus, it was sought to promote the experimental enjoyment of that fellowship in which, irrespective of their denomination, all the children of God are united. Praise together, prayer together, and the ministry of Christ, by His many gifted servants, were thought to be the best means of attaining this happy end. The name of God alone be praised for the very blessed result in this respect, to which all will bear witness who have had the privilege of being present in these gatherings.

“The power and grace of God have been manifestly present. Volumes of praise have risen from the 1200 voices of God’s children together assembled, surpassing the recollection or previous conception of many of the aged saints of God. Not sound, meaning nothing, but sound breaking forth, as could be seen by all, from fervent spirits vibrating with the inward melody of joy. Such has been the power in prayer, that often *hours* have been spent by these great congregations, while the petitions flowed forth from one, and another, and another, throughout the hall, till sometimes exhausted strength imposed a limit too soon on the energies of heart and spirit.

“Written requests for prayer, for places, persons, labours of various kinds, ministries, schools, mission work in foreign lands, &c., &c., have been laid upon the table in such numbers, that very often special meetings had to be arranged for their presentation to God.

“At all the meetings liberty has always been given for prayer to be led by any one present, and, strange as it may seem, no abuse has arisen from this practice, such as to suggest its discontinuance.

“The power of the Spirit manifest in the meetings has been something almost unparalleled, and this especially in the prayers.

“Ministry has been chiefly exposition of such truths as are generally accepted by Christians, much of it

being deeply spiritual and edifying. Fervent exhortations upon the walk of the saints in every detail of life have been frequent at all the gatherings, and from time to time thrillingly interesting reports have been given of some great outpouring of blessing, or revival of spiritual interest.

“The speakers have been from all classes of labourers in the Lord’s vineyard; clergymen of various denominations, merchants, medical men, and lawyers, young men and old, learned and unlearned, any one whom God was owning and using. It was sought to recognize only the gifts of the Spirit, and thorough reality, owning these wherever found, disowning only that which seemed to lack them.

“In this matter there have been many and marked proofs of the presence and power of the Spirit, sometimes in the unarranged continuity of subject taken up by different speakers, sometimes in the restraining of what would be unsuitable, sometimes in the powerful utterance of truth by some feeble lips, always in the gracious and truly Christian spirit of those thus taking part in the ministry.

“As to results, they are so many and various, it would be difficult to enumerate them. Suffice it to say, that in answer to prayer many large districts have been aroused from lethargy, that thousands of souls have been saved, that many labourers have been brought into the field through this direct in-

strumentality, that numbers of believers have had interest awakened in the Lord's work, who before were hemmed in, in some narrow circle of labour and fellowship, that much social intercourse has resulted between those, who, differing on some church question, would otherwise never meet each other, that many have been delivered from worldly associations, that God's truth has been unfolded, and praise has gone up to Him in volumes, weighty and sincere; and last, not least, that at and in the meetings, overcome and subdued by the manifest power of God, backsliders have been restored, and some unsaved souls who have been admitted unawares, deceived as to their own state, and deceiving others, have been eternally saved.

"As to minor details, visitors from a distance are received into the houses and hospitality of their fellow-saints in Dublin and the neighbourhood. On Tuesday and Wednesday are the principal meetings, held three times a day, at 7-30 a.m., 12 noon, and 7-30 p.m., originally in the Pillar Room of the Rotunda, latterly in the Metropolitan Hall; the strangers in Dublin meeting also at breakfast and dinner in the side rooms of the Hall. Thursday is set apart for gatherings at Willow Park, near Dublin, where, in the large conservatory of a revered and loved servant of God, scenes of joy and spiritual refreshing have been witnessed, which call forth

praise and thanksgiving to God at every remembrance of them, by those who have had the privilege to be present. The meetings have been generally held in February and July in each year.

“Labourers in the vineyard have been present from London and many places in England, Scotland, Canada, and the United States, and from all parts of Ireland; and among these there have been renewed latterly in smaller and supplementary meetings, the idea of conference on questions connected with the work of the Lord, which have been very instructive.

“Not in the spirit of boasting, or giving credit to man, is this little history written; but with a fervent desire to give all the praise to Him from whose bounteous hand the blessing so manifestly came.”

Another who wrote concerning one of these happy re-unions, thus closed his descriptive letter:—

“Those who were present, and whose hearts were in full sympathy with the blessed scene, and whose eyes were directed to ‘Jesus only,’ will doubtless say, ‘The half has not been told;’ for what mind can conceive, what pen describe, the holy blissfulness experienced by each individual soul of all those happy hundreds—as the Lord revealed Himself in His beauty, preciousness, and love, in near communion, such as would find utterance in the words of holy writ: ‘He brought *me* to the banqueting-

house, and His banner over *me* was love. . . . .  
His left hand is under *my* head, His right hand doth embrace *me*.'

"If the experience of the GRACE bestowed be so satisfying and refreshing, what will the GLORY be ?  
'It doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'

"And as our hearts were filled with the love of Jesus, and our spirits soaring to the celestial throne, and as the assembled saints were permeated by the living power of the Holy Ghost, enabling us to have *felt* communion with our exalted Lord, we had our minds occupied with thoughts of the coming glory, in which we all believe, and accepted this fellowship in the spirit of these gatherings as another sweet foretaste of the great and glorious gathering of the blood-bought Church, when He shall present us faultless in the Father's house, before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

We cannot but add two thoughts that occur to us relative to these meetings, namely : What immense blessing may not a few Christians possessing means, and willing to spend them for Christ, secure to thousands of the Lord's people throughout this and other lands, if they would, even occasionally "go and do likewise." And secondly : What a wonder

it is, that at such meetings there are not found twelve *thousand*, instead of twelve hundred believers, applying for tickets of admission, which surely would be something like the case, did the multitudes of Christians in the United Kingdom really know how fruitful they were.

Thankful are we indeed to know, however, that not a few similar meetings have been held elsewhere during the past few years ; but it is hoped that the narrative of the origin and history of these gatherings may have the effect of inspiring the Lord's people in many other places, to seek a like blessing by a like effort, on however small a scale.

Lastly : may the Lord graciously grant unto His children, who share in these precious privileges, such grace as shall enable them, by endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, by lowliness and meekness, by speaking the truth in love, by persevering supplication for all saints, and by "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" for these blessed purposes, to secure on any future meetings that may be held, if the Lord tarry, that divine benediction on which all success depends ; and above all, to watch for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; who gave Himself for us, that he might

redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

"Lord Jesus, come !

Nor let us longer roam  
Afar from Thee, and that bright place,  
Where we shall see Thee face to face.

Lord Jesus, come !

Lord Jesus, come !

Thine absence here we mourn ;  
No joy we know apart from Thee,  
No sorrow in Thy presence see.

Come, Jesus, come.

Lord Jesus, come !

And claim us as Thine own ;  
Our weary feet would wander o'er  
This dark and sinful world no more.

Come, Saviour, come !

Lord Jesus, come !

And take Thy people home ;  
That all Thy flock, so scattered here,  
With Thee in glory may appear,

Lord Jesus, come ! "

164, ALEXANDRA ROAD,

ST. JOHN'S WOOD, LONDON.

C. R. H.

Dec., 1872.

## NOTE.

Most of the following addresses were taken down in short-hand by a valued friend, at the time of delivery, expressly for this volume. Several, however, have already appeared in the pages of the *Latter-Rain*; but it is believed their reproduction, together with those not hitherto published in this collected form, will render them still more acceptable.

A few of the earlier ones are reprinted from the *British Herald*, by kind permission of the Editor.

Nearly the whole of the addresses have been carefully revised by their authors for this book, and we affectionately ask the prayers of each Christian reader, that the Lord's blessing may now accompany its publication.

THE EDITOR.

# CHRIST GOD'S OBJECT FOR OUR HEARTS.

By H. W. SOLTAU.

---

WE have in the Christ of God an object for our *hearts*, and one that fully satisfies us, for He is sufficient to engage all our affections, and answer our warmest desires. Do not then think that Christianity is losing everything and getting nothing; for we only lose that which is worthless and unsatisfactory, and get a satisfying object for our hearts—eternal riches and eternal glory. Even now we have something for our hearts, that needs nothing to be added to it; and that is *Christ Himself*.

Beloved, the gospel testimony is concerning a *Person*, a living, gloriously spotless *Person*, one whose “heart is made of tenderness,” *Christ Jesus Himself*. God hath spoken to us by His own beloved Son. And He Himself came down and “offered *Himself* without spot to God.” Yes, He “loved the Church, and gave *Himself* for it,” and “put away sin by the sacrifice of *Himself* ;” and now that He is at the right hand of God, His heart is as full of love as it was when He shed His blood on the cross,

He is as full as ever He was of mercy, of compassion, of grace, and of faithfulness.

He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And He *Himself* is now pleading for us; His heart beats for us; His eye is occupied in looking after us; His power is toward us; His thoughts are thoughts of love, of kindness, of faithfulness and mercy to us; and He Himself is coming for us! He is to send *angels* to accomplish some of His purposes, as we know from the book of Revelation and the 13th of Matthew; but for *us* He is coming *Himself*; "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." And this is for our *hearts*.

And now, beloved, all our blessings that we have are *in Christ*, and in Christ in the heavenlies. We are blessed with Him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. If the thought be in our hearts about *acceptance*, it is "*In the Beloved*." If the question be in our hearts of *redemption*, it is "*In Whom* we have redemption by His blood." If the question be in our hearts about *standing*, "Ye are *complete in Him*." If the question be in our hearts about that glorious mystery of which the Spirit treats in Ephesians, it is "that He might make *in Himself* of twain *one new man*." There we get the blessing of the whole Church of God in all its

aggregate standing, as the body of Christ, as in Himself.

And if thought be about the heavenly calling, why, beloved, the heavenly calling is in union with Christ, being united in life, united with one who is in heaven. I believe it is not merely that we have fellowship with Him ; for two might be in fellowship, and yet not be in the same place. But this our heavenly calling is being quickened together, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in *Christ Jesus*. And that, I say, is the blessed portion of the weakest believer amongst us, whether he knows it or not. It is something that God has done for us in a crucified, risen, and ascended Christ.

And now, beloved friends, this object, I say, is for our hearts now, *the Lord Jesus Christ*. And Paul, who wrote so much about the mystery of the Church, the body, (for he was the special person to whom the mystery was revealed,) and who calls himself, by inspiration, the minister of it, not only the "minister of the *gospel*," but you will find him speaking of himself as a minister in connexion with the mystery, "Whereof I am made a *minister* ;" this man, who was raised of God to minister this glorious truth, shows that it was connected emphatically with this dispensation ; and could not be brought out till the

Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead ; for "He is the first-born of many brethren." Therefore, others are to follow, but He is the first. And then He was raised from the dead by the mighty power of God, as you read in Ephesians, and set "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, both in this world and that which is to come ; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church."

These blessed truths, which could not be brought out until the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and fully known till the descent of the Holy Ghost to dwell in the members of His body, (and believers are habitations of God,) are brought out by the apostle Paul.

The same apostle, on another occasion, gives birth to these precious words, in the last chapter of his epistle to the Galatians :

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The apostle knew all these glorious truths, and enjoyed them, ministered them in the power of them, in a way that perhaps none do now. The thing he ever gloried in, the thing he said God forbid that I should glory save in it, the great theme of the apostle's

heart, was "THE CROSS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST." Why was it? Because it is the cross of Christ that brings us into all these blessings. It is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ that takes away all our sins; it is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ that saves us from this present evil world; it is in virtue of the blood of that cross of Jesus that He was raised from the dead, and entered heaven itself, and brought that blood there, and that we have right in the title of that blood to sit down in the holiest of all; and because all our blessings spring from the cross, and that all the truths of Scripture, however elevated, whether for the present or future dispensation, are all connected with the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And through that cross and that precious blood we are able to enter in on the ground of *justice*, as well as on the ground of *grace*, and to enjoy this blessed reality now. Wherever the apostle was, it seems to me, reading his epistles, he was *ever preaching the cross*, ever presenting the cross. If the subject be justification, "being justified by *His blood*." If the subject be sanctification, "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with *His own blood*." If the subject be worship, "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by *the blood of Jesus*." And so wherever you turn. If the apostle had a word to

a disciple, or to a disorderly church, he lifted up the cross as a great "heal-all" for the saints. When divisions came in in Corinth, the apostle lifted up the cross; he said: "Was Paul *crucified* for you?" And when philosophy began to sap out the spirituality of the saints, did he not say, "But we preach *Christ crucified*, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." And if there was leaven, evil, among them to be put away, did he not cry out, in the power of the Holy Ghost, "Christ our passover is *slain for us*."

And so you might go through the epistles, and other parts of God's Word, and see how the apostle delighted in the cross, because it saved him from *himself*, and from the world. I do verily believe the apostle gloried in the cross, because he saw an end of himself there. And I ask every experienced Christian, Is not the greatest trouble you have *yourself*? And it is a glorious deliverance God has given us from *ourselves*. And *that* I find nowhere but in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only do we get forgiveness of sin in His blood, but also "our old man," the very root and trunk, everything of "the old man" put to death, legally judged. What a great power over ourselves!

And the cross severed him from the world. It was never a *question* with the apostle Paul, after his

conversion, about the *world*. Taught by the Spirit of God, he saw that Christ and the world were as opposite as east and west; he saw the cross of Calvary planted there, and the world, the best, the cleanest part of the world, every part of the world, the rich world, and the poor world, the religious world, and the godless world, all gathered about that cross; and all with one heart and with one lip crying, "Away with Him, away with Him; crucify Him, crucify Him." I am crucified to the *world*. How could I be of that world; how can I identify myself with that world that rejected Him, whose heart was so full of love and grace!

Paul also says, By that cross the world has nothing to do with me. I have heard some of the Lord's people say they never had a trial with their unconverted companions. When the believer grasps with both arms the cross of Christ as the only ground of acceptance before God, which gives them full acceptance in heavenly places, he is severed from the world. For this reason *the heart* is taken up with Christ; *Christ is for the heart, and the heart is for Christ*. A sight of that cross for a poor ruined sinner, and seeing the Lord of life and glory, pouring out His soul for the sinner, is that that captivates the heart; and the heart and energies are directed in relation to Him, the world has no relish for it.

Says Paul, "I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me."

Oh! my beloved brothers and sisters, let us see where the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has put us! We are "*not of the world.*" He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world. And Jesus says, "They are not of the world." And Paul could see this by virtue of that cross, for it was as a mighty lever that lifted him up out of the world into "heavenly places." In virtue of that cross Jesus is coming again to take His people to Himself. The work of redemption from sin and the world is so perfect, so complete, that the only thing wanting is that the blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, should come to change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body.

May we then, beloved friends, carry away at least the thought that *Christ is for our hearts*, and that our affections should be for Him. He has poured out all His love for us; He has given Himself for us; He will come Himself for us: and let us be for Him!

# CHRIST'S DESIRE FOR HIS SAINTS.

BY WILLIAM LINCOLN.

---

“O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”  
SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 14—17.

IN this verse there are two things asked for in a certain order, (we are very prone to reverse the order,) and mark, the countenance is to be seen *first*. It is as though Jesus said, “Before you speak, come close, and let me see you. Don’t be so anxious to talk to me, until you are very near me. Be very sure that I see your countenance before I hear your voice. See *where you are* before you begin to speak to Me.”

O love of mine! thou art indeed near me, for thou art in the clefts of the Rock. Yes, God’s hand put us there, actually in Jesus; therefore let us have boldness to enter into the holiest.

Jesus says so kindly, how sweet our voices are in His ear. He says it now of all the petitions we have brought to Him; and every time we pressed to get close to Him, our countenances were very comely in His sight. If He thus esteems our lisplings, be sure we have got the answer already.

“Take the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.”

Here is a caution. There *are* things that interfere in pouring out our souls, things that interrupt the enjoyment of communion. You are conscious of this? Don't you often feel fettered in prayer? Though you know you are so near and close, you don't always enter into the full realization of it. Then take the foxes, the *little* foxes, the little things which mar communion. Only a glance, perhaps, or a word uttered, and we have felt the spirit of prayer checked. Little things. The Lord does not name them; but He would have you search them out, and put your finger on them. And why? Because the vines are tender, and the fruit they bear, the fruit with which Jesus is so vastly pleased, is easily spoilt.

Next comes the reply. We may suppose the foxes *have* been taken; and the doubt, the shyness, the reserve have been found out, and put away, and you have fresh life by beholding how *His* countenance beams upon you. And what follows? The soul exclaims, “*My Beloved is mine.*” There is not much said; but it is mightily to the point. The two “*Mys,*” indeed, are hardly grammar; but most beautiful theology. The first thing Jesus wants, if we have not time for long prayer, is this, (never leave it out); say, “*My, my Beloved,*” (all thought of a Judge is gone), and “*I am His.*” Ah! say it just now. He hears you. As the soul grows in grace, it seems

that all its desire is simply to rest in the arms of that Beloved One, and say, "I am His."

Very often we are not saying, "I am my Beloved's." Supposing you have been half an hour, even five minutes, without speaking to Him, without your eye going up to meet His; *He* says, "Do let Me hear your voice." I fancy that along the Atlantic cable messages from shore to shore are continually flashing backwards and forwards, and Jesus wants to have a current of communication flowing on perpetually between you and Him. He loves the entire consecration, the upward glance at Him, the whispered, "My Beloved." Yes, He wants *that*, whatever else we omit. (I am sure we often give Him a great deal of rubbish in prayer.) Oh, be sure you always say it, "I am my Beloved's."

And then at last, from constantly seeing that face, and appropriating that Beloved One, the soul seems to be brought to be impatient at the slightest separation, at the least shadow of anything that would come in and prevent the constant enjoyment of His love, and she exclaims, "Until *the* day," (there is no special day mentioned, but the Lord and the soul know what day very well,) until the time when Jesus will send for us out of this world of shadows, "Turn, my Beloved; (don't let there be any gap, any hiatus between us, but turn,) and be thou like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of separation."

# THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD.

By MARCUS RAINSFORD.

---

“Ye are the temple of the living God.”—2 Cor. vi. 16.

**T**HIS is a very wonderful statement, my dear friends, and may the Lord impress it upon each of our hearts—“Ye are the temple of the living God.”

These words, as you are aware, apply exclusively to believers ; none others are the temple of God. In the opening of the first epistle you find Paul wrote to them who were sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours.

Not only is this statement made, that they who are the temple of the living God may know their privileges ; but that those who are not may have faith kindled in their souls, hope begotten in their hearts, and love and gratitude shed abroad in them. God grant, that if there are any in this place, who have never laid hold of such truths as they shall hear, they may be arrested in mind and heart, and that they, too, may become living stones in the tem-

ple of which I am about to speak. There are many wonders in the universe of creation—many in the universe of grace; and who can tell what are the wonders in the universe of glory? The greatest thing that ever shall be, the greatest thing that the putting forth of God's power, providence, grace, and glory shall construct, shall be the temple of the living God. There is not the least question about that.

What is a temple? I will begin lower down. What is a mansion? A mansion is a place where a rich man dwells, collecting around him all that his taste and his wealth can provide, and he dwells there surrounded with all he admires and all he loves. What is a palace? A palace is where a king dwells. It is more beautifully furnished, decked with more costly gems, and more valuable pictures than a mansion. Now comes the thought I want—What is a temple? A temple is where Jehovah dwells, where He surrounds Himself with His purchases, hangs out His pictures, and where He resides, surrounding Himself by the objects He loves, the reflectors in which He is seen and glorified. If this is true, a great deal more than this is a temple. “Ye are the temple of the living God.”

God can only dwell in anything that has fellowship with Himself. The heaven of heavens cannot con-

tain Him. Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the place I may dwell?

When God undertook to build a house for man, poor, puny man, of a span long, whose days are as a shadow that declineth, here for an hour or two, a passing stranger, when God built a house for the wayfarer, how did He do it? You are all lovers of nature, more or less. What a splendid house creation is, what beautiful carpeting, what a lovely ceiling, what variety of fragrancy there is in man's house! What a glorious home! If He made such a house for the wayfarer—what sort of house? what sort of mansion? what sort of palace? what sort of temple *do you think He is building for Himself?* The whole visible creation is but a platform, that God may build upon it.

Men have tried to build, and plans have been formed; but God will sweep them away with the besom of destruction. An overflowing flood will take them all away, and leave not even a trace of them, and by and by the living stones, taken out of many nations, will be ready for their place in the great temple which God has been building. Then the scaffolding shall be taken down, and the temple, the wonder of heaven and earth, shall be seen, amid shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it"; and God will make known the height and depth and length and breadth of what

His love and power and wisdom could do, and shall display to a wondering universe, His manifold wisdom in building that temple, in which He shall dwell for evermore.

I may give you a few thoughts on the temple—

1. *The builder is God.*

There is not a particle, from the foundation to the top-stone, of which God Himself is not the builder. We may tell of the temple; describe the beauty of it, and the proportion of it, but we cannot build it; God alone is the builder, and there is not a single stone of that temple about which every attribute of God is not engaged.

Oh, it is a wonderful structure. Every attribute of God is occupied in its construction. If His wisdom can devise, it will be a good place; if His power can execute what His wisdom devised, depend upon it, it will be well executed; if glory can furnish it, it will be well furnished; if the love of God can fill it, depend upon it, it will be filled to overflowing. The Father is occupied in building it; the Son is occupied in building it; the Holy Ghost is occupied in building it; and every one that has the love of the Father, or the grace of the Son, or the unction of the Holy Spirit, longs to see the top-stone completed, and to hear the shouting of Grace, grace, to welcome it.

This temple is intended to be God's masterpiece.

Every great artist likes to have a masterpiece, to show what his skill can do ; the warrior points to show where his victory was won ; and so the great God, who has done many wonders in providence and grace, intends to have a masterpiece. It is wonderful that He should take the lowest dust of earth to construct it. When He dwells there in all His power, He shall point to each of us and say, There is my masterpiece. If angels want to see His power, to see what His grace could do, He will point to you and me, and say, There it is. Then they will see how much love there is in God. I think God values His love more than any other thing about Himself, and if you want to know how much love there is in God, how much holiness there is in God, He will point to this masterpiece, where His love is most reflected and His holiness most manifested.

When He created this world, it was by the word of His mouth ; but when He came to erect His temple, it cost Him the life-blood of Him who was the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person ; and more than 6000 years ago, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost engaged in constructing the temple in which He shall dwell eternally. It is not yet finished ; but what will it be by and by.

All this was indicated in both Testaments in many

passages. I shall take one or two. Time is not allowed me to enter into it very deeply.

1. **THE TABERNACLE.**—There was a wonderful announcement made to the children of Israel. Let them make a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. What a sound in the ears of those who were in the wilderness—God looking down in love, not merely to rain manna from heaven for them, or to open His water-springs, but deeper, closer, fellowship. He announces His intention of dwelling among them. Let them make a sanctuary, let the materials be supplied by the people I carried out of Egypt, to show forth my glory. Not a single thing was to be brought into it but the offering of the willing hearts of redeemed Israel.

Men were to construct the tabernacle by the pattern given on the mount, and when completed the glory of God filled it, and He spake from the mercy-seat all His will and all His Levitical law.

2. **SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.**—The tabernacle was a passing earnest of what was afterwards more fully developed in the temple which Solomon was commanded to build. Who can tell the wealth that was there? There were gems from many a mine, the gold of Ophir was there. Solomon built a house for the Lord. Never under the sun was there such a building as that at Jerusalem. You all know that the wealth

expended upon it is not to be computed, and when he looked upon it, as if the thought God had in His mind broke upon his soul, he said, "The Lord hath said that He would dwell in the thick darkness. Will He in very deed dwell with men on the earth; the heavens cannot contain Him," (2 Chron. vi. 1—18.)

It was a splendid picture of God's intention. The priests could not enter by reason of His glory, which filled the house, (2 Chron. v. 14.) It was set apart exclusively for God's own people, where God did meet with man, and held the most familiar intercourse, according to God's own mind. There was the altar and the incense, there the priests served day and night, there was the water for purification, the memorial of the manna of the wilderness was there, the rod, the resurrection rod of a risen priesthood was there, and there the eyes of the Lord, and the heart of the Lord, rested continually. "Mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually." It was only a picture; but what a beautiful picture. But that temple became a heap of ruins, not one stone left on another; it was only a picture; for if God is to dwell with man, it is not in a house that man can build. God must take the manhood with Himself ere He can dwell with man, and so we read of another temple.

3. THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY.—The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, tabernacled among us. In the history of the blessed Lord, who was the foundation-stone of this temple, we hear Him say, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; but He spake of the temple of His body.” The humanity of our Lord-Christ was a perfect temple, God was dwelling in man, it had all the appliances of the temple of old. There was an altar, incense, fragrance to God; there was prayer, there was praise, and there was entire and absolute consecration to God, and God’s eyes and heart rest there continually. Oh! what a temple that was! Never were there such prayers poured into the ears of Jehovah, as the prayers that ascended from that temple; never were such praises sounded in the ears of the God of Sabaoth, as those which called forth the response, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Oh! what a splendid lamp was that which God kindled, when Christ took our nature upon Him. That was a splendid altar, when the Word was made flesh. Now I show you a mystery. Man, with whom God once dwelt in amity and friendship, preferred the devil’s lie, and he was ruined. The Lord had come down according to His purpose, to dwell with man; but before He can build Himself a house, He

must conquer not only man, but sin and death and hell ; and now the temple is seen in the person of Jesus Christ, God and man, in one Christ. Oh ! think of it, brought down to the very dust of death. That beautiful lamp that shone out in our world is extinguished, the incense is scattered, and the thunders of God fell upon that sacrifice, and He bowed His head and died ; the earthly veil was rent, showing that sin was put away ; but God's perfect, blessed temple—all light, and songs, and praises—is down in Joseph's rocky tomb ; not only was that a sacrifice for sin, but that we might be made the temple of the living God ; it was the seed of all the temples ; it was a seminal temple. The Lord seemed to think of this when He said, " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." On the third day that temple was raised ; then was fulfilled what was spoken by the Spirit, " Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation-stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation : he that believeth shall not make haste."

4. THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST.—God hath laid now in a risen Jesus the foundation-stone of the temple, in which He is about to dwell for ever and ever, and the Holy Ghost has come down to quarry the stones, to square them, to take them one by one,

and put them into the place where they shall glorify God most, and that is His process, going on now in our day. Every individual believer is a temple of the Holy Ghost. Ah! there is an altar in each heart, in which the Holy Ghost dwells, and from which incense goes up to God. There is a meeting-place in every heart for God, there is consecration to God in every individual believer, and though our path may be lonely, and we may know much of conflict, and of temptation, as true as God is true, "Mine eyes and My heart are there," and shall be there continually; and by and bye, when all the living stones are builded together on the foundation, when the last stone is brought in to the position intended for it in the plan of this great temple, all will be cemented into one splendid divine temple, and the fulness of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost shall be in it for ever.

In Revelation xxi., when John writes of the city which he saw, he says, "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Strange! he saw everything of glory, but no temple; it had become so identified with God, that nothing but God was seen. No stone as a stone, no pillar as a pillar, no altar, no temple, but the Lord God was everything.

Now what an idea of union this gives, all centred

in God Himself. There may be great varieties of character, of trial, of disposition, of conflict—it needs all that to bring out all the supplies that God intends to manifest. I must be weak, that God may manifest that He is strong. I must be empty, that God may manifest Himself that He is full. There are great varieties of weakness. I do not go through them all. There is one for one kind, another for another, and so on; but there is not a department of weakness, or of temptation, or of human trial, that will not have been represented here below; not merely to bring out our trials and difficulties, but also to show that there never was a case, never a temptation, never a phase of sin or suffering, for which there was not a supply in God, and will show all the fulness that was laid up in Him. I could not reflect all there is in God. Like the varieties of the stones in the breastplate of Aaron—one reflects His love, another His power, another His patience, and there are other and various kinds and ways and triumphs of grace and long-suffering to be displayed; and when the Lord inhabits His temple, we shall each have to tell of something He has done for us specifically and specially.

Now this is a practical subject; very much so, if this is our destiny and present position.

God does not inhabit dead stones; we ought to

be alive, acting, speaking, working for God, if we be the temples of the living God.

And remember, the temple is the place where He manifests Himself, where God will manifest Himself to you.

And temples are meeting-places, where you ought to meet with God, and God with you.

God wants consecrated temples; do not go half way with the world. Let no merchandise of earth desecrate the temple of God—no earthly object be in our hearts, in the temple which the Lord inhabits with His Spirit, and intends for His glory. Let praise and supplication go up to the High God from you, and when the world sees you, compel it to say that God is walking in you.

The Lord forgive the weakness with which I have tried to put these things before you, and grant that the truth I have spoken may be made a power by the Holy Ghost. God often takes our stammering and uses it for power. He wants our weakness, not our strength. If I have been able to give you anything of a sketch of God's temple, and any knowledge of the position you are to occupy, I pray that it may lead you to consecrate yourselves afresh to His service. God delights in our service, and God will be glorified, and we will be blessed.

# JESUS THE ONLY SOURCE OF JOY.

By WILLIAM REID.

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WE read this precious little narrative respecting Jesus at the feast of Tabernacles:—

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus 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.)”

Jesus is still presenting Himself, and saying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto *Me*, and drink.” The important word—the little word, “*Me*,” brings us right into the presence of the Lord Jesus Himself, the true Well-spring of all fulness of divine blessing; and if we look at the connexion in which these “gracious words” are spoken, we will get at the thought of the Spirit here concerning Jesus,—or, I should rather say, the thought in Jesus’ own mind

concerning Himself as the only fountain of spiritual life and perennial joy.

It was the feast of Tabernacles; and His brethren urged Him to go up to Jerusalem and take the opportunity of showing Himself to the world which that feast afforded; but He refused to go up because His time was not come. But after the feast had commenced He went up, but only as it were in secret; for He could not sanction what was done at it, for those who were celebrating it were no longer the people of God rejoicing in Him, but "the world," occupying itself with the celebration of hollow ceremonies, while God's Son was rejected and made to go into the outside place of a mere stranger. Though this feast had been originally appointed by God as one of the feasts of the *Lord*, it was now degraded into one of the feasts of the *Jews*. It was a feast that was to be kept with every demonstration of joy; but Jesus knew that it was now a hollow joy; and, therefore, we find Him outside of it, and coming up in secret to reveal Himself to "any man" there who was thirsting for the living water. "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not:" and being thus rejected by His own people, He takes His place as the Son of God outside of the nation and its ordinances, and presents Himself as the heavenly One, who was ready to fill *any man* who thirsted for

something more satisfying than religious ceremonies, with true, lasting spiritual joy. “*If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.*”

Jesus having been rejected by *His own*, places Himself before men, not only as outside of the nation of the Jews, and outside of that dispensation; but He takes His place in the spirit, in *resurrection*, and as One who, in the Spirit, was glorified in heaven; He calls to all needy ones to come to Him and drink, for it is “the last day of the feast,” the *eighth* day, that represented resurrection, and He is giving, as it were, a premonition of what was ere long to take place, that the Son of man was to go up to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things, and be rejected of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, raised again the third day, and ascend up to the right hand of God, to be the Head in glory of the heavenly body, the Church, that was predestinated to be formed in this divine parenthesis in which we now live.

The Lord Jesus Christ then took His place, in spirit, outside all that was merely external, hollow, and unsatisfying—outside of all that was of man and his world and worship, and presents Himself as the One that was not any longer “the Man of sorrows,” but as He would be in resurrection, “the Man of joys” for evermore. This is the form in which the Lord Jesus Christ presents Himself to

us ; for He who was once the rejected self-emptying "Man of sorrows," is exalted to the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour ; and (the nation of the Jews having refused Him as their Messiah) God is now gathering to this same Jesus a believing company of redeemed sinners, who are livingly united to Him in the Holy Ghost in the glory, and seated in Him in heavenly places, where they are blessed in Him with all spiritual blessings by the same God and Father who gave Him up to rejection, suffering, and death, and hath raised Him up and given Him glory, and He will yet display His glory ; but, meantime, He is waiting in heaven, and those that have died in the past ages are waiting with Him there ; and we too who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, and are still lingering as strangers and pilgrims upon this earth, are waiting for God's Son from heaven—waiting for Him to come in His glory, in order that His dead saints may be raised, and His living ones may be changed, and all His sanctified Church in one glorious blood-bought company ascend to Him, the blessed Bridegroom of their hearts, to be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy in the Father's house of many mansions, and there share *His joy* in all its divine fulness—the joy that was set before Him when He endured the cross, and

which He has now that His work is finished,—the joy He has in His Father's presence, and the joy He will have as THE CHRIST to all eternity.

That joy will be *ours* in all its richness and satisfyingness on that day; but it is that we may know the fellowship of it even now, that He calls us to come to Him and drink. The Lord very distinctly speaks of His joy as *My* ! as *your* ! He says, "That *My* joy might remain in you, and that *your* joy might be full." We sometimes sing—

"My joy still ebbs and flows,"

but we mean only our consciousness of it; for Jesus says, "*My* joy remaineth with you."

We think blessedly of Jesus, that He is of God made to us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," and that we have all in Him; but let us think of Jesus also as the great Head of His church, the great Redeemer, who has been down here as the "Man of sorrows," and the Surety of our souls, and who has gone through the work of glorifying His Father on the earth, and of redeeming a people to Himself, and who said when that work was over, "*It is finished*," and thus passed from being "the Man of sorrows," to be for ever "the Man of joys;" for I take that to be the note of joy, and triumphant joy too; for there is in that word the utterance of His deep joy that God was

glorified, that sin was atoned for, that the Church for whom He gave Himself was now redeemed :— Yea, He could look at Satan bound, his head bruised, and see him finally cast out of heaven down to the bottomless abyss ; and He could look forward in spirit to the time when the true feast of Tabernacles will take place, and when He and His Church will reign over all ; for He has said, if we overcome, He will set us down on His throne, even as He is set down on His Father's throne, when there will be "fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore !" And now, beloved friends, when Jesus speaks of "*My joy*," and we think of it as the joy set before Him, for which He endured the cross—*joy* that He now has, after the Father has been glorified by Him upon the earth, and we are all made sure of being with Him in the glory, and sharing His fellowship and reign—when we hear Him inviting us to come to Him and drink, that having the deep-flowing of the Holy Ghost within us witnessing of Him in His person, death, resurrection, exaltation, and coming glory, and HIS JOY REMAINS in us—what fulness of joy may be ours, even now, when we are only on our way across the desert to our glorious home !

Our *experience* of spiritual *joy* is very fluctuating. One day we have joy and happiness, and exuberance of spiritual feeling, and the next we are cold and

dull, and dark and dead, not feeling the joy of Christ in us, not rejoicing as we ought with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." But then our joy is the same all the time in so far as His joy remaining in us is concerned, because it is *Jesus'* joy. When the storm is on the ocean, it is only the surface of its waters that are affected by it; and if you go beneath the mighty tide of the ocean billows, you will find it perfectly calm. That is a representation of *my joy* beneath the surface. Christ's joy abiding in me is a permanent calm joy.

Jesus has died for us and redeemed us—He gave Himself for our sins—He died that we might live, and He presented Himself in resurrection as One who has accomplished all; and who, because God has been perfectly glorified in Him, has raised Him in newness of life, in which He is alive unto God, and *we* are united to Him as He is, quickened out of death in Him, and alive where He is in the place of life, acceptance, victory, and perfect love; so that in Him we have refreshing streams poured into our souls—the very joy of the living Jesus, who is beyond the cross, judgment, sin-bearing, the hiding of God's face—death and the grave. A *life-connexion* has been established by the Holy Ghost between us and Christ, after He could say, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

A great city has a connexion established between it and some mountain lake, the water of which is constantly supplied from inexhaustible fountains, and the "living water" flows from that great source of supply into all the houses, so that every house is in connexion with the lake, and the families have it in a small supply, or more abundantly, as they may require it. This is how I think of Jesus raised and glorified by the Father. When I look up to heaven, the happy thought of my heart is, "The fountain of life is with Thee." And Jesus, the great fountain of *everlasting life*, has been thus highly exalted, on purpose that the whole church of God may be in life-connexion with Him, and have the water of life flowing in its refreshing power into their souls, and out from them to the vivifying of dead souls, and the mutual joy and comfort of all the household of God.

Has not the living water been flowing amongst us here in the ministry of the Word? Have we not had living fellowship with a living Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost, and fellowship in life with one another? As wrote the beloved disciple: "Truly our fellowship"—our partnership—what we have in common—"is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your *joy may be full*." Our God is

called "the blessed God"—that is, the happy God, full of happiness like the great ocean ; yea, nothing can be compared with the happiness of God—the blessed God ! And we are in living connexion with "the *blessed* God," by the blessed Spirit through the blessed Son, raised from the dead, and now glorified. Having such communion, what joy should be ours ! The Holy Spirit has come down on purpose to form believers into one body in connexion with this glorified Jesus ; and (oh, wondrous mystery of love ! ) we who are now gathered around His blessed name are, in very deed, members of His body, and God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We are blessed in the greatest measure, for it is "*with all spiritual blessings ;*" in the highest sphere—" *in heavenly places ;*" in the noblest form—" *in Christ ;*" and in the freest grace, for it is "*according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world ;*" and He has put us in Christ, that He might have us before Him in a nature such as He could love : and He has predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, and graced us in the Son of His love, that He might let forth the full tide of His love upon us. He has redeemed us, that we might obtain the adoption of sons with the son's standing and son's nature and

life. I am one with Him in life, and you are one with Him. And realising this in the communion of the Holy Ghost, there is a mighty flow of *life* in the midst of us. It is life that never ends—everlasting life; for we are all born of God with the life of Jesus in us; and as He said, “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” And the inward well of life springs up, and out of the Spirit-filled ones flow rivers of living water for the blessing of others; and thereby the saints of God are mutually edified, refreshed, and filled with divine joy; and sinners are converted. This overflowing commenced at Pentecost, and the disciples were filled with gladness, and were praising God; and the conversion of three thousand souls from the world gave token of the healing power of the “river of God.” And, O beloved, is not the Holy Ghost now filling our souls with the living water, that from this happy scene of divine fellowship and unutterable joy, it may flow out in “rivers” in the several places where we live, that saints may be revived and sinners saved? May we not hope, that as the result of its copious outflow “three thousand” souls shall be “added to the Church” before we meet again? O beloved, if this “living water” in all its fulness were springing up in our souls, it would work mightily, so that there

would be a great overflowing ; and joy, communion, edification “life from the dead,” and abundant thanksgiving to God, would be the blessed effect.

Is there not a verse in Ephesians that says, “*Be filled with the Spirit?*” And what is the result of being *filled with the Spirit?* I find the result is, “speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord ; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” There will be a fulness of singing joy in the heart, which will be truly edifying, and the Lord will be the theme of our enraptured heart-melody. Our appreciation of Him will be such as would find appropriate expression in the burning words—

“*My heart doth sing for joy,  
And sing I must—a Christ I have ;  
Oh, what a Christ have I !*”

And again, I find that this is not an unintelligent joy, for in Colossians, where this same theme is touched on, the exhortation runs thus :—“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your*

hearts to the Lord." Here we have the Holy Spirit taking "THE WORD OF CHRIST," and putting it into a *state of spiritual solution* within us, so that it comes flowing freshly forth in varied and copious streams of praise to God and Jesus Christ—holy praise for all the spiritual blessings which His Word tells us have been bestowed upon us "in Him."

And then the day is coming when Jesus shall be *manifestly* glorified ; and we are to be with Him. God has now accepted us in the Beloved—accepted us in the ONE PERSON in the whole universe on whom He can lavish an infinite love, and we are loved with that infinite love ; for this love of God in all its fullness is ours in Him. We are in the Beloved, and being possessors of the new nature and the new life, and being indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and being put into the state of sonship, He now takes us into His confidence. Our gracious Father now deals with us as His dear children, who know and love Him ; and He commits to us His secret with regard to His purpose for the future, as He did to Abraham about the cities of the plain ; but it is not a secret with regard to destruction, but salvation—it is that He is forming a body for His Son, and that when the body is completed, and the last member that shall be included in the mystic Christ has been gathered in, then the glorified Head shall come forth, and all His

saints with Him, and the true feast, the blessed feast of Tabernacles, will then take place.

And it will be a feast for all creation—the time of festive joy for heaven above and the earth beneath. The joy of our present communion is only an earnest of that blessed feast, and the effect of it should be to make us long for that glorious day. The Lord will then be crowned in glory with His many crowns, and manifested in glory in connexion with us, His redeemed ones, who shall be shining in Him, as the very rays of His glory that shall usher in the day of His kingdom:—Jesus Himself will then come forth as Head over all, God's reigning Christ, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him, for the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth;—and *then* "the prayers of David the son of Jesse," as well as all our prayers, shall be "ended." For, if He appears in glory with His Church—if all Israel is saved—if "the kingdoms of this world are become Christ's"—if all nations be blessed in Him, and all nations call Him blessed, what more can He have? for what more could we pray? God will manifest His glory in that coming day in the Church, and the holy Jerusalem shall be the grand medium of blessing to the millennial earth. We shall in some way or other

be ministers of blessing and joy in that great day of the feast of Tabernacles, for there will be a river of *the water of life* proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb, with which God will then bless all the nations of the earth; the nations of them which are saved shall walk by the light of the holy city, and the leaves of the tree of life, of the fruit of which the redeemed in the golden city eat, “shall be for the healing of the nations.”

I would say one word in connexion with this city respecting what Christ has done. I have before my mind's eye the 13th of Matthew, where we have Christ speaking of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it; and surely that merchantman is the Lord Jesus, who, that He might have us, beloved, and all His blood-bought Church as “the pearl of great price,” has parted with all the goodly pearls He had; He has given up His Israel and His world-kingdom, or rather allowed to be in abeyance His right to the throne of His father David, and His reign in glory over the millennial earth. He parted with all, even life itself, that He might win our love, and have us with Him as His choicest pearl—His body—His bride—in the great coming day of His joy, and the gladness of His heart. He will get back all in resur-

rection, when He comes in His glory ; just as Abraham gave up Isaac to God at His bidding, that he might fulfil His will, and got him back from God in resurrection, and thereby saw Christ's day of glory, and was glad. Jesus will receive all from the Father's hands as the risen and exalted One.

And He will have, and will display His glory in the Church in the day when He is revealed ; for He is now the first-fruits, and there is a blessed harvest coming, after the ingathering of which the true feast of Tabernacles shall be celebrated, and there shall be "*fulness of joy*" such as never before obtained in the universe of God. When the blood-bought Church is completed and taken up to the Father's house ; when the Jews are no longer a scattered people, but blessed in their own land with the blessings of the new covenant ; and when all the spared nations of our world are blessed in Jesus under the Jews ; and when the streams of blessing shall be flowing down from the throne of God and of the Lamb ; as we listen to the angel's word, " Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride—the Lamb's wife," and we " see that great city, the holy Jerusalem, decending out of heaven from God," we are struck with the significant fact, that whichever side of this " four-square " city is looked at, the first object that meets the beholder's eye, as he approaches it with a view to

entering in, is a PEARL, for "the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each several gate ONE PEARL."

How deeply should it affect us, His redeemed ones, that we, the pearl of great price, which cost Him His all in the day of His humiliation, should be the first object presented by Him in the glory ! What a place we have in His heart, when nothing will satisfy His love in the day of His exaltation and glory, short of giving us the most prominent place in His kingdom, when His glory shall be revealed ! We are redeemed "according to the riches of His grace, that we should be to the praise of His glory ;" and is it not meet that we should now rejoice in such a Beloved with "*joy unspeakable and full of glory ?*" We, poor worthless ones, are the great object of His "love that passeth knowledge ;" His heart is set on us, and nothing will satisfy Him but that we should be "glorified together." And oh, how blessed to be able to say now, "He brought me into the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. His left hand is under my head, His right hand doth embrace me ;" and to know that this is only a little foretaste of everlasting communion, for we are to have Himself as the *One Great Object* on which our hearts will be centred for ever. And God our Saviour will be glorified in us ; for not merely is He to see His glory in the millennial age, but He is to have glory *in the*

*Church* through all ages, world without end. God has created us for this very purpose ; He has brought us unto Himself in connexion with His raised Son, "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus," and that He might show a higher wisdom in the Church than that which is displayed in *creation*, or that has been shown in any dispensation preceding ours. Even principalities and powers will not show forth the glory of our Lord as we poor sinners shall. And oh, what a joy will fill our souls when He is *glorified in His saints* ! The joy of these happy, holy, Spirit-filled meetings, compared with the joy of seeing Him in His glory, whom unseen we love, and having Him as our own beloved, to love and praise for evermore, though great, and almost enough for us in our present state and with our poor capacities, is but a mere drop to the ocean ! We are His joy, and shall be, world without end ; and we own it and bless Him for it, for He is ours, and there cannot be one drop of real spiritual joy apart from Him.

And as ours must ever be the place of subjection to our Lord, and our joy much dependent on our single-hearted obedience, we find the experience of Jesus' joy spoken of in connexion with the keeping of the Father's commandments. "If ye keep My

commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." Then He immediately adds, "*These things* have I spoken unto you, that *My joy* might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

This is a bracing word, and proves the sincerity of our love. Our Saviour's love to the Father was such, that it was His meat to do the will of His Father and finish His work. He said, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Jesus had joy in keeping the Father's commandments, in learning obedience, and glorifying the Father on the earth. And what a real joy to a loving heart is this! Is it not *our* joy to please our Father in heaven?—to keep our Saviour's words?—to keep His commandments? It is a perfect luxury to serve the One we love; and thus it is in serving Jesus. Oh that we were all filled with joy in connexion with pleasing Him! We are His witnesses in this the time of His rejection, and we are soon to be His associates in the eternal glory; and it is such "*a little while*" we have the opportunity of giving Him a proof of our love in the midst of His enemies, that we should seize every opportunity that presents itself to keep His commandments, and in so doing have fellowship with Him in *His joy*, and have *our joy full*. The coming day of glory, when He shall

present us to Himself before the presence of His glory *with exceeding joy*, will be all the more blessed, that we make every day of our wilderness pilgrimage a little foretaste of the great feast of Tabernacles that we shall keep in the heavenly land after He has come to receive us to Himself, and, with us, take His kingdom.

We know not how soon our Beloved may return to take us to "the marriage supper of the Lamb" in the Father's house, when the heavenly banquet-hall of love shall re-echo with the choral song of joyous praise. And seeing that we have only "a little while" to live for Him before the men of the world, let us rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name—"strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering *with joyfulness* : giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." "Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also *with exceeding joy*." We are expectants of a glorious day, and we may well "*rejoice* in hope of the glory of God." We look for the Lord Himself—not our individual departure by death, (though we would hail that as "*far better*" than being here, as it would take us to be "*with Christ*,") but for the coming of

Jesus, that we may all go together, along with all the resurrection saints, into our prepared home in our Father's house. Oh the unutterable joy of being in living connexion with Him, who is not only Head over all things, but "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father," and who will yet come and take us to that bosom ! It would seem a great thing were He to send Michael or Gabriel for us, arraying them for the occasion in all the splendour of celestial glories ; but—oh, joyous thought ! —He loves us so much, that He will not send an angel or an archangel for us, but He assures us that as He has gone to prepare a place for us, and He will come *Himself* to fetch us, that where He is there we may be also !

And when our Heavenly Bridegroom returns to receive His loving, longing Bride, and we see Him as He is, and are perfectly conformed to Him in spirit and soul and body, what will be the *joy* of being like Him, and with Him for ever !

" *Heir of glory,*  
*That shall be for thee and me !* "

# GOD'S NAME REVEALED IN CHRIST.

By H. W. SOLTAU.

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**T**HERE is one name of God, beloved friends, that we do not find in that most blessed and glorious list of names which was given to Moses on the Mount,—a name, an attribute of God, to reveal which no angelic, no Sinai vision, no hinder-part vision, no rock vision, could suffice,—a name which it was impossible to bring out in the Old Testament,—a name which none but He who is God's own Fellow could make manifest,—that name, nature, character of God, which you will find only in the New Testament—*God is love, God is LOVE.*

We have heard of God's grace, mercy, long-suffering, goodness, and forgiveness, but "*love*" is a vast ocean that swallows up all these others, and stretches out in boundless extent beyond them all. We do not find *that* upon Mount Sinai. We do not find *that* till One was revealed that could not only speak of it, and show it, but who Himself was it. The blessed Lord Jesus was sent and given by God to

make manifest His name, that it is "Love." God waited till the fulness of time came for the manifestation of Himself; for however vast His revelations were before, He was straitened till He sent His Son.

If we were to be launched at this moment into the circle of glory, and found ourselves translated into heaven in our bodies of glory at the sound of the Lord's voice, we should not have a more full revelation that *God is love* than we already have; for God has no means of teaching us, even up in heaven, that He is love, except the very means that He has adopted down here upon earth. We may, indeed, have learnt but little of this blessed truth; but yet He has given us in Jesus the full eternal revelation of it. He has revealed HIMSELF: "*God is love.*"

But though this is the most precious thing, it is truly the most difficult thing to believe, because of our own hard hearts. We can believe the love of everybody else; we can believe the love of a parent, of a wife, of a husband, of a child; but we cannot believe that *God is love*! It is a daily battle, a daily struggle with our souls to keep steadfast to this wondrous truth. Every doubt is so far a denial that God is love; every mistrust as to our circumstances, every question of heart as to the future, every shrinking from the service of God because of

a fancied incapacity, is practically a denial of the love of God. The fancied humility which makes us think we are of little value to God, is really a doubt of His love. We are in truth most costly, most precious to God, the costliest beings He can ever have, and of infinite value to Him, for He has loved us and purchased us to Himself by the blood of His Son.

If there be an unconverted person here, I would say to such an one, you are losing a joy, a happiness, a blessing, a delight that is inexpressible in not knowing God, for "*God is love.*" I can tell you that I have experienced such happiness here, that if anyone were to pour out and fill this room with gold from California, I would walk out and say, "Give me rather, if it were only a few of the feelings I had in that room when the Name of God filled it, instead of the gold."

But there is a dark, dismal, heavy weight on your soul, a secret, undefined terror, a consciousness that something is wrong, a dread about the future, an uneasiness and restlessness about your heart. You set your affections upon some object, you pursue it with eagerness, and when you obtain it, you find it full of disappointment; you start in another race, and pursue another shadow, and it eludes you, or again cheats your expectations. You

are living for some hope which you cannot define ; you desire improvement in your soul, or in your circumstances, and yet you know not how to reach it. But this is not all : you are losing hours and days of enjoyment, of rest, of happiness, because you will not believe that "*God is love.*"

We who know that "*God is love*" have perfect rest in our souls ; we fear not the past, the present, nor the future ; we have all "things present and things to come : " but you have nothing ; all is doubt, uncertainty, dreary, and undefined with you, and you have no object of eternal love, for you know not that "GOD IS LOVE."

Oh ! believe that truth as it has been illustrated in the gift and cross of Jesus, and you will even now enjoy peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

" Content' with beholding His face,  
My all to His pleasure resigned ;  
No changes of season or place,  
Would make any change in my mind :  
While bless'd with a sense of His love,  
A palace a toy would appear ;  
And prisons would palaces prove,  
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

# COMMUNION WITH JESUS.

By HOWARD JOHNSTON.

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JESUS, standing in the midst of much form, even "in the last day, that great day of the feast," "cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." Oh, beloved, are we thirsting for blessing and power, dissatisfied with the form and word around? Do we know what it is to come again and again to our blessed Lord, and drink out of His fulness? yea, to drink deeply and freely from His heart of love? Alas, how satisfied we are with sips, when we are welcome to draughts. "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)."

Now there are two conditions to our having, and being the means of distributing, this living power. First: that we come to Jesus and drink. Second: that we believe on Him. There is a coming to and believing on Jesus for *salvation*; there is another coming to and believing on Him for *power*. Let us boldly and unhesitatingly trust Him for the latter

as well as the former. To do this we must be in communion with Him. Companionship with Jesus gives power for service, and this will lead us to bear faithful witness to others of Him. (John xv. 27).

Then there is another verse to which I call your attention (John xiv. 12): "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father." Here again are two conditions to our having power—*great power*—such as is in our living Head. First: that *He should go to the Father*; this is fulfilled. Second: that we should *believe on Him*; nothing between our believing on Him in close communion and having power. Surely, then, the secret of our weakness and impotence, is that we know so little, as individual believers, of fellowship with Jesus. Oh! then, let us diligently seek to be brought into communion of the closest kind with Him; and the result must be more power among the saints of God, and more power with the preaching of the gospel. Remember, beloved friends, this is God's will concerning us. He says, "Be *filled with the Spirit!*" (Eph. v. 18). He would not have us lean. By our thus being filled with power, He is glorified; our Lord Jesus is honored; fellow believers are profited, and sinners con-

verted. We may be conscious of present weakness and lost power, as was Samson in the prison-house of the Philistines ; but let us by faith rise from our low estate, place our hand on our Living Head, in whom is "all power," (Matt. xxviii. 18, ) drink deeply from His fulness, and then out of our "belly shall flow rivers of living water."

In the first Epistle of John and the first verse, we find four grades of communion with Jesus. John says, "*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard with our ears.*" And we now sing :—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Come unto Me and rest ;  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon My breast."

I was once groping in the dark ; I had heard a voice, but did not understand it. I was like Lazarus, brought up out of my grave, but bound with grave clothes ; the napkin was about my head, and my feet and hands were bound : I stood like a mummy. So I believe are many dear children of God. The apostle adds, "*Which we have seen with our eyes.*" The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, says, "We see Jesus." Oh, dear people, do you so realize the presence of the Lord Jesus by faith, that you can say, "We see Jesus ?" I believe many are

saved, who don't know they are made *one with the living Christ*; and that they are "*members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.*" They need to see Jesus; not merely to hear about Him on the cross; but to see Him by faith at the right hand of the Majesty on high. They must realise the words of the hymn:—

"So nigh, so very nigh to God,

I cannot nearer be,

For in the person of His Son,

I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,

More dear I cannot be,

The love wherewith He loves His Son,

Such is His love to me."

Beloved, we need to see Jesus as our Representative in heaven, as well as know Him as our Substitute on the cross. On the cross *He bore our sins*; in heaven He presents *Himself for us*. God punished Him for our sins; now He blesses us for His sake.

Then, says the apostle John, "*Which we have looked upon.*" There are many satisfied with just a glimpse of Jesus. I want to gaze on Him. I want to be weaned from every thing but Jesus. I want His glory, His brightness, His fulness, His effulgence, I want Him to eclipse everything else. What

makes the world a wilderness ? What makes this a dark scene ? Because it is a place of trial ? No !

“ ’Tis the treasure I’ve found in His love,  
That has made me a pilgrim below.”

I cannot rest here, because Jesus is not here. I cannot sit down in ease in the place where Jesus was a stranger ; He sits only at the right hand of the Majesty on high. I seek, and wish for, the place where He has laid down, and there I alone can rest. Again, the apostle John says, “ *Which we have handled.*” Dear believers, do you know much about this close communion with the Lord Jesus ? Oh ! how near the relationship for one to handle Jesus. I know I am treading on holy ground. Oh ! beloved, we must take off, as it were, our shoes now ; for I say the believer in Jesus is warranted in singing, on the one hand :—

“ Both *Thine* arms are clasped around me,  
And my head is on Thy breast ; ”

and on the other :—

“ Both *mine* arms are clasped around Thee,  
And my head is on Thy breast ; ”

Dear friends, keep Jesus before you—the Person of Jesus, the glory of Jesus, the love of Jesus, the power of Jesus, the affection of Jesus, and you will find He will be to you a precious ground of perfect

peace. You will find you have the portion that the priest of old had in type. His was the wave-breast and the heave-shoulder.

In communion with God we have peace. Whatever a believer may be called to endure, while gazing on Jesus, he can sing :—

*“Peace, peace, be still.”*

The darkest night becomes the brightest day. I find there is no dark cloud without a silver lining. Oh, beloved friends, do see to it that Jesus is your study; Jesus HIMSELF your hope; Jesus, the blessed Jesus, your all in all. You remember how carefully the Lord Jesus worded those precious sentences in the fourteenth of John :—“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Notice the little pronoun “I,” over and over again. “*If I go, I will come again.*” Not, ‘I will send some one’—‘I will send some angel to waft your redeemed souls and bodies to Myself.’ No! it is, “I will come again,” And to receive you where? To the many mansions? No! Where? To the place

He has gone to prepare? He does not say so. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto MYSELF." That is what makes the coming of Jesus so precious to me. I am going to be received by Himself; and as Paul has it in the Thessalonians—"We shall meet THE LORD in the air." We shall be gathered unto *Him*. Well may we sing:—

"I will not gaze on glory,  
But on the King of grace;  
Not on the crown He giveth,  
But on His pierced hand.  
The LAMB is all the glory  
Of Immanuel's land."

The mind may be filled with different doctrines, and the soul remain stultified; but if the heart is set on Christ,

"All, all is well."

What does Jesus say? "He that believeth on Me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Why have we so little power? Why are we not "full of the Holy Ghost?" "In HIM dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "The Spirit" is not given "by measure unto Him." Ah! if we want to prove a blessing to others, we must be living in communion with HIM. Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye shall also bear witness, because ye have been WITH ME from the

beginning." Dear believer, mark these two little words, "With Me." Are you saying, "I have so little power in speaking in my own house, to my own family, about Jesus!" What is the secret of it? You know too little of being WITH JESUS. That is it.

Dear backslider, have you found any like Jesus? You are like the dove out of the ark: you find no rest, though you seek it. Come back to Jesus, bringing with you WORDS (not works)—the confession of your failure (Hosea xiv. 2). Jesus is standing at the door, is knocking, if you will only hear His voice, and let Him in. Give Jesus not A PLACE in your heart, but your WHOLE HEART, and you shall be full of joy.

Dear anxious soul, you must particularly consider Jesus. He is changeless in character, and faithful in all His assurances of welcome to such as seek Him. His work is completed. He hath atoned for sin, and is now at the right hand of God—the Surety for every believing soul. Look to Him, gaze on Him, believe what He says—His Word is unalterable—"He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life," (John vi. 47).

"There is life in a look at the Crucified One ;

There is life at this moment for thee ;

Then look, sinner—look unto Him and be saved—

Unto Him who was nailed to the tree."

Dear sinner, unsaved, unanxious sinner, (should such be present,) *you must have to do with the person of Jesus.* God has said it. God has sworn by Himself, that to Him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. It is written: "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him," (which you are doing spiritually by rejecting Him) "and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him."

Dear sinner, once more, it may be the last time, I tell you, *you must have to do with Jesus* in one of two ways, either as the Lord THE SAVIOUR, or as the Lord THE JUDGE. Jesus Christ as Saviour or Judge—I speak it advisedly—will either save or damn every one of you. He will either receive you as His people into heaven, or He will send you damned into hell. He is God's servant to bless, or God's servant to curse. He is here, but not to curse. Oh, hear His words: "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" "*Come unto Me.*" I like those words. It is not, "Go to the minister;" "Go to the priest." It is "*Come unto Me.*" And you have not far to go; you have not far to come. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Dear sinner, you need not move an inch. Jesus' arm is round you; His blood-stained hands are about you. Fall into His bosom. Rest in the wounded side of Jesus, and you will find peace and joy in believing. May God by His blessed Spirit endear the Person of Jesus to every one of you.

"I would commune with Thee, my God,  
E'en to Thy seat I come;  
I leave my joys, I leave my sins,  
And seek in Thee my home.

I stand upon the mount of God,  
With sunlight in my soul;  
I hear the storms in vales beneath;  
I hear the thunders roll.

But I am calm with Thee, my God,  
Beneath these glorious skies;  
And to the height on which I stand  
Nor storms nor clouds can rise.

O this is life! O this is joy!  
My God, to find Thee so;  
Thy face to see, Thy voice to hear,  
And all Thy love to know."

# THE SUFFICIENCY OF GRACE.

By MARCUS RAINSFORD.

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“God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”—2 Cor. ix. 8.

**I**F I want power, I am told here where to get it, and my security is cast upon the ability of God. The poor leper put an “if” upon the willingness of God; but he put no “if” upon the power. It is not a physical ability that is spoken of here; it is not the power of His omnipotence; it is His moral ability. The grace of God has put forth His power, to remove all the obstacles to the outpouring of His love and grace to me. He sent His Son, who has removed all the barriers that death presented, away, and He abolished death, and He sent His Spirit to deal with the enmity that is here, that nothing in God on the one hand, and nothing in the sinner on the other hand, might hinder the outpouring of “all grace.” And I never saw the force of this text more strikingly, than when our brother was speaking on that passage in the 21st of Numbers. There we have Israel entangled with the mixed multitude;

there was one thing they had not forgotten, because they had not learned it, and that was the cross. They had forgotten the hand that led them out of Egypt, and brought them through the Red Sea ; they had forgotten more ; but oh how God brings them back to the remembrance of what they had forgotten ; they had forgotten the mercy which had supplied them, and they lied with the hellish lie, that there was no bread and no water, and having looked for something beyond the manna, they loathed it. And now watch the outpouring of mercy ; first the Lord sends serpents among them, and then the grand picture, selected by the Lord Jesus afterwards : “ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.” And it was a new view of the love of God in Christ, the grace sent to Israel, to restore them from their forgetfulness ; it was a new view of the types and shadows. A crucified Saviour for a dying people. The command went forth, that whosoever being bitten should look upon the brazen serpent, that moment should be restored ; and whatever you may have lost, however your poor heart may have gone out after the garlic and the leeks, and forgotten the manna, oh may God enable us to take a fresh look at the Saviour lifted up for healing. He will draw you, and you will start by the power of the Spirit with new life. Oh what a clear-

ing of ourselves, oh what zeal, oh what forgetting of ourselves, what ceasing to lean upon ourselves. "My God is the strength of my heart."

"God is able"—when you have got farthest from Him. Your emptiness has not exhausted His grace. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Oh what a glorious sound! Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ. "Grace reigns." Let us then "come boldly to the throne of grace." All the fulness of God is condensed in one word, and given to us in Christ Jesus, and that is grace; and all the fulness of God is condensed in one power, and flows down to us from Christ, and that is the Holy Ghost. Christ is the fountain, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of God; so that there is nothing in Jesus for the sinner but grace. Poor torn one, wandering in the wilderness, all grace for you in Jesus. He is the fountain, He must overflow into poor empty vessels; and therefore He makes us empty, that we may take in. And God not only gives us a stream; but He gives us a river flowing out from the throne, to get into us, and to bear us up, up, up to that fountain on the throne from whence He descends; and to crown us with the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you join me in this prayer, that the Lord would crown Jesus

in all our hearts, that we may see nothing, love nothing, and desire to love nothing, but Jesus? And when we forget our manna, oh may the Holy Spirit, who loves to take of the things of Jesus, then shew us an exalted Saviour on the cross, and then shew us an exalted Saviour in resurrection, and then an exalted Saviour on the throne, and then feed us with the manna, and then will we understand the meaning of that one word—grace.

“God is able.” Now it is very gracious of our God to rest our security on His ability. Does any one doubt that God is able? He that was able to find a reason in Himself (and He never goes outside of Himself for a reason) to give Himself when we were enemies, is surely able to save us by His life. “God is able.” And not only in this passage alone is this stated. See Heb. vii. 25: “Able to save to the uttermost.” Oh what grace. “He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him.” A man whose very heart is *steeped* in hell, He is *able* to save that man without abating His justice one jot. The grace of God has brought it to pass, that the throne of *justice* is to me the throne of grace, and the throne of *grace* is to me the throne of justice.

Another passage, (Eph. iii. 19): “Filled with all the fulness of God.” Nothing less. Now mark what he adds: “Now unto *Him that is able to do exceed-*

ing abundantly above all that we ask or think." Now do we believe that? Oh, I believe it; but I want to *realize* it. All I want is, that I may know Christ, and have the power to enjoy Him. God cannot do more than that for me, nor can He give me more than that. Oh, we will want an *eternity* to enjoy it. God has given to us all things, and done for us all things, and what we want is to be able to enjoy it. God is "able to do *exceeding* abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Well, there is another view of the ability of our glorious One. (Jude ver. 24.) He is able to keep you from falling, and it takes His ability to do it. Nothing puts God to His test (if I may so speak) like keeping us from falling. True, we war "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," powers of death and hell; but He is able to bring us off more than conquerors. Notwithstanding what I am, all that my sin deserves, and notwithstanding what all that know me well can deplore, He is able, by virtue of the blood of Christ, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost, to take me, *me*, *ME*, and present *me* faultless before the presence of His glory. There is the ability of grace. "Hast thou delivered my soul from death? Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling."

But another passage. (2 Tim. i. 12.) The race is now nearly run ; he has proved the Lord Jesus Christ in many an hour of weakness ; but, says Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is *able to keep* that which I have committed unto Him against that day." That was no knowledge learned in a day or two. It is not, "I know *what* I have believed." To know how to pray, or to praise, will not do ; only one thing will do—to *know Him*, and our faith will be according to our knowledge. It is the knowledge of Jesus sets us to work for Him—"I know whom I have believed." Two or three things Paul was persuaded of, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That was a grand thing. And here we have another (2 Tim. i. 12): "That He is *able*." Oh, the willingness is taken for granted ; but to do what ? to keep my *deposit*, that is the original. He has deposited his hopes, his spirit, with Him for life, or for death, for time, or for eternity. Learn to know Him, and you cannot help it. If you know Jesus, you cannot help depositing—know that He can do for you, that your name is *on His* heart, and His name will soon be *in your* heart. This is the

way God wins man, by just making Himself known—oh, then he loves.

And here you have another passage, (2 Cor. ix. 8) : “God is able to make all grace abound toward you.” You have in this verse the extent, the measure, the subject, the object, and the result of grace. May grace, the grace of our God, be our theme. What can we have but through this grace? “My grace is sufficient for you.” “God is able.” There is the foundation, the ability of Jehovah. There you have “all grace :” that is the extent. There is not a grace in God that is not “all grace.” Only God knows what are all kinds of grace, and all degrees of grace. If any sinner in this place had but the faith to put God upon His Word, and claim the grace that is in Him ; if it required all the grace in God to meet your need, you would get it ; for God is able to make *all grace* abound toward you. You remember that beautiful passage in 1 Peter v. 10 : “The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory.” “Us.” Who is that ? the lowest of all creatures. And if there had been anything lower, God would have taken that up to display the majesty of His grace. “The God of all grace,” &c. We did not call Him, but He called us. No devil ever sinned as the sinner sinned against grace. The “God of all grace” called us. Who can tell the

distance to which the sinner wandered ? the dangers in which he stood ? but God called ; and called us where ? I would not dare say it, but that it is *here* — “unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus.” He has called us to glory ; but there may be many degrees of glory to “*His* glory.” But it may be only for a time ; but “to His *eternal* glory.” All grace — here you have it, electing grace, converting grace, pardoning grace, again and again, quickening grace again and again, sanctifying grace, renewing grace, enabling grace, comforting grace, protecting grace, restraining grace, seasonable grace, saving grace. “He is able to make *all* grace to abound toward you.” Now is this glorious, or is it not ? Our Father has laid out all His fulness in grace. Our position is grace, our streams are grace, the foundation and the top of the building all grace, until you have a measure abounding towards you, that is more than is enough ; there is more rain in the heavens than is wanted, and water in the ocean than is needed, more love in God than is wanted for ten thousand worlds. God cannot contain all His grace, and He comes down to poor needy ones, and pours it all out upon them. Grace reigns through righteousness all the way to eternal life through Jesus Christ.

And now the subject — “toward *you*.” You may have come here ; perhaps no one but God knows

you ; He is looking at you ; He is able to make *all grace abound toward you*. Here is God's provision for the sinner's need, grace, all grace ; so do not be afraid.

“That ye always,” *i.e.*, at all times, “having all sufficiency in all,” *things* is not in the original—all your cares, all your circumstances, all your trials and difficulties, all your griefs and sorrows. If He called you to win a world, He would give you grace for it. Only go on His grace, believing all sufficiency is all grace.

And now the last thing—the *result*. “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” What are good works ? The overflow of grace in us. And what is grace ? The overflow of love in God. God overflows in love, in power, in blessing, in life, *into* the empty vessel, and the empty vessel cannot contain it ; it overflows in the wilderness, comforting all around. Here is grace ; ah, perhaps some one may say, “Oh that I had some of this grace.” Beloved friends, when grace begins it never stops ; when God begins, He will shew you what He is able to do. The Spirit of God showers down that grace upon our souls. May we in the light of that grace live *on* Jesus, and live *for* Jesus, and may our walk on earth be a walk in

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Beautiful it is in the last verse of the Revelation : " Even so, come," with Thy many crowns. " Even so, come " in Thy triumph, thou glorious Captain of Salvation. " Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But in the meantime, whether the delay be long, or whether it be short, " the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

" Sovereign grace, o'er sin abounding !  
Ransom'd souls the tidings swell,  
'Tis a depth that knows no sounding ;  
Who its breadth or length can tell ?  
Saved by Christ, we're free for ever,  
This the Spirit's voice declares !  
Death, nor hell, nor sin shall sever  
Jesus from the chosen heirs."

# NO DAMAGE TO THE KING.

(Daniel vi. 1—10.)

By T. SHULDHAM HENRY.

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**D**ANIEL had been brought captive by king Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, and we shall see how he behaved himself in this strange land.

In the first place, he at once assumed the *Nazarite* character, and refused to defile himself with the king's food or drink. As the servant of God, he took his stand in the midst of his enemies, and he made his power felt all through that mighty empire. He was placed by king Darius in a position, second only to himself, of power and authority. He was placed over all the presidents and princes, who had to reckon with him about the expenditure and revenue of their respective provinces. The great, the one object of his life, was that the king, his master, should not be wronged, should have no damage—so careful was he of his master's interests, so jealous was he of his master's honour. What an example we have here, beloved, in this faithful servant of God! Are we like him? Are we so

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careful of our Lord and Master's interests, that He receives no damage at our hand? Would God it were so! Alas! alas! what dishonour, what reproach, what damage do we bring to His blessed name, by our worldliness and inconsistencies. It is not our name nor our cause that suffers, but His. How often is it cast in our teeth, that many who profess the name of Christ are very careless in their business transactions, very unpunctual in their engagements, very greedy and grasping after money, very slovenly in their homes and persons, and very light and flippant in their manners and speech? With some truth, it has been said, that Christians often make unkind, exacting masters and mistresses; unfaithful and disobedient servants; careless tradesmen, making promises they don't fulfil; men of business, whose transactions are not altogether honest and above-board. Herein the Master suffers great damage. I ask you, beloved children of God, is this true of any of you? The King gets great damage through the worldliness of His people. It is the crying sin of the church. It is the cause of more infidelity in our land, than almost anything else. How sad to see the saints of God conformed to this world, in its principles, maxims, habits and dress. Yes, dress, beloved. How little difference between the world and some of you in this? Great

damage to the King ! Separation from the world and to God, is the true position of His child in this world that murdered our Lord. God's standard is a high one, and very different from the worldly Christian's. The latter says, "I don't see any harm in doing this or that, or in going here or there." God says, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Then the King will have no damage. If any of you, beloved friends, think there is no harm, as you call it, in this or that, I tell you honestly, before God, your heart is not right with Him. God's standard is Paul's—"For me to live is Christ." By this he measured everything in heaven and earth. Daniel was faithful to his God, and therefore faithful to his earthly master. The chief object of our lives, beloved friends, ought to be faithfulness to our Master in all things, that He may have no damage ; but rather that, as His letters of commendation—His epistles—we may be known and read of all men. The testimony that Daniel's bitter enemies were compelled to give of him, you will find in verse 4: "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom ; but they could find none occasion, nor fault, forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." Glorious testimony,

wrung from a watchful, hating world. Oh ! beloved, should it not be so now with us ? What hinders ? The world is keeping our hearts ; therefore worldliness flows from them, and displays itself on our persons, in our speech, manners, and ways. Will you read *Philippians ii. 15*, and there see how we should live in the midst of this strange land, surrounded by the King's enemies. "That ye may be blameless and sincere (margin), the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom shine ye (margin) as lights in the world." This, beloved, is our rule of conduct, and nothing short of it ; else the King will suffer damage. Be not conformed to this world. Be punctual in your engagements. Be blameless in your transactions. Be honest in your dealings. Be not greedy of gain. Be kind as masters. Be faithful and obedient as servants. Be whole-hearted for Christ. Be real. Then the King will not suffer damage.

There is just one thing more I would like you to observe about Daniel—namely, his unswerving faithfulness to his God. By his faithfulness to his king and master he made many enemies, who were determined to get rid of him. They could find no flaw in his blameless character, nothing on which they could found a charge for impeachment ; there-

fore they turned to his character as a servant of God, and determined to test "concerning the law of his God." They knew he was in the habit of praying three times a day, with his face towards Jerusalem, and they resolved to have a decree passed, which would either compel him to give up testifying to the world around him of his trust and confidence in his God, or else, if he persisted in his faithfulness to God, that he would be cast into the den of lions. They passed a decree with this object, and got the king in ignorance to be a party to their devilish plot. The signature was attached, the death-warrant was signed, and now the enemies triumph. Unfaithfulness or death? How did Daniel act in this trying hour? He well knew the snare that was laid for him. He well knew that his enemies had succeeded in their scheme. He well knew that the decree was passed and could not be altered. He well knew, that if he broke the law he must bear the consequence. Death was staring him in the face, and either he must pray in the secret of his closet, or else die. How did he act? Did he pull down his blinds? Did he give up praying to his God? Not a bit of it. He looked not at nor cared for consequences. Obedience was his duty, and at all costs he must be faithful. Many might think that, under the circumstances, he would be quite justified

in giving up praying for thirty days ; or at all events, if he did, in shutting himself up, or doing it when nobody was watching—that he ought to compromise, and not contend for a thing that was not essential to salvation. Oh ! beloved, in these days of world-bordering liberality and compromising, how many there are who argue thus ! Everything is essential that has reference to the salvation of the soul and their own interests. But when it comes to a question of principle, or truth, or the Lord's honour, it is non-essential. To maintain a principle, to contend for the truth, or to be jealous for the honour of our Jesus, entails the world's hatred, the sneer of the companion, and even the disapproval of Christians, that few are bold enough to take their stand in this world alone with God. Daniel, bold as a lion, and undaunted by the fear of death, scorned to give in, but walked bravely on in the path of obedience, leaving consequences to God. And what have we, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, to do with consequences ? “Obedience is better than sacrifice.” To be true and faithful to Christ, in the midst of His enemies, is to walk in fellowship with a rejected Lord. This is the path of obedience, the path of blessing. As one has said, “I would rather be a marble statue in the pathway of obedience, than accomplish the mightiest exploit at the

expense of God's truth." Noble, faithful Daniel contended not for a non-essential. He contended for a great principle—he rested on a blessed promise, he swerved not, compromised not, yielded not, though the consequence was death. Turn with me to 2 Chron. vi. 36—38, and vii. 16. You will see what God says about Jerusalem—that His eyes and His heart shall be there continually, and that, if His people are in captivity, in a strange land, and repent and pray towards Jerusalem, God's metropolis—where God's temple was, that He would hear and answer their cry. Was this a non-essential to Daniel? Certainly not. Oh! beloved, may we be more like him, walking boldly in the narrow path of obedience, thinking everything essential that touches our blessed Master's honour and glory, and non-essential that touches our ease, comfort and enjoyment. May we ever be able to say with truth

“Still on Thy holy Word

We'll live, and feed, and grow—

Go on to know the Lord,

And practice what we know.”

THE WALK OF THE BELIEVER,  
AND  
THE SERVICE OF THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

John xiii.—xvi.

By HOWARD JOHNSTON.

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**I** WOULD say a few words to those of you, beloved friends, who know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, concerning the walk of the believer, and the present service of our Great High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, in the heavens, in connection with it.

In a comparatively short time the propitiation for sin was effected. Was it not during the three hours of suffering on the cross that Christ “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself;” “who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,” having “once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God?”

In order that we might live and walk so as to glorify God, our Lord Jesus spent thirty-three years on this earth; and for more than eighteen hundred years has patiently waited and served on the Throne of God. I would not say this was the only end of His walk on earth and His life in the heavens; but

certainly it is written, "He that saith he 'abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, *even as He walked.*" And "Christ also suffered for us, *leaving us an example*, that we should follow His steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." And as our Advocate and Great High Priest in the presence of God, He is still our Saviour—our daily Saviour, delivering from sin in all its power and uncleanness.

In the gospel written by the apostle John, which is supposed to be the last written book of the holy Scriptures—even later than the Revelation, you will find, I think, the person and work of our Lord Jesus as the Son of God and great High Priest, prospectively shadowed forth and spoken of in the works, and the words of our Lord Himself. This may be specially traced in chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16.

In chapter 13, the Lord Jesus takes a preparatory step towards our living in communion down here. And how this chapter opens: "Jesus having loved his own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Surely He loves us now; He in heaven, His people, His saints, His members, down here on earth. "Jesus having loved His own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end;" and "knowing that He was come from God, and went to God," "took a towel, and girded Himself, and washed the

disciples' feet, preparing them for communion down here. And you remember he said to Peter these words (verse 8): "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." What did it mean? That Peter should not have a place in heaven if Jesus did not wash his feet? No; but that if Jesus washed not Peter's feet, he would not have fellowship with Him, in practical discipleship down here. Now then, if Jesus does not wash your feet, you may have *union*, but not *abiding communion* with Him. Our standing is perfect; but, alas, our communion, how soon broken! But what is the remedy? It is this—*Jesus washing our feet*. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Dear believers, let me entreat you to seek with all your soul, to have abiding communion with Jesus at all cost, whatever you may have to bear or suffer. Is Jesus so before you, that you are ready to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach?" Surely that is a *heavenly place*, to be found with Jesus. This 13th chapter of John is taken up with the disciples' feet being washed; and, dear friends, He waits on you now, to wash *your feet* and fit you to enjoy Himself.

In the 14th chapter He speaks to the *heart*, and comforts the *heart*. I may not know any guilty stain left on my conscience; yet the joy of the Lord is our strength. How important for the believer to be

happy in the Lord. And therefore, in the 14th chapter we find Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in ME." Do you want to glorify God? Believe in Jesus. "But we are believers," some one may say. You may be believers as to *life*; but are you believers as to *power*. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God" (1 John v. 13). I call upon you believers to *know* that you have in Him eternal life; and to so trust on Him, as to continually lean on the arms of the Beloved. Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." How sweet are these pronouns! "If I wash thee not;" "Believe also on Me." Ah! beloved friends, if you want to gain the victory, it must be by believing in Jesus; you must be drawn and attracted into closer communion with Himself. This 14th chapter is the chapter of *abiding*—the Son revealing Himself to the believer; and the Father and the Son taking up their abode with the believer; and lower down, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you." This speaks of fellowship with the Father.

The 13th and 14th chapters give us, as it were, the life and fellowship of believers with Christ. And

now, in the 15th chapter, they come out to manifest the result of that fellowship to God. It is bearing fruit to God that glorifies Him ; not so much testifying to the world, as fruit-bearing to God. In that chapter there are three expressions—"fruit," "more fruit," and "much fruit." In the second verse, "Every branch in me that beareth not *fruit* he taketh away ; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth *more fruit*." And in the 8th verse, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear *much fruit*." You see what God wants. The longing of God's heart now in heaven is, that you should bring forth "*much fruit*." Oh see this word "fruit" in the second verse ; and then "more fruit." And if you really want to glorify God—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear *much fruit*." Do not stop short of that bringing forth "*much fruit*," and thereby glorifying God. God looks for it. How is it to be accomplished ? We have the answer in these three little words, "Abide in Me"—"believe in Me." That is the secret of bringing forth much fruit ; *abiding in Jesus, and He in the believer*. Not in doctrine, but in power. Know more of Jesus. He is the One in whom the Father is glorified.

But what is the next chapter ? In the 16th chapter it is this life in and for Christ before the

world, which involves being cast out of the synagogue. Men rise up to thwart a little band of believers, and to stop their testimony. In the 15th chapter it is *fruit bearing*, and in the 16th *testimony for Jesus*. And what is the power for this? You will find it in the last verse of the 15th chapter, "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." Oh, if there were on our part the "*believing in Me*" of the 14th chapter, the "*abiding in Me*" of the 15th chapter, and the "*being with Me*" of the 16th chapter, (or rather the last verse of the 15th,) we should bear much more fruit to God, and be able to do mightier things for Christ; for fellowship with Jesus is power for life and strength for testimony. Beloved friends, do you know what it is to be often alone with Jesus? This is what Mary did; she chose the better part, which no one was to take from her. It could not be taken from her, it was indeed the *better part*—fellowship with Jesus, sitting at the feet of Jesus.

Well now, are you satisfied to live and walk as you have done? Since the Holy Ghost is in every member of the body of Christ, their bodies should be *filled* with the Holy Ghost. We should bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. And as we show forth the praise of Jesus, so God is glorified. May it be so for His Name's sake.

# THE STORY OF ASA.

2 Chron. xiv. xv. xvi.

BY F. C. BLAND,

OF DERRYQUIN.

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THE history of the world has ever been the same ; one man sleeps with his fathers and another reigns in his stead. The son of a king succeeds to his kingdom. The son of a rich man to his riches. The son of a poor man to his poverty. The sphere in which each moves may differ from the other as much as it is possible for things to differ in this world ; but each man has his world around him, and the interests of the subject are not one whit less important to himself than those which surround royalty are to the king. The circumstances in which the lot of each is cast may differ ; but human nature is the same, whether it be clothed in purple or in rags ; whether struggling for existence in a hovel or seated upon a throne ; and the history of a king may furnish a warning or an example for a beggar. In the history before us there is much to instruct us ; and the word to the Galatians, “ Ye did run well, who did hinder you ? ” finds a striking exemplification in the story of Asa.

“ Abijah slept with his fathers, and Asa, his son,

reigned in his stead. In his days the land had rest ten years, and Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God, for he took away the altars of the strange gods," &c., &c. Such was his beginning; he made straight paths for his feet, and put out of his way, and out of his kingdom, everything which might cause him to offend. The next thing he did was to command Judah to seek the Lord. He not only seeks God himself, but he remembers that God may be honoured by others also, and he begins his life by using his influence for the glory of God.

Now this is the order in which each of us must walk: first, to put away the strange gods—anything which would command the worship of our hearts—before we can influence others for God's service and glory. We are all ready enough to command Judah to serve the Lord, while the altars of the strange gods are not put away; and when the high places of our hearts are not yet thrown down, everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God must be cast out, before the kingdom can be quiet before Him; and we too, if we would have the God of peace with us, must have our hearts filled with the things that are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

“The dearest idol I have known,  
Whate'er that idol be;  
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,  
And worship only Thee.”

I fear that the next act of Asa's life does not always find its counterpart in us. He took advantage of the time of peace to prepare himself for war: he surrounded himself with strength, "he built fenced cities, for the land had rest." It is an ever recurring thought to me, that we are not taking advantage of the times in which we live, times in which the amount and character of the truth that is taught exceeds anything of which we have a record. It is a day in which, without let or hindrance, we may serve the Lord, no man making us afraid; and yet a sneer turns us aside from His service. The slothful see lions in the way continually, and we are wearied in running with the footmen. If this be so, "how should we contend with horses," and if "in the land of peace in which we trust we have been wearied, how shall we do in the swellings of Jordan?" Asa not only fortifies himself in time of peace with fenced cities, but he surrounds himself with warriors, also "an army that bare targets and spears, and that bare shields and drew bows:" and it was well he did so, for no sooner is he ready, than Zera the Ethiopian came against him with an army of a thousand thousand. Asa went out against him in battle, prepared indeed as he should be, but trusting not in his preparations, but in his God. With all that he has around him, he acknowledges no help but God, and places no limit to His power to save by many as by

few. "Help us, O Lord, for we rest in Thee," is his language. He will go against this host in none other name but God's; the trial, therefore, of his faith is precious, and redounds to praise, and honour, and glory. He not only is a victor through God, who gives the victory, but he takes much spoil, and thus becomes more than conqueror; but God knows that our day of victory is often our day of weakness and danger. The warrior's harness is put off, and he forgets that the foe, though beaten, is not destroyed; but God knows our frame, and remembers that we are but dust, and he sends a warning voice in the day of victory. "The spirit came upon Azariah, the son of Obed, and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin, the Lord is with you while ye be with Him, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you;" and is not the word the same to us? "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done. If any man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered."

Again he hears and obeys the word of the Lord, and his hands being clean, "he waxes stronger and stronger." He puts away the abominable idols that had crept into Judah and Benjamin, and not only does this in the cities which he originally possessed,

but all that he acquires he devotes to God. God has given him everything, and he acknowledges that all that he has, or ever may have, is the Lord's. The idols are put away, and the altar of the Lord is restored—a word pregnant with meaning, telling us that when the idols are cast out, the place should be filled by the altar of the Lord God. God can be worshipped in spirit and in truth, only when the idols of our hearts are put away: and how striking is the result; many (and even strangers) who had never sought the Lord before, came to Him when they saw that the Lord was with him; many a one halting between two opinions; many a stranger to the truth, would join themselves to us, if they saw that the Lord was with us; but how *can* the Lord be with us if His altar is not there? and how can His altar be set up while anything takes His place in our hearts?

We read that they entered into a covenant to serve the Lord, and took the Lord's side against everything that was against Him. "They swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and trumpets, and cornets;" but when they swore unto Him they did it with "*all their hearts*," and "*sought Him with their whole desire*." How easy is it to swear to Him with a loud voice, to sing hymns to His praise with energy and shouting, without the true heart, and whole desire. When God is sought with all the heart,

and with the whole desire, He gives His people victory and He gives them rest; but His people must give no rest to anything that exalts itself against God. The king's mother herself is removed, and her idol stamped upon and burned! Then Asa further honours God's house with vessels of silver and gold, and "there was peace until the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa."

What a time to have enjoyed peace! Surely the man who has known God, and served Him for five and thirty years, and who has enjoyed rest from God because he has served Him, will go down to his grave in peace! Are not five and thirty years' experience of God sufficient to secure him against failure? or must we read, that in the six and thirtieth year of his reign, his life of failure is to begin? Alas, it is so; and so it will be with every one, the moment he ceases to depend on God, and seeks for help outside Him. In the six and thirtieth year of Asa, Baasha came against him; and we find that the very treasures of silver and gold, which he had once dedicated to God, are brought out of God's house, and given to make peace with his enemy; and does it not often happen, that gifts and powers once devoted to God, in the energy of faith, are used to make peace with the world? and the natural result is, that an alliance with the world prevents our overcoming it. He makes peace with his enemy, instead of letting God destroy him before

him ; but if Asa is unfaithful and denies God, God is faithful and cannot deny Himself ; and so he sends Hanani, the Seer, to Asa—and God is faithful still. If He sends Azariah to Asa in the day of victory, and Hanani to him in time of failure, He has not left us without warnings that we should know both how to be abased and how to abound. We have the “faithful witness” to “counsel, to rebuke, or to chasten ;” and the eyes that then ran to and fro through the earth are still as a flame of fire searching the heart. God’s controversy with Asa was, “because thou hast not relied on the Lord.” His judgment on him was, “from henceforth thou shalt have wars.” Five and thirty years of rest, and then wars ; wars in the decline of his life ; wars when he was least able to wage them. “He had sown to his flesh, and he must reap corruption.” But more solemn still is what we next read : he could not endure the testimony of the Lord to him ; he puts His messenger out of ear-shot from him, and he oppresses His people. What a warning to us—five and thirty years of acquaintance with God is no safe-guard for the six and thirtieth year, if we step out of the place of dependence on Him. God speaks to His people in many ways. Let us take heed that we do not get impatient under His rebuke, and seek, when His word reaches our conscience, to put it from us. When Asa departed from God, the people suffered. When a man is out of

communion, his own peace is gone, and every one around him suffers. *Everything* goes wrong when a saint refuses to hear the voice of God. "Behold the acts of Asa *first* and *last* are written." Yes, *first* and *last*, his failure as well as his victories; and they are written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the world are come; and every one of *us* must give account of himself to God, "that he may receive the things he hath done by his body, whether they be good or bad." In his thirty and ninth year he was diseased in his feet. What an ending to a life of victory and five and thirty years of rest: and worst of all, he had forgotten where to look for help, and he "sought not unto the Lord, but to the physicians." They buried him with spices, and divers kind of odours, and made a great burning for him. It is the way the world always seeks to hide a life of failure; but all his acts, *first* and *last*, were *written*, and spices and odours after his death did not make up for wars and disease in his old age. He might have been a victor to the end, if he had added to his faith virtue. Could ye not watch with me one little hour—

One little hour, and then the glorious crowning,  
The golden harp-strings and the victor's palm,  
One little hour, and then the Halellujah,  
Eternity's long deep thanksgiving psalm.

# THE HOLY WAR.

Read Ephesians vi.

BY ARTHUR AUGUSTUS REES,

OF SUNDERLAND.

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**B**LESSED be God, we are elevated to a great height in Christ, "raised up to sit with Him in heavenly places," and from that height we may see the enemy with whom we have to contend. Now, there are two wars which we must all wage ere we reach heaven—the war of Egypt and the war of the wilderness. The one is short, the other is long. The war against the world and Satan, the prince and god of the world, at the outset; and after that the war against the same world, the same devil under another aspect, and with the flesh. In the first war God is for us, and we may say He does all for us. We don't even draw a sword. With His mighty arm and stretched-out hand He leads us out of Egypt. We don't wield a single weapon. We are brought down to the Red Sea, and the waters are dried up for us, and we go over dry shod; and we look back and see all our enemies dead on the shore,

and we sing the song of Moses. In other words, without our co-operation, blessed be God, we are quickened together with Christ. When the dead are raised they don't co-operate with Him who raised them. God calls the dead, and they *must* hear. "Lazarus, come forth!" How strange to call a corpse by his name! yet that corpse hears, and it is equally wonderful to call a dead soul, as if that could hear, yet it does hear. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead *shall* hear." It is not left to their choice whether they will or not. "They *shall* hear, and they that hear shall live." By the mighty power and energy of God we are rescued from the world and from the yoke of Satan, or, to use Paul's language in Colossians, "We are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son." I repeat it: God does all for us in this. But now comes the tug of war! One short war brings us out of Egypt, our enemies rush after us into the Red Sea and are swallowed up; but the war of the wilderness is a life-long series of battles. We have to fight, and fight, and fight to the very end of our course; and in this battle it is no question of the power of Satan. We *have* been delivered from his power. It is a question of his "wiles"—no longer a question of the guilt of sin. Our sins have been washed away in the Red Sea. It is no longer a question of the tyranny of the world, but of its seduc-

tions. Satan comes as a wily serpent, trying to deceive and mislead us by telling us lies in the name of God; and his chief agent is the flesh, which is a fish ever prepared to nibble at the hook of the devil. Now, I say, the tug of war comes! You will have to know what the flesh is. We don't know what it is when we are converted. We know what it is by the in-dwelling of the Holy Ghost.

Here is a river running on with great force, but very smoothly; you can scarcely see the flow of the water; but now build a breakwater across, and you will see the force of the river; and as soon as the Holy Ghost comes in and makes you His temple, you will know what the flesh is. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Resist the flesh and it will cling to you to the end of your days, and the more you resist it the closer it will cling to you. You are to draw the sword and throw the scabbard away. It is a life-long battle until our last breath. You lately sang the 'song of Moses, and how sweet it was—"Jehovah hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." But now you come, like the Israelites, to bitter waters. Where is your song? It is murmurings—it is the flesh. In the presence of the Holy Ghost you realize that there is within you a thing which murmurs and complains against God,

though you have just been singing His praise. You come to "light manna"—you quarrel with the food. It is the flesh quarrelling with the provision of God. Now look out for Amalek, that dreadful enemy against whom the Lord proclaims eternal war. There is no peace with this enemy. No Amalekite could enter into the congregation of the Lord, neither can the flesh. It is a thing given over to destruction,—a doomed thing. And let me pause for a moment. What are we doing? We make a league with this cursed thing. I was going to say we embrace it. We enter into a covenant with it and nourish it—that hateful thing which God declares is His greatest enemy and ours.

But higher, dear friends, look higher. Here is an enemy behind the curtain, that pulls the strings, that we cannot easily see. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood that we can see, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," or as it is in the Greek, "the world-rulers in the dark." I will tell you who rules the world,—not its kings and queens, but the devil and his angels—they are the real wearers of its crowns—they are the real wielders of its sceptres. We have been delivered from the *power* of darkness, not from its wiles. Let us look at them. And in the first place, I would notice, that in the Bible the discovery of

God and the discovery of the devil keep pace together. In the Old Testament where God dwells in darkness, where though a Saviour, "He hides Himself," He is divided from His worshippers by vail after vail. In keeping with this, the devil is hid from us, we don't find that he comes out from behind the scenes. In Genesis, there he is, but not expressly as Satan; and in the five books of Moses we don't find Satan brought out or the word "Satan" once used. It is in Job mentioned for the first time. We find it also in the Psalms and Zechariah; and you never find a single demoniac in the Old Testament, whereas they swarm in the New. There are false prophets, but they are not properly-possessed persons. The demoniacs are confined to the New Testament. When God was manifest in the flesh, the devil was manifest in the flesh. The discovery of Satan keeps pace with the discovery of God. The Lord Jesus comes to us, not as an angel, but as God-man; and Satan confronts Him as a man. He meets Him at every turn in the person of demoniacs. He even takes hold of Peter, to whom the Lord said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Of course he was in Judas, the devil sitting down eating and drinking with the Lord Jesus Christ; but it is not until you get the Holy Ghost, not until the Spirit of God has come down from heaven, you get a full discovery of Satan, and now you have him, the leader of armies,

the leader of hosts of wicked spirits; the prince of the power of the air, dwelling everywhere where the air dwells; and where does not the air dwell?—He is everywhere; we breathe devils as it were; where is there not a devil? and where are there not thousands of devils? Satan had two thousand to spare for one man. When the Lord Jesus cast them out they went into a herd of two thousand swine. Now these foes wield against us—not swords, but darts, fire-tipped darts, hurled at us—shot down on the camp of Israel with a view to setting it all on fire. In other words, we don't engage against a foe we can see, but against a host of invisible enemies who are darting their weapons against us, playing them off against our flesh, which is to the devil's temptations exactly what tinder is to sparks. But, blessed be God, that is not all; if we have got this war to wage, the Lord has given us armour to put on, and He has given us strength to use it.

Now notice this, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." That is the exhortation for the wilderness. In Egypt the Lord is strong *for* us, but here He is strong *in* us, and we in Him. We are His children, and because God's Spirit is in us, we are exhorted to "be strong." That implies that we are to put forth our own energy to lay hold of the energy of God. "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure;" but

still *we* will and do, and in keeping with this, we are told to put the armour on. God does not force it on any one. "*Take unto you the whole armour of God.*" It is provided, but it is for us to use and assume; and very remarkably, we have the word "stand" mentioned three times. When you have got this armour, "stand," "stand," "stand"—not now "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord;" that is, when you are on the other side of the Red Sea, but, stand and fight, stand and fight, stand and fight for yourselves in God's strength, and with God's armour, which is a very different matter. This word "stand," I have not the least doubt, thus repeated, implies that we are not assailants in the war, but defendants. The Lord Jesus never attacked the devil; He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness *to be tempted* by the devil, and when the tempter came to Him (He did not come to the devil), then He stood His ground. He defended Himself with the weapons which God had provided, and exactly in unison with this, is what we read in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Christian "stands;" He does not attack, but resists the devil. At the battle of Waterloo, showers of bullets came down upon our soldiers; and they stood fast, bearing the incessant attacks of cavalry and infantry in obedience to command, till the foe spent his force and retired. And so with the devil, "resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Now I don't know a passage in Scripture in reference to the devil more comforting than that. He hates resistance; there is nothing so displeasing to him, so thoroughly disgusting to the devil as to be resisted; he is not accustomed to it; he is accustomed to be obeyed, and when he meets a Christian who will not obey him, he leaves him and goes to those who will. He does not like a man strong in the Lord. Look at Christ; He resisted him and the devil went. He tried Him three times, and then Satan left Him, and angels came and ministered unto Him; and if we resist the devil we too shall get angels ministering unto us. We are not to compare ourselves with Christ altogether; but there are some Christians better able to resist the devil than others.

But I cannot stop without noticing some of the weapons these enemies of ours use. I have said they are "wiles." The devil can hardly be said to use wiles with the world. He is the god of the world and prince of the world; he is the tempter of the Christian; but as the prince of the world he says to one, "Go, and he goes; unto another, Come, and he comes." Just look at any number of people you meet, and you will see they are quietly serving the devil and doing his commands. They "go," they "come," they "do." He does not say that to us, but he comes to us, and he hints, and suggests, and questions. "Yea! hath God said?" "Is it not a

little one?" "If thou be the Son of God?" Fiery darts, playing upon the flesh, which is ever ready to receive his suggestions; inflammatory darts,—questions of Christ's goodness, wisdom, love, questions of the evil of small sins. A little sin!—what harm in that? You will see by-and-bye, when you do a greater. A small thief gets in at the window to let a bigger one in at the door.

It is like going down a slope. You take one step and then another, and at last you cannot go back. Questions of indulgence, questions as to whether there is any harm in this or that, indulging in dress, in temper, the indulging of the tongue,—fiery darts cast upon our souls; but he knows well our Divine nature is not combustible, it is like Christ's. So he casts his darts against the flesh, which is a rotten combustible tree, and therefore we have the need to be constantly on our guard, lest, through the flesh, Satan should get an advantage over us.

Now, lastly—In the endeavour to expound these few words, notice the armour that God has provided for us to put on—"the whole armour of God." Beloved fellow-Christians, can you all say you have got this armour on? I appeal to your consciences, can you all say you have obeyed this precept? It is addressed to you and to me, as much as any other precept in the Bible. "Put on the whole armour of God." Why, surely if you have it on, you must

know it? Here is the first, "Let your loins be girt about with truth." What is that? I don't believe it is doctrinal truth, though I am quite sure it is necessary to be sound in doctrine so as to be able to contend against the devil; but I think here we are to understand sincerity of purpose and uprightness of heart. If a man has not that, he is not a strong man. Then there is the breastplate of righteousness covering the vital part. I don't think that is the righteousness of Christ. A breastplate covers only the breast, but the righteousness of Christ covers us from top to toe. I believe this is personal rectitude of life and conversation which protects us against the attacks of the enemy. Then we have the feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and what peace? Peace of conscience. The Gospel brings peace to our consciences, and we cannot walk with God comfortably, and endure all the toils, and troubles, and thorns of the wilderness, if we have any guilt on our conscience; and nothing can give us peace but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Why do so many walk unsteadily? It is because they have not their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Then we have the helmet of salvation. We rejoice in hope—it does not mean an uncertain hope, but we rejoice in the certainty of eternal life. God's hope is without uncertainty, and we rejoice in the full assurance of final victory. That is a helmet upon

our head, giving us security against the assaults of the devil; when we know that in a little time "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry," and we shall be perfect in body and soul, and free from every pain for ever. Next: the shield of faith—not a buckler, that you can carry on your elbow, but, as the original signifies, a door-like shield, hiding you from head to foot; faith in God, in His goodness, wisdom, power, truth, and love, in spite of all contradictory providences, which Satan will interpret against God; but faith quenches these darts, and says, "Though He slay me, I will trust in Him." Then, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." "It is written," "it is written," "it is written." Christ used that sword,—you know with what effect, and we can never contend with Satan unless we are full of the Word of God, and know from whence to choose appropriate texts—"The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Not only are we to overcome Satan in ourselves, but in our fellow-Christians. Very often they come and do the devil's work, leading us to do things which we know and our conscience tells us we ought not to do. We are to overcome them also. And in conclusion: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Some kinds of prayer? No, but all kinds of prayer—praying

always, watching always, using dart against dart, the ejaculation of our prayer against the devil's darts, meeting him particularly at those times when we are conscious of weakness. We need not kneel down; let us shoot up a dart to the skies—one true prayer. "Lord, help me" is a most effectual weapon in the time of sore temptation.

Now, beloved friends, think of the flesh, think of the flesh! I suspect you have more need to dread the flesh than you have need to dread the devil, for the devil could do nothing without the flesh, and God proclaims eternal war against the flesh. O think of the flesh, think of the devil's wiles, think of God's weapons—His Word, and think of God's strength! Strong in Him, fight and you shall be made "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Jesus is the name that charms us,  
He for conflict fits and arms us;  
Nothing moves and nothing harms us  
When we trust in Him.

Trust in Him, ye saints, for ever,  
He is faithful, changing never;  
Neither force nor guile can sever  
Those He loves from Him.

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# CHRISTIANS THE SALT AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Read Matthew v. 11-14, and 2 Peter ii. 1-9.

BY HENRY VARLEY,

OF LONDON.

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I HAVE read those precious words in order to show you the relations we sustain to the world: The *first* is this, “Ye are the salt of the earth;” the second, “Ye are the light of the world.” And then we are exhorted to “show forth His praises who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

What is suggested to us by that word, “Ye are the salt of the earth”? I think it distinctly suggests the great character of our discipleship. There is nothing more distinct in its character than salt. If you destroy its primitive, its normal power, you make it worse than useless. It is just perfectly true what Christ says about it. Thus, distinctiveness of character is brought out here; and I do hope that we are endeavouring everywhere to maintain this character, and that there is Christ’s savour coming from us; because if you and I are Christians we are not simply

reformed men and women. Paul does not say, "If any man be in Christ he is a better man than he was." No. "If any man be in Christ he is a *new* creature: old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new." There is nothing you and I more rejoice to see than this, that God has judicially dealt with sin at the cross of Christ; that when sin is finished He comes forth to show "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, which He wrought in Christ," when He raised Him from the dead. Now this is our life—the reception in our heart, through the Spirit, of the Christ life. There is nothing so necessary and unassuming as salt. It is to be found on every table, and is used at every meal through the day. It is this common all-day grace we want, affecting our speech, spirit, and whole life.

But pass on very briefly to notice another relation we sustain, "Ye are the light of the world." We have been brought out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of light and love. But let us be careful it is God's light we are setting up. Let our eye be single in this respect, and the Lord will bless us.

There should be great distinctness in our shining. In the word we preach, no one should be able to question the doctrine; the great truths, for example, of justification by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, of

redemption by His blood, of the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, the supreme authority of God's Word. May we then show forth the truth of the word, "Ye are the light of the world," by clinging to the Lord in this evil day, and by diligently serving Him.

The little night-light teaches us a lesson; we are often so identified with results of *great* meetings; but oh! for grace to be like the little night-light, to be little and foolish. Oh! it is hard to be that. I know how hard it is to turn away from a great congregation. I remember once at a service, I said in my prayer, "Lord, if there should be only a little boy here, the only one that Thy Spirit should quicken, oh! give me grace to lead him." A little fellow stood at the foot of the stairs, his eyes filled with tears. I felt it was an answer to my prayer. Oh! see Jesus there, and that poor blind beggar; he cries out, "Have mercy upon me." And Jesus stands still, arrested by the cry of that poor blind beggar. May God give us that spirit.

One word more ere I close. We are called to show forth His praises who hath "called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." How can you show forth His praises, one might suggest? by a cheerful demeanour, by happy holy converse. Let Christ shine out of your eyes, why should He not? We should be joyous happy Christians, rejoicing in the Lord always.

Further, our hearts should burn, dear friends, with the thought of Christ's second coming. I was very much struck by a German brother in London the other day saying to me, "Oh! I do find it such a joy to think about the Lord's coming." I asked myself again and again through the day how should I like Jesus to find me doing this or that, or find me here or there. May we ever live in the glad anticipation of His coming.

Again, dear friends, we show forth the high praises of the Lord by loving one another. Oh! how much need we have of gentleness towards fellow-Christians. You cannot go with this or that brother. Can't you? Then love him and pass on. Don't stay to launch out hard words against him. He does not work just as you work? "There is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me." Oh! that God may help us to cast away all envy, and to love to hear of the progress of the work of God, wheresoever His Spirit should carry it on. And shall we not, dear friends, unitedly pray to the Lord to help us to go forth from this meeting, to do nothing through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves; that the greatest gifted may think less of himself, for he has received more than others?

The grace of Christ be among you.

# TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS.

BY JOHN G. M'VICKER,

OF BALLYMENA.

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**I**N the 51st Psalm, 6th verse, we read these words, "Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts." And in the Epistle to the Ephesians, 4th chapter, 25th verse, "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour."

God desires truth in the inward parts, and He commands us Christians to put away lying, and speak every man truth with his neighbour.

I believe, beloved, we are not conscious of the extent of lying that is in our hearts. We profess to believe a great many things that in our very heart and soul we don't believe; and it is because we are not willing to confess this, that we often get no deliverance and blessing. If we just quietly look over the things that we profess to believe from the Word of God, and stand naked and honest before Him, and say, Now, do I really, in the very bottom of my heart, believe that? I know we would be again and again convicted of lying before God if we said we did.

Look, for example, at our desire for the salvation of souls. We profess to believe that precious souls are perishing around us, and that we desire their salvation; and yet cannot some of us go on for days and for weeks, and make no honest effort to have souls brought to Christ? and yet we don't know—we won't let our hearts believe—that souls are not precious to us; we don't admit before God that we have no right value for the souls of men.

We say we believe our Lord Jesus Christ “bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” That includes our bad tempers, our hasty words, our wrong actions. It means that we shall not have to suffer the consequences of them, but that our Lord Jesus did. Now, tell me why we give way to these sins? Do we know they were a part of the bitterness of Jesus on Calvary? If we believed this in our hearts, would we give way to them, and make Christ suffer? Ah, brethren, we don't believe what we say.

We often read the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans through, and we say we believe we died with Christ, and were buried with him in baptism, and have been raised together with him; and yet we groan over our flesh, and we talk about our wickedness and badness as if we did not really believe that we were crucified and buried with Christ.

We say we have a life up there in Christ, and that

He is our real life; but do we believe it? Do we honestly believe that Christ put away our sins, and that we have got a new life, and are complete in Him? Beloved, this is why we fail. We don't believe in our hearts; we don't quietly, in the depths of our hearts, believe what God Almighty has said in His word, as we believe that such-a-one is our wife or child; and if we would only stop and say this before God, "I don't believe that I was buried with Christ; I don't believe that Christ is my life above"—immediately we would get help; but as long as we go on lying, and saying we believe what we really don't believe, God cannot help us. I know I am condemning myself; but is it not better to be honest before God? is it not better we should acknowledge it before our dear heavenly Father?

We often say, that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Master. Now consider, dear friends, there is not a man that takes service with a master that does not know it. Why a dog, if he had no owner before, and got one, would know the difference. Do we know it? We say that we have a Master in heaven. Do we believe it? Do we ask our Master's leave for everything we do? If I am my own master, I do what I please; but if I have a master, I go to him and I ask him where shall I go to-day, and what work shall I do to-day. Do we look to our Master in heaven? Do we ask Him in the morning where

we are to go? Do we ask Him what we are to put on? Do we ask Him what we are to do with our time, in what company we are to join, and from what to abstain? Is our profession of being Christ's servants honest and true, or do we do what pleases ourselves, or the saints, or the world? Oh, if we don't in our hearts own Christ as our Master, let us say it. Let us go and tell our God, and ask Him for help, and He will make us His true servants, whose Mastership is the tenderest and the most blessed in the universe.

Again, we often say we believe what is written in the 3rd chapter of Corinthians, that we are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the spirit of God dwells in us. But do we? Let us try. If you and I were honest men and women, would we undertake a work we were not able to perform? No. Do we then count on the Holy Ghost, who has come here to do a certain work, doing it? He has come to sanctify us to God (it is not by our striving). Do we count on the Holy Ghost, who is dwelling in us, sanctifying us in every corner of our hearts? I put it to your consciences, do we count on the Holy Ghost, who dwells in us, using His strength to sanctify us in every corner of our hearts to God? Do we reckon on it? Perhaps we feel very dry and withered some day. Do we say, "Now, I must sin to-day?" Or do we reckon on the Holy Ghost keep-

ing us and sanctifying us, from morning till night, to the service of the living God ?

And there is another and last thing I would say. We often pray, "Lord Jesus Christ, come back, quickly, oh, Lord, come!" and we profess to be expecting Him, our Master, our Lord from heaven. Are we honest when we say it? There is not one of you in this hall who, if you had a rich brother over in Australia, and he was coming back to make you rich for life, would not know right well whether you expect him or not. The heart is full of expectation. You are longing for him to come; you know he is to come. Honestly, are we from day to day thus expecting our Master from heaven—our Lord—to come back again? It is not to make us rich for *life*, but to make us happy *for ever*. Are we ready for His coming? Are we counting on it? And can we come honestly, and sit down face to face with God, and shut the world out, and say, "Oh, my God, to whom my breast is as glass, thou knowest I am looking for my Lord and my Master to come back again, and I long for Him to come back this very day?"

The Lord help us to be true, beloved.

# GODLINESS.

Read 1 Tim. iii. 14 to end ; iv. 1 to 8.

BY JOHN M. CODE,

OF BATH.

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THE concluding verse of the third chapter comes in after the Apostle had been giving certain instructions to Timothy, as to “how he was to behave himself in the house of God—the church of the living God.” He had been warning him (chap. i.) against those that were introducing law instead of the pure free grace that had saved Saul, the persecutor, thus giving his own case as an instance of that grace, and as “a pattern of them who should afterwards believe unto life everlasting.” “The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” Then, in chapter ii., he gives exhortations consistently with the grace of which he was such a remarkable example. It was not law but grace that was being dispensed by God. “I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made

for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty ; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be *saved* (not condemned as they should be if under law), and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Consistently with this grace, then, he exhorts concerning men and concerning women in the Church of God. First: That the men pray *everywhere* "lifting up holy hands without wrath and reasonings." Men are naturally disposed to reason, men are disposed to be captious and sceptically to quarrel with revealed truth ; under grace, they are to lift up holy hands *in prayer* without wrath and reasonings. It is a wonderful thing when a man, who boasts of his intellectual powers, is humbled to take the place of a little child, and sit at the feet of Jesus Christ, looking up to Him for instruction. We fancy our intellectual conclusions are very sound, but they give no rest to the heart. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, saith God." It is hard to be subject to one that is bad. It is good to be subject to One who rules only to bless. Yet most persons are willingly subject to the devil ; but few are willingly subject to Christ. "Come unto me," He says, "learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart" (because He was always doing the thing that pleased another, even His Father). "Learn (be instructed) of Me, and ye shall *find* rest to your souls."

Secondly : He gives directions about women, as to their habiliments and ornaments, because the natural tendency with them is fondness for outward adornment and glory of the person, even as the natural tendency with men is to glory in their wisdom and strength. They were to be habited in a manner worthy of those "professing godliness." You will remark the important place which the word "godliness" has in this second chapter, and also that it is carried on into the third and fourth chapters.

Here is the first occurrence of the word. We have it again in "the mystery of godliness," and again, in the next chapter, "godliness is profitable for all things." Thus, you see how these different natural dispositions of men and women professing godliness are forbidden by the Apostle, on the ground of our standing in grace. We are saved by *grace*. We are debtors to grace, there is no good thing in us by nature, soul or body. Ye men, give up your reasonings and your wrath, ye are by nature lost sinners, and as debtors to grace blessedly responsible to confess that debtorship in all things.

The glory of the outward appearance is inconsistent with grace. Ye women, professing godliness, cease from your vanity, and glory only in Christ. You are saved through the "*crucifixion* of the flesh with the affections and lusts" in the person of your Substitute, Christ. These are the potent reasons which

the Spirit of God uses to bring down all high things, and every thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Then He goes on to the portion we have read. With fear and trembling I attempt to expound it in reference to the word "godliness." He says: "These things I write unto thee hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God," &c. The house of God is the pillar and *stay* of the truth, as you may see in the margin. The Church is not the foundation of the truth, it is that instrument which God uses to hold up or display the truth. And this Church is called the house of the living God. You see these words "living God," again in the fourth chapter and tenth verse, "For, therefore, we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust," or hope in the "Living God"—hope refuses the present through expectation of the future. "We suffer and labour and endure reproach, because we hope in the *living* God. Now, the Church is the house of the living God. Why say—the Living God? It is because it is the witness for the true God in contrast with idols who are dead. The Holy Ghost says in 1 Thes. i.: "Ye turned from idols to God, to serve the living and the true God." Beloved brethren, have we not seen such ways in the worship of professing Christians, as if God was an idol that had eyes and

could not see, and ears and could not hear? God is the living God, and, as the living God, inhabits His house; and anything that is not inhabited by the living God has no right to the name of Church. May we not here say to those who call anything "the Church" which is not dwelt in by God—"it is *your* Church"—just as Christ, when rejected by Jerusalem, said: "Behold, *your* house is *left* unto you desolate," for it had been deserted by God long ago, and now it had refused to receive Him in the person of Christ, who left it as He found it. Observe that this house of God is a thing on *earth*. It is not looked at as in heaven, as in Eph. ii. 6. Paul did not instruct Timothy how to behave himself in *heaven*, but in the Church of the living God on *earth*.

I will not stop to say anything about its divisions and its visible ruin, but I will only affirm the importance of this truth, that whether we meet as two or three, or as two or three thousand, in the name of Jesus the Lord, we ought to know how to behave ourselves, because it is by virtue of that name an assembly of God, and not ours. The moment it becomes *our* Church we lose the essential power for our behaviour—that is to say, for "godliness."

Then, after describing what the house of God is—"the pillar and stay of the truth," not the pillar and stay of mere orthodoxy, but the pillar and stay of *the* truth; and who is the great exemplification of the

truth but Christ? Who or what is the truth but Christ? "The truth is in Jesus, no where else. Some people seem to think the truth may be somewhere else, when they say, "the truth as it is in Jesus." Whereas, it is properly, "as the truth is in Jesus." Then the Apostle says, "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." Here again we have to correct a very usual mistake in the interpretation of this passage. It is quoted merely as a proof of the absolute Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Doubtless this truth is in those remarkable words, but I question very decidedly whether that was the intention of the Spirit of God who inspired them.

We cannot possibly overrate the importance of the fundamental truth of the Incarnation, for it is the source, spirit, and life of godliness. Neither can we overrate it as an essential of His atoning death. If He were not both God and man comprehended in one Christ, there had been no atonement in His death. But I do not judge that the Apostle is speaking here of atonement, but of godliness. He speaks of the "manifestation of God in flesh" and "godliness," in one breath. It is not said—great is the mystery of the incarnation, but, "Great is the mystery of godliness," not great is the mystery of God, or divinity, but great is the mystery of godliness; and mark, *that* godliness expressed in a man, even Christ Jesus, who is God and man in one Person. "*God* was manifest in

flesh, justified in spirit, seen of angels." Wonderful thought, God was seen by angels in a man. It seems as if God had never been seen by angels, till Christ manifested Him in flesh—in human flesh. I do not dogmatize, but the great point here appears evident, that God was seen of angels when Christ the Son became man. "No *one* hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father hath declared Him." Blessed truth! The only full and perfect revelation of God was reserved for, as it could alone be made by Him who was in the affections of His bosom as the Son of His love. His obedient manifestation of God in human (sinless) flesh, this was godliness and the rule of godliness in the house of God! To know Him, to delight in Him, to have communion with and to obey Him is the very essence of godliness.

Next will you please to remark that the first word in chapter iv. 1, is, "Now," "Now the Spirit, &c," It ought to be "But." It alters the meaning completely. As we have it translated, it appears as if the Apostle was entering upon another subject, having concluded that of chapter iii., whereas, he is continuing it.

Having laid the great foundation of what godliness is, which ornaments and characterizes the house of God, he proceeds prophetically to show what a state of things should corruptly come in in contrast to this

divine rule. "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith." He does not here speak of the total apostacy which is yet to come, but of the corruption of the faith, so that the faith would not be there at all, while the profession should remain. He does not say all, but *some* should depart from the faith, while retaining the name of Christians. We are not going to glance at any particular form of this corruption, except to show wherein that foretold and accomplished departure from the faith should consist in order that we may profit by the moral and its instructive application to ourselves. "Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, of them which believe and know the truth." Here is the human prohibition of things which God has declared to be "good" and "honourable in all," the disuse of which is pronounced by usurping and corrupting men to be holy, and pious, and profitable. God says, that "every creature of God good for food, is to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." God says also, that "marriage is honourable in all." These corruptors assert that abstinence from what God has commanded to be used is godliness in contrast with,

and to the refusal of that godliness defined and exemplified in the person of Him who manifested God in flesh.

“If thou put the brethren in memory of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine whereunto thou hast attained, but refuse profane and old wives’ fables.” Now, all these things that are invented by men instead of godliness, whose great example is Christ, are “profane and old wives’ fables.” And He further calls the practice of these religious rites and ceremonies “bodily exercise.” It is rather remarkable that the word used here for “bodily exercise” is the same from which our English word “gymnastics” is formed. Bodily religion—bodily forms, manifestations, and genuflexions—reminding us of the religious rites of Baal instead of “godliness.” But all this bodily exercise profiteth little; gymnastics—religious gymnastics—profit but a little; but “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life which now is and that which is to come.” Now, the application of this to ourselves. In the great definition of godliness you find the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us, and that He is the great model by which we are to fashion ourselves. “Except a man eat His flesh, and drink His blood, he has no life in him.” And the manifestation of life in you and me, according to

the truth of it, is the manifestation of Christ, and He is the "image of God." It is *God* that must be manifested, else there is no godliness; and the way in which God is to be manifested in His house is by abiding in Christ. You must be in communion with Christ; you must abide in Christ, by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. If you do not there is no realized life in you. You may think there is, but there is no life evidenced by you. There may be life in you as known to God, but there is no living manifestation of God; and your religious profession is only just practically reducible to this,—it is no better than "profane and old wives' fables," for what good does it do to anyone? It is merely religious gymnastics. What a sad thing it is that unless the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom we abide, is the animating power, and comes forth in you and me, there is no life manifested, there is no godliness. You may be called "a nice person," a "nice Christian," "I am sure that is a godly woman," or "that is a godly man," and yet Christ is not manifested. Christ does not come out; the life of Jesus is not manifested in your mortal flesh because you are not abiding in Him; and what is manifested is merely *your* niceness, *your* piety and holiness, for the eyes and for the praise of men. It is not that you are to make yourselves better. You are never told to crucify the flesh, or to mortify the flesh. To "mortify

your members, which are on the earth," is another thing. It is not, then, any action of God, or of ourselves on the flesh, as it were, to make it better, but Christ practically superseding *you*; and He cannot supersede you unless you *believe* you have been crucified with Him, and abide in Him as your life and source of fruitfulness.

As I walked with a gentleman in the city last evening, I looked up at the moon and said, "That moon sees the sun, but we don't see a bit of the sun. If she did not see the sun she could not shine. She shines with a light that is not her own." The moon saw the sun, and we did not see the sun; but we had the benefit of her advantage over us. She saw the sun because she was so high above the earth. We did not see the sun because we were so low down here. That is just like what Christ says in the 14th of John, "The world seeth me no more, but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also." As the sun was to the moon, and as the moon was to us as we walked the dark streets, so Christ is to the Church, and the Church is, or ought to be, to the world. Now, then, beloved, if you do not look at the Son of God, you will not reflect the light of life; and if you reflect the light, this light which you reflect has language in it; *it speaks*, as the Apostle says in the 5th of Ephesians, "Now are ye light in the Lord," not merely *enlightened*, but *light*. "*Walk* as children of

light." Again, "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." And again, "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; wherefore *it* (the light which you reflect from Christ) saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Christ is the light, and when we are in Him we are light in Him; and when we walk in Him we are used as the voice of light crying to the sleepers to awake. Has your conscience never been smitten, when walking carelessly, by the godly walk of one who was walking in communion with Christ? Thus should we be as showing God manifested in flesh. We, by His spirit dwelling in us and leading us, manifesting godliness, and sounding the alarm to the world that lieth in the wicked one, or to worldly Christians that are sleeping among the dead. Light, when it shines into your bedroom, sleeping when you ought to be up and doing, comes with this word to your soul, 'Arise, thou sluggard,' for 'now it is high time to awake out of sleep. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' "See, then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Dear friends, we are called upon to awake, the Lord is coming. Surely if the things which are occurring in this world—in this Christendom—are involving such foretold results; oh, surely, if the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ

is coming near, how much nearer is our being taken up to "meet Him in the air," for that kingdom cannot come till we have been caught up first. Now, then, beloved brethren, if the events transpiring before our eyes betoken the Lord's coming in judgment to the world, should not His presence in you as "the light of men" betoken the grace which now declares the salvation of God to sinners? Let us not hide our candle under a bushel, but let us, beholding, as in a glass, the glory—the excellent glory—of the Lord Jesus which saves, be changed into the same glory of grace towards men.

There is one more thing I could notice: that the devil is against you in every desire or effort to show forth Christ. He soothes and quiets you, and keeps you undisturbed. If you want to be religious, the devil will give you plenty of religion; if you want to satisfy yourself with the good opinion of your fellow-creatures, the devil will allow that; but he is the sworn and malignant foe of Christ. It is Christ that does the work of God, and when He is seen and manifested the devil trembles; and he makes people use the language, "I know Thee, who Thou art;" and he makes many a man think Christ came to torment him when He only came to deliver him. Now, then, let us realize this,—that we have got the devil against us as sure as ever we are in earnest for Christ; and yet being in earnest is not enough, we

must have Christ—the true Christ—as the object of our practical confession. But if you have the devil against you, you have Christ for you; and “if God be for us who can be against us?” And “He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world.” Therefore you cannot be unwatchful. If you be unwatchful and unprayerful, unfaithful, unnourished by the word of faith and good doctrine, you will be like the rolling thing before the wind—the devil despises you. What a thing, to be despised by the devil! No good to God, no harm to the devil! You are trying to keep with the world and Christ, and are miserable. The thought of Christ, instead of making you happy, makes you miserable through your own unfaithfulness; and the more He is presented to you by those who walk faithfully, the more unhappy you are. But if you be like the moon beholding the sun, you will not only be full of light yourself, but you will shine to the benefit of others; for if God blesses any, it is that they may be a blessing to others. The moon does not *intend* to get any admiration from anyone. Oh, the delight, the joy, and the glory, the deep, deep blessing of being permitted by Christ to manifest Him. God *has* loved us and *does* love us, and points us to the extreme depth of His Son’s humiliation in death, and to the height of His glory at His own right hand, and says, “See how I love you. See what a height and depth my

love has." He has put Him "who loved you, and gave Himself for you," at the very top of excellence and blessing. Therefore, if nothing else showed it, the excellence of the position of Christ would assure us of the love of God. Let nothing then come in between you and Christ; let nothing rob you of the joy, and the glory, and the honour of being a servant of the living God, to show forth a likeness of Him in whom "God is manifested in flesh." I say let nothing come in between you and Christ, for if you do, then you should be like the moon, darkened by the earth coming between her and the sun, and intercepting his light from shining on her face. Let not, then, the world come between us and Him who is our Life and Light, "lest we walk in darkness, and know not whither we go!"

# CHRISTIAN PRECEPTS.

BY HERBERT W. TAYLOR,

OF BARNET.

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**W**ILL you read with me the 8th verse of the last chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, in connexion with which I would especially speak to those who, like myself, are young, because I feel that this is what needs to be pressed home by the Spirit of God upon my own soul, and upon your souls also in this evil day of declension.

In this Epistle the Apostle has been speaking much about rejoicing, and now he says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Let the mind be occupied with the true, and the honest, and the just, and the pure, and the lovely, and the good, and not with the evil, and the dishonourable, and the false and the impure, and the untrue and the unlovely. God desires that our minds

should be filled with the good things, that our thoughts should be set on that which is of Himself; and, beloved, we may well say all this is summed up in Christ. If our minds are constantly dwelling on Him, and continually occupied with Him, then they are on the true, and the lovely, and the good report; but I think it may have something more to do with ourselves in reference to one another. In the present day, Satan seeks to make us listen to the evil report about a brother. He likes to have us occupied with what is bad in one another, and when he gets us thus engaged, it is, indeed, to the detriment of the whole Church of God, but most especially to our own souls. I believe that whatever we are occupied with, *that* we draw in, and more or less imbibe, into our own souls. Of course we cannot find what is true, and good, and Christ-like in one who has not Christ, but in dealing with Christians—with you, beloved—God would have me look for what is good and like Himself; and surely such researches can never fail in happy results; and then what I find of God's Spirit in you I shall imbibe myself. But if I look for evil, shall I not, on the other hand, imbibe it? This is the reason why we oftentimes appear so unhappy, and our faces bear such a downcast look, when we should always be rejoicing in the Lord. And why should we not rejoice? God has given us everything to make us happy. He delights to bless us, and now He tells

us what to think about. Think about what *He* thinks about. "Set your affection (or mind) on things above," is His injunction to us. No mind is a blank that is filled with such Divine realities; for who can tell all that is included in those two words "things above"? Let our thoughts ruminate in that sphere where all things are of God. We find in the second and third chapters of Revelation the Son of Man walking among the golden candlesticks. He is looking for something good, seeking for something to commend. And, blessed be God, we find that in that great day, when we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, He will find somewhat to praise in each one of us. "Then shall every man have praise of God." It will be His good pleasure then to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It is well for us, then, to make this same happy discovery in finding out the grace of Christ in one another. How often (I say it with shame to myself)—how often we are listening to the gossip of evil report! Do you and do I rejoice in iniquity? Have you and I ever rejoiced in iniquity? It is with shame I ask such a question. Oh, I feel verily guilty, making discoveries of evil in others and rejoicing in it! Of course we find evil, and there are occasions when it must be dealt with, but it should be with sorrow and humiliation. You do not go to live in a foul atmosphere *from choice*; you do not *seek* to

inhale impure air. You may, perhaps, be obliged to enter such a scene, but if you do, you go in hating it, and taking with you the antidote. May-be duty calls you to analyse it, but you stay in it no longer than necessary; and still you hate it. You go in like a diver into the sea. He goes down for the pearls and then comes up, for he will stay there no longer than he can help. The water around him he knows is his greatest enemy, an uncongenial element; and so with us. Let us think of that which is positive, and that which is Christ-like—of that which is God-like. He rejoices not in iniquity. Shall we? Charity “rejoiceth not in iniquity.” And we can find something in every Christian to love.

I was thinking to-day of three reasons why we should love one another as members of Christ. One reason is, because the Lord loves us, and we belong to Him. That is the first general reason. Well, then, we love one another also because of what we shall presently be, like Christ, changed into His image, perfect in His likeness; just as you might value an ugly torpid chrysalis, and treasure it up through the dark days of winter, because of the beautiful butterfly it is going to be when the bright spring appears. And then there is a third reason, because of what we get from one another; and I think we can get profit from every Christian. We meet some Christians that edify us, and we love them

easily for it, and they love us; but sometimes we come across crooked and uncomely ones. We may learn a lesson, too, from them. We may learn a lesson that has to do with God Himself—that of long-suffering, gentleness, and forbearance. You cannot be forbearing and patient with an angel, but we have need to be often with our brethren down here. So we can thank God for that Christian, (sorry of course for him,) but still thankful to learn something good. Oh, beloved friends! let us then exercise ourselves to think on, to meditate on, and to be occupied with the true, and the honest, and the just, and the pure, and the lovely, and the good report; and when Satan brings evil thoughts of one another and evil gossip (that horrible gossip in the Church of God) among us, oh, let us stop our ears to it; and if we cannot speak something good of a fellow-Christian, let us pass on, but speak not evil of one whom Christ loves, nor bring up gossip-accusations against him. The Lord help us in this matter, for we need it. Thus, I do beseech you, beloved, be occupied with the good, and not with the evil things in one another in these last days. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK on THESE things ... and the God of peace will be with you.”

# THE CROSS OUR GLORY.

BY GEORGE F. TRENCH,

OF TRALEE.

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**W**ILL you look, dear friends, at two verses in the Epistle to the Galatians—2nd chap. and 20th verse—"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." And in the last chapter and 14th verse—"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

I want to say a word upon the great foundation truth upon which Christianity is built up—I mean the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the present day there is a special necessity for our laying to heart this particular truth in all its significance, because it is upon this point that Satan, well discovering wherein the strength and stability of Christianity consists, is making all his attacks to meet,—the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a spirit abroad in Christendom, with which the truth has

had to contend from the very first, but which now is met with everywhere. The name upon its forehead is, "Contempt for the cross of Christ," and its teaching is, that it is a thing unworthy of reasonable people to believe that Jesus Christ died as a substitute, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." I believe that very soon this doctrine, which is spreading so fast around us, will become centred in one great anti-Christian power, to which the majority of so-called Christian men will yield subjection and pay homage.

There are many who imagine (I think it a mistake) that Popery is the full development of the spirit of Antichrist; but there is one great characteristic of Antichrist which is not to be found in Popery—the denial of the Father and the Son. (1 Jno. ii. 22.) The Father is not denied, and the Son is not denied, nor is the death of Christ as a substitute for sinners denied. These things have not been let go, although hundreds of figments and human traditions have been *added* to the truth of God, as things necessary to man's salvation. Observe that it is not in the nature of Popery to *deny* but to *add* to the Word of God, and to demand *more* from the sinner than God has demanded. But, dear friends, there is another spirit abroad (oh! evil day upon which we are fallen), which Satan sends out among us—the spirit

of *denial*, the spirit of *contradiction*; the denial of Scripture, and specially of the truth of atonement through the cross and substitution of Christ. I believe the day is coming when we shall see events which Christians little expect—thousands who have professed the truth carried away by the stream of scepticism and infidelity, which by-and-bye, and I think soon, will be headed up in Antichrist.

Now, what I want to put forward to you is this—a simple appeal for the glory of my Lord and Master—that you will in this evil day lay fast hold of the precious truth of His death on Calvary. In the death of my Lord I see all light, all peace, all blessing, for time and for eternity. Take away that from my soul, and you cast me down a shipwrecked mariner, in a trackless waste, without a hope for time or for eternity. You may fill me with high thoughts of what man is in himself, of what human reason can grasp, but if you take away from me the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ, you leave me a lost and ruined wretch, with nothing before me but the darkness of despair. It may sound very well to hear human nature exalted. People like it. “That accounts for my good disposition,” they say, “and all I need is, that God’s Spirit should so work upon it that I may become what I ought, and enable me so to imitate Christ’s holy life as to be worthy of heaven.” These things sound very well; but beware of them, beloved! It is not by the holy

example of the man Christ Jesus on earth, but by His death, and by His precious blood making atonement for the sins of the sinner, that you must be saved. "It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul."

Moreover, you may observe that parallel with this denial of the need of atonement goes, as one would expect, the denial of eternal punishment. For nothing short of the atonement of Christ could save from eternal punishment. And if there be no hell there is no need of the blood of the cross. Thousands of unsaved sinners on earth would be glad to suffer even a million of years in hell, provided they might serve their lusts while here, and could reach happiness, or be annihilated at last. I remember when the devil whispered to me, "There is no such thing as eternal punishment in Scripture;" I rejoiced to hear it; it was a sweet sound, for I wanted to walk in my own ways. I was relieved. I could bear any number of years of punishment if they would end at last. But, oh! thank God, the delusion did not last very long, for this Word of God is too well filled with instruction on that point. There are some truths which seem to hang only upon one text, or on a single verse; but here is a truth which stands out in very many passages of God's Word, of which, if one seems to bear some other interpretation, it will be strengthened by a hundred more. All we need is, to stand by God's eternal truth, and upon it to stake our souls

for heaven or hell, for time and eternity, heedless of human questionings and philosophies.

The next step is, to deny that there is any such thing as sin. You may not have heard it, but so it is. This all flows from one poisonous root—the denial of the need of an atoning Saviour. But, oh! beloved, remember the words I read to you, “I am crucified with Christ, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” I was thinking of those words the other day, “who loved me, and gave Himself for me,” and I thought, take all but that from me; let me be blind, and ignorant, and dead to all the other precious truths of Scripture, but only leave me this, “He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*,” and there I rest, and there I have peace, and there I have joy for ever. “He loved *me*—ME—and gave *Himself* for *me*.” Oh! fellow-believers, do you not delight to put yourselves into that “me”? “He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.” I am sure there are moments when all of us, from one cause or another, have to say, “Well! what ground am I standing on? I call myself a believer, but I am not very like one sometimes. I look at my conduct and do not find it satisfactory. My words are very far from what the 4th of Eph. teaches me they should be. I go deeper, and I look into my motives; O horrible discovery! O hateful thought that I have harboured! My heart is as a cage of unclean birds! What ground have I to rest on?” Ah!

here is comfort, here is peace ! “ Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” We do not rest for peace upon our motives or our conduct, but we rest in what Jesus did on Calvary ; and if by my words, and deeds, and motives, you can prove me *a sinner*, and bring me in altogether guilty, then am I sure I have good ground to stand on, for “ Christ (I read) died for the ungodly.” The whole need no physician, but those who are sick. Prove me sick and ungodly and you prove me fit for Christ to save, and I can take all the comfort of that blessed word to myself. “ He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” If I had not those bad motives, and unholy deeds, then I would not have needed that His back should have been bared for my stripes, and His hands outstretched and pierced for my sins.

But it is not only for peace that we are driven back and back again to the cross of Christ, for often when we are quite sure of our soul’s salvation, we feel “ what little return I make to Him. *He* loved *me* indeed, but how much should I love Him. And instead of that, I find little but coldness, deadness, and unreality ; and yet my royal Lord still loves me.” Oh, how is this ? And then I find this blessed truth in Scripture, “ Not that we loved Him, but that He first loved us.” “ He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Let me say in passing, that you should not suppose it is a bad habit to try and to examine

yourself and your ways. It is not. It is a most blessed and necessary habit. Oh, often consider, and search, and see whether indeed there be a due return for all God's grace to you, and whether your heart will bear the light of God's holiness. And then if you discover this coldness and want of love, remember it is not your love which commends you to Him; and you will never get the response you want by thinking of your love, or trying to love Him, but by turning your eye to Calvary, and by looking back to the great centre of all blessings. Sit a moment at the foot of His cross, gaze at that pierced and bleeding side, upon that blessed brow, upon that crown of thorns. Oh, gaze upon that "visage marred more than any man's," upon Him who was stared at and mocked, for *thy* sake, and if this does not move thee to love Him, I know not what will. He loved *thee*. He proved it upon the summit of Calvary. He proved it as He hung on the cross. He proved it when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and when He bowed His head, and said, "It is finished." And if that will not restore your heart, I know not what will. But we go working and working upon our own unworthiness, instead of dwelling and delighting in His love.

But, further, the cross must have its place in the Christian's daily life. Did you ever consider the meaning of that text in John, "Except ye eat the flesh of

the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"? It does not merely mean except ye read about Christ and believe about Him—it means feeding upon Him in sacrifice, in atonement; and if we do not feed upon a crucified Christ, we may roam about amid the wonders of the blessings of Christians, and talk about "heavenly places;" but if our soul's food is not derived from Christ, from the crucified Christ, the broken body and shed blood, our Christianity will soon become vanity. I remember a time when I thought in myself, Well, now, thank God for the cross of Christ, by that I have been saved, and my guilt is purged away. And now let me pass on to resurrection truths, and not only to resurrection, but even into heavenly places, there to dwell in thought; but let me not go back to Calvary, for that would be coming down from my glory. Oh, gross delusion! I prize these lofty truths most highly, but never let my soul get beyond the cross—never! For, friends, I give you this as my most solemn conviction, that, full as this Bible is of truth, there is not a shadow of truth beyond the cross. The cross is the centre and the source of all truth. If you want a proof of this, look into the Revelation, where we see into heaven itself. If people could ever get beyond the cross, they would get beyond it in eternity. But even there we see "the Lamb as it had been *slain*." And they glory and they sing of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And if those in heaven sing of it, how can *we* say, "Let us go beyond it?"

Now, it is a very helpful thing to observe the place in which God puts the cross. In the Jewish economy we find the cross of Christ set forth by every sort of type and sign God could devise. The victims on a thousand altars all tell the same story, and point to the same event. The truth I seek to press is remarkably shown in the manner of the peace-offering in the 7th of Leviticus. After offering the sacrifice upon the altar, the offerer was to eat the flesh of it *on the same day* it was offered. And it is declared in the 18th verse, "And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity." What does it mean? Why, the feasting at the table means the enjoyment by the Christian of that peace and blessing which Christ has purchased for him, and the meaning of permitting but one day's interval is that we are never to get beyond the remembrance of the great transaction by which our blessings are secured; and if you make an interval, if you separate the enjoyment of blessing from the cross, it shall be an abomination. Christ will remember His death in eternity, and bear the wounds in His glorified body (Zech. xiii. 6). And shall we forget it? May we have grace to learn

what its true place is, from His dying commission, "This do in remembrance of me." Alas! I fear the desire to pass on beyond the cross has its root in a too high estimate of what we are in ourselves. We think the cross is the place for sinners, **and** that because we are saints we need it no more. I heard one say, the other day, that once a man got to be a saint he was no longer called a sinner. But I find that Paul, "the aged," at the very end of his journey, said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom *I am* chief." He says, "*I am* a sinner," not "of whom *I was* chief," but "of whom *I am* chief." Oh! mark this, and it is a good thing for an evangelist to remember. He did not go to preach of past experience, but he preached a crucified Christ, whose "flesh and blood" was the daily food of his soul. It has been my prayer that, when I stand up to preach the Gospel, I may do so with all the earnestness of one who realizes that he has just escaped the damnation of hell, through faith in the blood of Jesus. Never let us imagine that the Gospel is a thing passed for the Christian. It is as fresh and sweet to him to-day as at the first. God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of Christ!

But, dear friends, there is another aspect in the cross of Christ in this Epistle to the Galatians, and that is where the Apostle says, "I am crucified with Christ." Now it is most important we should see

that this has nothing to do with salvation from hell. If I were crucified with Christ a thousand times over it would not avail to blot out a single stain. We have sometimes imagined the way of salvation is this, that the penalty of death is upon us for our sin, and that we discharge it by being crucified with Christ. But remember this, our death is not of the slightest value to God. We have not got a life of our own to render. Therefore, we must have a substitute—and mark you, there are three persons in the transaction: there is God the offended, me the offender, and there is Christ the mediator, and as such He is *alone*, and my being united to Christ in His death would not benefit me a whit. If you put me to death, and leave me there until I render satisfaction for my sins, you will leave me there for ever. What then does this mean, “I am crucified with Christ”? It means union with Christ in His death with regard to the *power* of sin. Recollect the three P’s of which we heard just now—the Penalty of sin, the Power of sin, and the Presence of sin. Now from the penalty of sin we are saved by the substitute who died alone instead of us. But we are saved from the *power* of sin by union with Christ in His death. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections

and lusts." Every time you find this truth brought out you will find it has regard to the *power*, not the *penalty* of sin. And as in the Lord's Supper our thoughts are taken back to that aspect of the death of Christ in substitution, by which we are saved from sin's *penalty*, so in Baptism—for both ordinances show forth the death of Christ—our thoughts are occupied with that other aspect of His death, in which we are united with Him, and thus saved from the *power* of sin. Oh! if you know not what being "crucified with Christ" means, you know nothing about the power of the Christian life. A brother said to me, "We hear a great deal about 'responsibility,' but I should like to hear how we are to *discharge* the weight of responsibility that rests upon us." And, dear friends, I know it is perfectly useless to press obedience on those who have not learned the secret of all spiritual power—union with Christ in death and resurrection. May God unfold the 6th of Romans to us, and illuminate that blessed page, that we may know what it is to be no more alive as sons of Adam, in the flesh, but risen with Christ, having the same life in us as the life of Christ, the temples of the Holy Ghost, "created after God in righteousness and true holiness." When we know what this means, then shall we gain the power to fulfil our responsibilities. For then we shall see that, in Christ's death to sin, such a death-blow has been

inflicted upon our old man as enables us to consider it just as if it were a corpse in the grave, six feet below the earth, giving no more response to Satan than the dead man gives to him who knocks upon his tombstone. What I seek is this (I do not say I have attained, God forbid I should entertain any such delusion),—the thing to be sought after is this—that we should respond to the summons of sin no more than the dead man responds to him who knocks upon his tombstone. That is what is open to us; and when we get into the power of that blessed truth, that we are crucified with Christ, then we shall find that our soul will spring up with a marvellous liberty and a heavenly freedom, and the ear will be quick to hear the sound of God's voice, and the eye to see things invisible, and the feet to run in the way of God's Word; and so long as your soul is kept in the power of that truth, you will enjoy the priceless blessing of the conscious approval of God.

All this, and much more, flows from a worthy appreciation of the cross of Christ. Some, it is true, have gone back to the beggarly elements, as though the prodigal, after tasting the plenty and joy of his father's house, had returned again to his old haunts. Oh! beloved friends, if you want to avoid such an end, take heed to your secret thoughts, and watch the entrance of your hearts, for out of it are the issues of life. To keep our souls in the love of God, to

abide in communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, this is our only security, and thus only shall we continue to be fruitful.

And now a word in conclusion. Be not content with a purely negative religion. It is much easier to be negative—that is, not to commit gross sins, than to be positive. It is not so easy to be an outspoken, active, decided Christian on the Lord's side; and, beloved, you will find that the world will bear with you any length, so you don't interfere with them, and push the thought of eternity upon them. But this is what the Lord wants—not merely negative Christians, who do no great harm, but glide on smoothly with the current,—but bold and active labourers, who seek by word and deed to turn men to God. We have been hearing of the salt and the light. Observe, that while the salt preserves from corruption, the light dispels the darkness; that while the salt is meant for the Church, the light is meant for the world. And we are not only to have salt in ourselves, to preserve what is good, but we are also to be lights in the world to dispel the evil, pushing forward among perishing sinners in the activity of the new man—not only *not* doing what is evil, but doing positive good, and seeking the salvation of souls, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, and then glory will be brought to God by our lives. May we

be less content with moderate attainments, and more desirous to be *filled* with the Spirit, that we may be as overflowing vessels ; for when a vessel is full to the brim, the least little touch will overflow it. So it shall be with us, that the least opportunity will cause our full hearts to overflow with words of grace and love to those around. Amen.

The cross ! the cross ! the Christian's only glory :

I see the standard rise ;

March on, march on, the cross of Christ before thee—

That cross all hell defies.

The cross ! the cross ! Redemption's standard raising ;—

I see the banner wave ;

Sing on, sing on, Salvation's Captain praising—

'Tis Christ alone can save.

The crown ! the crown !—ah ! who at last shall gain it ?—

The cross a crown affords ;

Press on, press on, with courage to obtain it,

The battle is the Lord's.

# THE BELIEVERS' TRIUMPH IN CHRIST.

BY C. RUSSELL HURDITCH.

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**T**HE end of all our meetings, dear friends, should be to lead us out in triumph in Christ. Many here have had their hearts bowed down with sorrow—sorrow on account of their own sins and shortcomings—sorrow over the failures, or reported failures, of others—sorrow over a divided Church and a dying world, and their cry is, “Lord, we know not what to do, but our eyes are upon Thee,” and that cry will yet find an echo in many hearts. Now Paul the Apostle knew—the man that was caught up into the third heavens, who saw the living Christ and the glory of God—he knew what it was to have much of joy; but he also knew what it was to experience much sorrow. If ever there was “a man of sorrows,” other than Jesus Christ, it was Paul the Apostle. Paul witnessed for God, and this necessitated his sharing the sufferings of the Christ whom he preached. He endured the afflictions of the Gospel, and could say, “I die daily,”

"I glory in infirmities," "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" while he laboured and sorrowed and suffered for Christ's sake, and in the end surrendered his life as a seal to the testimony he had borne for Him. Yet he was ever able to triumph in God.

This morning we began with sorrow—we poured out our sorrow before God.\* Blessed be His Name for bringing us down. He never will bring us down without lifting us up, and we may assuredly—as we just now asked the Lord for grace to do—go away triumphing in Him, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh. These are the lessons the Lord, I believe, desires to teach us in the events that are happening around us, and amid the circumstances under which we are gathered together. The Lord help us to go away able to exclaim, in the language of the Scripture, which I ask you to read with me in 2 Corinthians ii. 14—"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph (or always leads us in triumph) in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place!" It is not triumph in our meetings, nor in

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\* A private meeting of labourers engaged in the Lord's work had been held in the morning for humiliation, confession, and prayer, and the three hours then spent at the Throne of Grace will never be forgotten, at least by *some* who were then present.

our labours, nor in our prayers, nor in our very humiliation. No! it is triumph IN CHRIST—the mighty, living, glorified Christ.

As I was sitting by the door of this Conservatory this afternoon, I saw a bee come in and fly round and round till at length it alighted on a fuchsia to draw the sweetness from its petals, and then away it went to hive its treasure that it may be a sweet savour to some who shall hereafter gather of its store. And, dear friends, what have we been doing these past three days? Have we been gathering the sweetness—the knowledge of the grace, and truth, and glory of God—and are we going forth in the power of the Holy Ghost to spread abroad the savour thereof, where Christ may be but little known, so that it shall have this end even the glory of the blessed God? For He says, “We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.” The Lord grant that it may be so. But oh, what babes we are, at best, in the knowledge of Christ!

Verily I tremble under the solemn responsibility I feel in having to address you at the close of these meetings, and the responsibility under which we part, after such precious privileges as we have enjoyed during the past three days, for we have spoken and heard for eternity. Yes, we speak and hear for *eternity*. The words uttered on this platform

twelve months, nay years, ago have not died out. Those our brethren have now spoken—every word—will return in the day of Christ, and will prove to have been a savour either of Christ in the upbuilding of saints, or of the flesh to our own positive loss.

I do, however, solemnly believe that our God will enable us to go away in triumph, strong in the grace of Christ to spread abroad the savour of the ever blessed, ever glorious name of Jesus. The Lord grant it! Amen.

Now God's purpose concerning us is, that we should be *always* triumphing, that we should be *constant* victors, that we should be *more than conquerors* over the world, the flesh, and the devil, because of the unlimited resources of power and grace treasured in our living Head, the great Captain of our Salvation, for our continual use. God would have us know that the saint is more than a match for the world, the flesh, and the devil, and for all the hosts of wicked spirits, "the world-rulers of this present darkness" we read of in the 6th of Ephesians. Blessed be God; we have one into whose Name, as into a strong tower, we may ever run! and running into that fortress we may say with Paul, "Thanks be unto God, which always leadeth us in triumph," so that the savour of His blessed Name may be shed abroad by us wherever we go.

Wherein, then, lies the secret of this victory—this

complete and continual triumph in Christ? It is not in mere orthodoxy of creed, or correctness of doctrine, nor is it in the abundance of our labours in the vineyard of God, but it is knowing—in real Holy Ghost power—the Lord Jesus Christ, as He is to be known by those who walk closely with Him.

In olden time God came down to deliver His people Israel from bondage. He brought them *out* of Egypt, and through the wilderness, that he might bring them *into* the land which He had sworn He would give them, with the fulness of the blessing embraced in the promise. In various Scriptures we see that that people failed—as they had ever failed under every circumstance—to trust God to bring them into the land, and as a consequence were shut out for awhile. Forty years they wandered through the wilderness. “They could not enter in because of unbelief.” They came short of the glorious portion for which God had apprehended them, but at length their time of deliverance and victory came; and in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th chapters of the Book of Joshua we read the wondrous story of the Lord’s interposition on their behalf, and of their complete triumph, and possession of the land that flowed with milk and honey.

Now we shall find seven things recorded in the experiences of the children of Israel in these three chapters, that suggest in their beautiful connexion

and order the secret of our own complete triumph in Christ, and on these I will as briefly as possible remark.

In the third chapter we see the Lord taking up their case as "The Lord of the whole earth," and what a change we are to behold. Truly was it said, "Ye have not passed this way heretofore."

"And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow *the Lord will do wonders among you.*" Observe, the Lord had brought them to the end of what *they* could do, which beyond all question resulted in failure of the most melancholy kind. But is it not a blessed thing to turn from our poor stumbling selves, and behold the "wonders" of our God? Now what does He do? Behold the people viewing the land—the land that was theirs (albeit their past inability to enter it because of unbelief) according to the promise God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—"for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." There lay the land spread out before their eyes in all its brightness and beauty, but between it and them flowed the river Jordan in all its breadth and fullness. But God—"the living God"—was there, and He would act for them; cutting off with a stroke its dark waters for His people to pass over. (Read chapter iii.)

I. Here then, was the first great lesson they were

to learn in their victorious experience, namely, THE POWER OF GOD TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GRACIOUS PURPOSES IN SPITE OF ALL OBSTACLES. The living God is seen dealing in judgment with the river of death, rolling back or staying up its dark waters for His ransomed to pass over into the land of promise.

In this very act of the Lord's they were to behold the unmistakable evidence that He was indeed among them, and that He would without fail judge the people of the land into which He was about to bring them, so that they should certainly triumph through His power and grace (verse 10).

And how deeply instructive is each act in this wondrous scene. The waters were to be divided only when "the soles of the *feet of the priests* that bear *the ark* of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—shall rest in the waters of Jordan." And this was done in the time of harvest when the river was deepest and fullest. No wonder that before the sacred symbol of the Divine glory these fast-flowing waters are "cut off," and piled "upon an heap," till far back as "the city Adam," "down to the sea of the plain, even the salt sea" (verse 16), they give evidence of the power of the living God, now acting on behalf of His redeemed hosts, "until all the people were passed clean over Jordan" (verses 14-17). And do we not see in this a striking picture of those darker waters of sin and death that separated us

from God, into which the living Christ descended as the true and "faithful Witness," whose feet stood firm while cleaving a pathway for His ransomed to pass over? When the floods saw HIM they fled back, while the quaking earth, and rending rocks, and thick darkness, and rent veil, were but the fit accompaniments of the mighty chorus "IT IS FINISHED," which, first uttered on the cross, reverberates through the vista of ages—"from the city Adam down to the sea of the plain"—from the portals of glory down to the gates of hell—from the Monday morning to the Saturday night of the world's history—even to the day that shall finally usher in the glorious rest of God and His redeemed family.

And is it not, my brethren, because He was what He was—a *perfect* Saviour, meeting every claim of Divine justice and answering every requirement of Divine truth as found within "the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth," and because He "hath an unchangeable priesthood, He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him" (Heb. vii. 24, 25); so that in HIM we have the pledge that every one of His redeemed family shall be finally and for ever saved. We are delivered from the power of death; we are saved from the final judgment; saved, on the ground of the judgment that was borne by Him. But by-and-by those dark waters will roll on their course again, down, down,

even to the salt sea of eternal death, for ever closing the way to God against the impenitent world—yea, even to-morrow, it may be, there will be no more chance for a poor sinner to get over the Jordan into the land of promise.

II. But notice, as the next feature in this memorable scene, there were to be ABIDING MEMORIALS of this miraculous passage of the Jordan. "And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, and command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, *twelve stones*, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night" (chap. iv. 1-3). "And these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever . . . . And Joshua set up twelve stones *in the midst of Jordan*, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day . . . And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch *in Gilgal*" (verses 7, 9, 20). Thus we see when they had passed over the divided river into the land of promise, they were to have abiding memorials of the mighty act of God. There were to be twelve stones erected in Jordan, and twelve stones on the other side of Jordan.

How suggestive this of the great lessons of *death and resurrection*, with which Scripture abounds. And have we not *our* memorials of the mighty triumphant power of Christ in death and resurrection? Surely we have. The great Lover of our souls has anticipated the need of our forgetful hearts, and given us emblems of His dying love of which we may partake as often as we will "in remembrance of Him." A precious help this on our pilgrim path, for we *are* pilgrims, and we have need of the *daily* sustaining power of the living God; but we are citizens of heaven, nevertheless, and already in possession of the land; and while looking, as it were, at these twelve stones, let us not forget that we never can go *back* through the Jordan again—we are *a risen people in our risen Christ*, whose power and love we are called to remember and glory in, while we "show forth His death till He come." Every saved sinner has been judged according to the utmost ability of God to judge him, and he is now blessed according to the utmost ability of God to bless him. Twelve stones under Jordan—twelve stones on the resurrection side, speak volumes to the spiritual soul, but on which we cannot now longer dwell.

III. We pass on to notice the significant EXALTATION OF JOSHUA, which was intimately connected with Israel's blessing, as we read in verse 7 of chap. iii., "And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I

begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel." And in verse 14 of chap. iv., "On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life." And can we fail to distinguish in this the typical exaltation of our true Joshua (or Jesus, as the name may be read), of whom it is written, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father." And again in Heb. ii. 9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." He who was "crucified through weakness," "lives by the power of God," and is now on His Father's throne, radiant with unutterable glory.

When the blessed Lord entered the caverns of the dead, death itself yielded up its witness to His Almighty power, as instanced in the opening of the graves and the subsequent resurrection of many of the saints that slept, while His resurrection declared Him to be the Son of God with power, and His enthronement at the right hand of the Majesty on high, manifests His eternal dignity and glory. Would you know how the Holy Ghost delights to dwell on

the glory of the exalted Jesus? then read Acts ii. 22-36; Phil. ii. 5-11; Heb. i.; Rev. i. and iii., and many other Scriptures.

No wonder, my brethren, we read of Him whom the Father delighteth to honour, "On His head were many crowns" (Rev. xix. 12). Then let us rejoice and be glad, shouting our songs of triumph, for Jesus lives, enthroned in brightest glory, and the crowns are on His brow, and the keys of death and hell are on His girdle.

"Crown the Saviour! angels, crown Him!

Rich the trophies Jesus brings;

In the seat of power enthrone Him,

While the vault of heaven rings.

Crown Him! crown Him!

Crown the Saviour 'King of kings!'

Sinners in derision crowned Him,

Mocking thus the Saviour's claim;

Saints and angels crowd around Him,

Own His title, praise His Name.

Crown Him! crown Him!

Spread abroad the Victor's fame.

Hark! these bursts of acclamation!

Hark! these loud triumphant chords!

Jesus takes the highest station:

Oh! what joy the sight affords!

Crown Him! crown Him!

'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'"

IV. But briefly notice in the next place the NE-

CESSITY FOR COMPLETE SELF-JUDGMENT on the part of Israel's host.

The Jordan had been divided; the people had passed over on dry ground, the memorials had been raised, Joshua had been "magnified in the sight of all Israel," with their armed tribes—"forty thousand prepared for war"—who had "passed over before the Lord unto battle, in the plains of Jericho," where the conflict was to begin.

No wonder the inhabitants quaked for fear, as we read in chapter v. 1, "And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel." Now then, you say, surely God will lead them on to victory. "Up, Israel! Go forth to the battle!" Does God say so? No, no, beloved; for before they can use a weapon against the enemy, or aim a single stroke at others, they must first judge *themselves*; for "at that time,"—when they were thus delivered, brought up from the emptied bed of Jordan, encamped, fully armed, right against Jericho, with memorials of past victory before their very eyes—"At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again

the children of Israel the second time" (chap. v. 2). All Israel are to fall on their faces before the Lord. If they would be conquerors in the conflict before them, they must be a *self-judged* as well as a redeemed people. And what does God say to us in all the histories of past ages and in the solemn lessons He is teaching us day by day? Does He not call us to "judge ourselves that we be not judged," to "purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump, as we are unleavened," having "put off the old man with his deeds," to "put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him," to "mortify the members which are upon the earth," and to "walk in the Spirit," that we fulfil not the lusts of the flesh? (Read 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32; 1 Cor. v. 7; Col. iii. 5-17; Gal. v. 16, 17.)

Brethren, this Christian conflict is no child's play; it is a solemn reality—a stern fact. We must "*die daily*;" our own wills and tempers and ways, our likings and dislikings, *everything* of man must be brought under the action of the knife. All must be judged in the light of infinite holiness, beneath the searching gaze, and according to the righteous claims, of our holy God. Then shall we prove the power of Divine grace, through the shed blood and present advocacy of our great High Priest, to heal; and the power of Divine love to fill and fit the soul for any conflict yet before us, as said the Lord to Israel,

“This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you; wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal (or rolling) unto this day” (chap. v. 9): And as He says of us, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John i. 9). Thus did Paul (1 Cor. ix. 26, 27; Gal. ii. 2), and Peter (1 Peter iv. 1, 2), and John, as we have seen. Let us but do likewise, and victory is certain in the daily and hourly conflict, while we shall joyfully sing, “Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to *triumph* in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.”

V. A solemn festive scene is now witnessed. THE PASSEOVER IS KEPT. “And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even, in the plains of Jericho” (chap. v. 10). *Redemption by the blood of the Lamb* is the theme on every tongue—the burden of every song. Be where they may, in Egypt, in the wilderness, or in Canaan, they cannot, they dare not, forget that all their relationship with Jehovah—their place, their possessions, and their power, are secured to them and established on the one ground of Redemption by blood. And, beloved brethren, are we not reminded, and do we not love to remember, this same truth touching ourselves? The cross of Christ is the basis of our peace, the

source of our life, and the symbol of our continual victory; for whether we find around us the bondage and death of an Egypt world, or as pilgrims, prove the pathway through which we pass to be a wilderness scene; or, if at times we well nigh faint amidst the conflict with the "principalities and powers—the world-rulers of this present darkness and hosts of wicked spirits in the heavenlies," as "the accuser of our brethren accuses us before God, day and night" (Eph. vi. 12; Rev. xii. 10, 11)—do we not find, I say, that our one triumphant answer is, "Blood! Blood!" "The precious Blood!" "VICTORY THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB." Yea, in heaven itself we shall have our Passover Song, and celebrate for ever the mighty triumphs of redeeming love, while the "word of our testimony" shall ring through the portals of glory and enwrap the very throne of the Most High, as we sing, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ!" and myriads of redeemed souls shall swell the echoing chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Even so! Amen!"

Seeing then, that "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8)—and thus walking in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another,

and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7).

VI. Redeemed, sanctified, and triumphant souls come well off. Not theirs is the simple babe's portion, with which carnal saints can alone be fed; but to them belong the strong meat, "the parched corn," THE RIPE FRUIT OF THE LAND POSSESSED; hence we read, "And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes and parched corn on the self-same day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." They were now in a suitable place, and in a fit condition to receive such food. And, my brethren, did *we* but know, in the power of the Holy Ghost, *where we are*, and *what we are*, as "accepted in the Beloved," saved by His grace, cleansed by His blood, and sanctified by His Spirit, as *one with Him* who is "the first-begotten from the dead," and seated with Him in the heavenlies, we too should be constantly eating "of the old corn of the land," the unleavened cakes and parched corn; feeding on a perfect Christ, who is both "manna" to the babe, and "parched corn" to the spiritually intelligent and sanctified soul. Do we not, brethren, often rob our souls of this rich provision in Christ, by reason of our uncircumspect walk and unsancti-

fied ways? We do not judge ourselves, and we forget our Passover lessons, and are, consequently, incapacitated for the enjoyment of the old corn of the land. May the Lord quicken our souls, and sharpen our appetites, so that our daily cry shall be, "More of Christ! More of Christ!"

Even with a completed Bible in our hands, and the Holy Ghost in our midst and in our hearts, with the instructive history of the Church for eighteen centuries before our eyes, and our own individual experience, fraught with so many important lessons from the God of all grace, it is sad to think of the infantine capacity of the majority of Christians, even to comprehend, much less *enjoy*, the higher truths of our holy, heavenly calling and hope in a risen, glorified, and coming Christ. Hence the extreme feebleness of their faith, the meagreness of their joy, and the powerlessness of their service; even if there be not uncertainty of hope, unevenness of walk, and worldliness of ways.

Oh, brethren! this ought not to be. Rather let us arise, and seek to help others to arise, to a fuller understanding, and a more lively realization of the Divine verities which are concentrated in our living Head, and a more practical enjoyment of the abiding and "unsearchable riches of Christ."

But I must not dwell longer on this interesting part of our subject, more than to earnestly commend

to your prayerful consideration in connexion therewith the following Scriptures:—John vi. 51, 57; 1 Cor. iii. 1-3; Heb. v. 5, vi. 3; 1 John ii. 12-14; and Rev. ii. 17.

VII. But one thing remains for us to observe, and with this I close. In verses 13-15 of chapter v. we read, "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.* And Joshua did so." What a precious lesson for our hearts is here! It is the grand old story—God seeking worshippers to worship Him—compare John iv. 23, 24, and Heb. x. 19-22. It is not enough for them to be brought fully armed through the divided river, to raise memorials of victory, to witness the exaltation of Joshua, to judge self, to eat the passover, and to feed upon the old corn of the land; this—all this does not satisfy the heart of Jehovah. The shoe must be loosed from off the foot, the head bowed to the

earth, and the soul serenely lost in reverent admiration, as the strength and challenge of the warrior give place to the obedience of the worshipper before the "Captain of the Lord's host."—In short, IF WE WOULD BE VICTORS IN THE BATTLE OF THE LORD, WE MUST FIRST BE WORSHIPPERS. Thus it was with Moses at the bush, and David, and Solomon, and onward to John, and Peter, and Paul, as well as the leader of Israel's host in the scene before us, while the day of manifestation will doubtless prove that the most valiant and successful servants of God, in all ages, were those who, as worshippers, have been most at the feet of Jesus.

It will not avail us much, brethren, that we have had large and happy Believers' Meetings here and elsewhere, or that we have thereby received much precious truth concerning Christ and Christian life, and rejoiced in the ministry of grace to our souls, if we do not beat out the full ears of our gathered sheaf at the feet of, and in communion with, the Lord Jesus.

It is well, *well indeed*, that we are thus privileged to meet day after day, to commune and rejoice together—well that we can thus pray, and praise, and converse—well that we can raise our song of victory in Willow Park, but let us not forget that we have to meet the enemy to-morrow—yea, even as we leave this very meeting—in hand-to-hand conflict;

and though we gaze, as it were, upon the memorials of past deliverance, and keep the Passover feast, and find our courage gather strength as we eat not only of the manna, but also of the "old corn of the land," we must prove that our *real* strength to stand in the day of battle, is in being brought down to the end of our own power, and our own selves altogether, in sublime silence to the feet of "the Captain of the Lord's host." Thus it was with the leader of Israel's tribes. Jericho may then be shut up, but its walls *must* come down, for the man has been at the feet of the Lord. Jericho *must* fall, and the Canaanites *must* perish, for Joshua has been *a worshipper*. Thither, and thus, would the Lord often bring us too, aside from the activities of service, where we may have been zealously occupied with questions touching "us or our adversaries," when we should have been alone, engaged in the most sure and sublime preparation, unshod, and bowed, at the feet of our living, loving Lord.

Brethren, *do* we know what it is to be often there, choosing "that good part"? Are we as ready and glad to obey the injunction "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot," as the command to go and preach to one, two, or five thousand people—as happy in being *worshippers* alone with God, as amidst the busy activities of service in Christ's vineyard? May the Lord teach us these wholesome and needed

lessons; giving us grace to gather the sweetness and power of His truth, and unfolding to our souls the secret of complete and continual triumph, so that leaving these meetings, we may undividingly go back to the feet of Jesus, and then out into the paths of diligent service, finding pasture alike in both, and with hearts laved in His love, and souls filled with His power, we may be able continually to sing, "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place!" Amen.

Jesus is the name that charms us,  
He for conflict fits and arms us,  
Nothing moves, and nothing harms us,  
When we trust in Him.

Trust in Him, ye saints, for ever;  
He is faithful, changing never;  
Neither force nor guile can sever  
Those He loves from Him.

Keep us, Lord, oh! keep us cleaving  
To Thyself, and still believing,  
Till the hour of our receiving  
Promised joys in heaven.

Then we shall be where we would be,  
Then we shall be what we should be,  
Things which are not now nor could be,  
Then shall be our own.

# HEARERS AND DOERS OF THE WORD.

BY F. C. BLAND.

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Read Joshua xxiv. 15-18, and Ezekiel xxxiii. 30-32.

**I**S it possible that these were the same people who, in answer to Joshua's appeal to them, chose to serve the Lord their God, that recounted all His ways, and said they would serve Him because He had redeemed them out of Egypt, and because they had remembered all His ways with them? Is it possible these could be the same as those of whom God says, in Ezekiel, that they were in the habit of coming to hear the words of the Lord, "And they sit before thee as my people, and they hear my words, but they *will not do them*?"

Now, beloved friends, we have been here for three days, and we, like Israel of old, have been recounting the wonders of redemption. We have been speaking of our conflicts, and of the power by which we are more than conquerors, and we, too, have been singing praises to our God. I wonder whether any of us will be found in the position of the children of Israel, of whom God said, in Ezekiel, that all they

heard was to them "a very *ovely* song, for they hear, and do not." I have thought, many times to-day, of a verse in 1st Corinthians, "Ye came together, not for the better, but for the worse." It was spoken to those who came to the Lord's table in a condition dishonouring to God; but wherever God's people assemble, there the Lord is present, whether it be at His table in the church at Corinth, or at the Believers' meetings in Dublin; and wherever He is present, He is present in His own character—His attributes never change. Dispensations may vary, and man may be allowed in one dispensation to draw near to a God that he could not approach in another; but it is not because God's character or attributes have changed, but because Christ has died and risen, and has gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us. The God that appeared as a consuming fire at Sinai is a consuming fire still, and the holiness that required Joshua to put off his shoes from off his feet when he stood in His presence demands the same from us to-day; while we seek to be learners, we must be worshippers; and if we have met here in any other spirit, we shall have come together not for the better, but for the worse. What were each of our thoughts when we came to those meetings? Did we say, one to another, like Israel, "Come, I pray you, let us go up to the Believers' meetings"? And had God, who knows all

our thoughts, to say of any one of us, "They hear My words, but they will not do them?" It is a solemn, a most solemn thing, to be present at these meetings, for we *must* have come together either for the better or for the worse. If we hear words here that we acknowledge to be blessed and helpful and true, and that they awake in us no corresponding responsibility, they are to us but as "a very lovely song," and we have come together not for the better, but for the worse. There was seed sown in stony places, which was anon with joy received, but it brought no fruit to perfection; and it is possible that addresses may be heard here, and enjoyed too, and be to us afterwards but as the sound of a lovely song. We have all stony and thorny ground in our hearts, and need to "take heed how we hear."

We live in solemn times; everything around us tells us so. The greatest minds of the day are bursting God's bands and casting His cords from them. Satan is writing the name of Christ on thousands of things that are his own, and he is content to let the world have Christ on its *lips*, provided *he* keeps *his* place in the *heart*. Iniquity is coming on like a flood, and God, instead of resisting it, is retreating before it; and so it must go on, till God retreats altogether from the government of the world that has refused Him, and gives it over, blinded and deluded, into Satan's hands; then shall that wicked one

be revealed—then shall strong delusion come that men should believe the lie. And what is to keep the Lord's poor people in such times, and against such power? There is first this, beloved, the sovereign power of God. I have often watched the tremendous power of the sea on the shores of the Atlantic, and thought, as the huge waves rolled in, in their might, how utterly useless it would be to attempt to resist their strength; but they were all broken into foam on the rocks, and went into fragments when meeting that which was stronger than themselves; and how could *we* stand against the powers that are against us? What force could we oppose against the might of Satan, or how could we escape his wiles? But all his hate, his craft, and his malignity are broken into fragments when they are met by the eternal purposes of God. And this God is our God. This gives us confidence in the darkest hour of trial; but this confidence does not make us careless: for the same Christ that tells us that we are kept by the power of God, bids us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as we know that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. And we can look on all that is taking place around us with calmness, and possessing our souls with patience, can look for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And amidst all the storms that blow so contrary,

we can believe that God is working out His own ends, or rather, letting man work them out.

Once God governed the world *immediately*, and gave the most minute directions for everything that was done under His hand, but now He governs mediately, allowing man, and often Satan, to have his way, but overruling all, and making all things work together for our good and for His glory; and faith can be content to wait the day when the great problem shall be worked out. We bow our heads and worship, and await the time when He shall come, whose right it is. But our place now, in the midst of all this confusion, is to acknowledge Him as the rightful heir of the world, Lord of our acts, our thoughts, and our desires.

And now, dear friends, we are about to separate, and to return to our various spheres of labour; some, it may be, for the platform, some to the sick bed, some to the household duties of life, to bringing up of the children, the keeping of the house—for in everything we can serve the Lord. Let us each seek to take Christ with us where we go; the path of some present may be beset with difficulties, the path of others apparently easy, but it cannot be without its snares, and we may often be constrained to cry out, “Who is sufficient for these things?” but we have the sweet answer, ever the same, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Do not think that the path of active service

for the Lord is necessarily a safe one. Apart from faith, and the active exercise of conscience, it is sin, and Satan knows how to make our service a snare to us, as well as our lusts. God wants first our hearts, and then our service. He is a jealous God, and will not share His place in our hearts with any. God's first charge to Israel was, to keep themselves from idols. And almost the last He gives us in His word is, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," for an idol is not necessarily one of wood and stone, but anything that takes God's place in our hearts.

"Whatever passes as a cloud between  
The Christian's eye of faith and things unseen,  
This is our God, our Idol, though it wear  
Religion's aspect on devotion's air."

When any one has learned Christ as He may be learned, he ceases from idols. "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him, and observed *Him*." May the Lord enable us, as we leave these meetings, to carry with us a sense of the presence of Christ to keep our hearts diligently, for out of them are the issues of life; to learn Him and observe Him, and then we shall say with Ephraim, "What have I to do any more with idols."

"Oh that our thoughts so heavenly pure,  
Our hearts to Christ so fully given,  
That all our hopes, our toils, our care,  
Might only lead us nearer there,  
Where He is set in Heaven."

# RESPONSIBILITY OF HEARERS OF THE WORD.

BY LORD FARNHAM.

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OUR dear brother has omitted the last verse in the chapter he has been speaking on. It has often occurred to me that that last verse is one we should all have before us in the enjoyment of the blessed privileges we have been realizing this day. "And when this cometh to pass." And there is a solemn parenthesis, "(lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them." Compare this passage with another in the tenth of Luke, to which I refer you. In our Lord's mission to the seventy, when He tells the disciples that if they are received by the sons of peace they are to remain; but in the eleventh verse we have these solemn words, "But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive ye not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth to us, we wipe off against you." Then our Lord introduces what follows, with a double word of immense weight, "Notwithstanding,

be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Those who reject the message of the living God might think that they shall never have to account for it; but God tells us that a solemn day is coming when all who turn their back on God's messenger will have to account for it.

We meet not only on the ground of glorious and blessed privileges, but upon the ground of most awful and solemn responsibilities. Often as I have had to address public meetings, I never did so before with such a feeling of responsibility; but I desire that the word spoken shall be a fruitful word to every one of us. It is possible for some who are sitting here (who may be unsaved) under the sound of the solemn truths we have been hearing, to have greater guilt laid at their door than ever shall be laid at the door of Satan, for he shall not have to account for a despised salvation, and for a rejected Saviour. But, let us all remember this, that we have met under solemn responsibilities; and may the Lord grant that it may not be for the worse, but for the better, that we assembled here to-day.

THE following hymn, written by one who has been much used of the Lord in connexion with these meetings, has often been sung at their close with great joyfulness of soul :—

## A SONG OF PRAISE.

COME, ye saints, rejoice with Jesus,  
Called with Him His joy to share ;  
Seraphs worship, angels praise Him ;  
We His friends and fellows are.  
Lost ones found, and  
Dead ones raised,  
Now the heart of Jesus cheer.

Praise the Lord with hallelujahs !  
Endless praises let us bring ;  
Praise His name for these great mercies,  
Turn we now His praise to sing.  
Loudest praises  
Make the court of heaven ring.

Praise Him ! praise Him ! never ceasing,  
Ye who prove God's boundless grace ;  
Have we asked, and has He answered ?  
Thankful hearts to heaven raise.  
He is worthy  
To receive His children's praise.

Hallelujah ! hallelujah !

Heartfelt praise to God we give ;  
They should loudest sing His praises  
Who His blessings thus receive.  
Songs of praises  
Let us render while we live.

Shout, ye ransomed heirs of heaven !  
Saved to show God's praises forth ;  
While ye shout, let joys unspoken  
Fill your hearts with heavenly mirth.  
Hearts exulting,  
Songs outbursting,  
Put to shame the joys of earth.

# GOD OUR REFUGE AND REWARD.

By JAMES BARTON.

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**I**N the first verse of the 15th of Genesis we read, “After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.” “After these things.” what things? The solemn scene of the chapter before (the 14th), where we have Abram as the man of faith in communion with God, used of God to do great things, and blessed of God marvellously. “After these things.” The five kings had gone out against the four, and were defeated, and Abram and his three hundred and eighteen had gone in the power of the Lord, and won a mighty victory; and as he returns, mighty in the Lord, Melchisedec comes out with bread and wine; and that wondrous symbolic scene, describing the priesthood of Jesus, is brought before Abram, and before us; and then the spoil all gathered of the host that has been con-

quered. "And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself." And Abram, mighty in faith, the servant of God, says, "I have lift up my hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich." There was mighty power in this, and there was great reality, that the Lord, the possessor of the whole earth, was *his* God, and that he could lean upon *Him*, and that all he needed was in the Lord, and more, that in the sight of an ungodly world he would not allow a word to be said which would dishonour his God. He would not allow the possessor of these spoils to be pointed at by the Gentiles around him, and say, "We made Abram rich." The Lord should make him rich. And now, "after these things." After these things we would suppose Abram mighty in the Lord still; but oh, friends, it is very easy to come down from a high position of communion with God, and a high position of the walk of faith too—very easy to leave that high position, and to come down and take the position of a poor weak creature; and here we have Abram, as God speaks to him in mighty grace, answering, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go

childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" Is this the Abram of Sodom? Is this the Abram that conquered the kings? Is this the Abram that spoke so boldly about the spoils, and was so faithful to his God? Ah, yes! it is the same Abram. There is one comfort in it; God writes the histories of His people as they are. He does not write the histories of His saints as we see biographies, giving us the good and nice points only of a believer's life. No; God writes the histories of His saints *as they are*, that we may see they have been the same weak people always, and that although they have mighty strength to lean upon, yet that all have sorely tried the longsuffering of our God.

Mark God's dealing with Abram. God seems to see the position that Abram is in, of coming down again; and He comes to him to speak to him, and His word to him is, "Fear not." Why fear? Was it not he who had conquered the kings?—Yes; but he was now in a different state of soul.

Dear children of God, it seems to me that we need this as we go away. It is so easy to get down, and though many of us may be able to say honestly before God to-night, "These have not only been pleasant sounds to my soul—I feel that there has been a real power touching my conscience;" even so, brothers and sisters; take care; it is so easy to get

down ; and here is one of the secrets of coming down, I believe, revealed to us in this story of Abram. What is the matter with Abram ? He has no child ? his heart is longing for a child, and though he could say that the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, was his God, and he could trust Him, he had these plans laid out before him, without which he did not think God could bless him, and *his* plans and *his* ways filled his mind and thoughts, and though God should promise him all the glory that He had, and everything that He could give him, his poor heart says, " Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless ? " How many of us have our own plans and our own ways, as to what would be real blessing to us, which, if we were truly honest with God, must be given up, or broken through. We are very anxious to be real Christians, to be really holy, consecrated to God ; but we take it all in connection with our own plans ; we do not think we could go and do what other people do ; we could not take such and such a position, society would not permit it, or our want of power or gift would not permit it ; we must stand in a certain definite line we have fixed for ourselves ; it may be with us as with Abram. What great blessing can I have ? How can I be what I desire, as long as my own plans are not carried out, as long as

I do not see my way and my part, according to the notions I have laid down for myself? And till then I must wait; instead of "what thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." See how the Lord meets this, even before the objection comes from Abram. The Lord says, "Fear not, Abram." The Lord has always to say, "Fear not" to the poor child of His who is not in close communion. "Fear not!" The Lord always says that to His child. Why? Because it is Satan tells us to fear. "Fear not to approach Me; fear not to trust Me, and to look up into My face; fear not, for My Christ is all for thee, and I see thee as a member of that Christ in whom I am well pleased. Fear not to look up." Satan always tries to make the child of God seek to hide himself—tries to make him feel, "Oh, I am so unworthy; now I cannot have fellowship and sweet communion with God, I am afraid." This is Satan's suggestion. Satan is a liar, and always says exactly the contrary to what is the truth to the unconverted and the believer. He says, "Fear" to the child of God; he says, Fear not to the unbeliever. God has commanded you and me to come. But oh! when we talk of not being afraid of coming close to our Father's heart, I cannot say to an unsaved soul, There is no fear before you; there is fear before you; if you do not come to Jesus, there is *great* fear before you.

But look at that word in the 12th of Luke, and you will see what the Lord says about fear there. He says (4th verse), "I say unto you, My friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do"—that is the height of persecution ;—"but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear ; fear Him which, after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell ; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him." Yes, fear Him. Oh ! if there is a soul here (and there may be some) who have come in with Christians, and sat with them, and heard the blessed sound, and like, it may be, the name of "believer" to be applied to them, and would like to be considered Christians here ; and yet in their inmost soul, it may be, there is this thought—"I have never been to the foot of the cross, never saw Jesus as my Saviour," oh, ere this meeting closes, soul ! I would tell thee that that Jesus, who is our Jesus, reaches forth the hand of loving mercy to you ; He calls you, who to-night are without Him, in the midst of Christians, with a name you do not deserve ; He calls you with all your blackness and hardness of heart, and He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—*you, even you, REST.* He tells you that He was wounded for the sinner's transgressions, bruised for the sinner's iniquities, that the chastisement of the

sinner's peace was upon Him, and that with His stripes the sinner is healed ; and He calls upon you to believe on Him, to trust your soul to Him ; not to a theory, or to sweet sounds ; but to trust to the mighty work of Calvary ; and as you venture to lean upon Christ, and trust in Him, you shall pass from death unto life, by God's mighty grace. That is His truth for you unsaved one, whoever you are, who have come in here amongst Christians, with a name to live, while you are dead. Jesus is willing to make you a real-hearted Christian to-night. Only trust Him, only venture to believe that that mighty atonement is enough for you ; rest there, and God say, " He that believeth hath everlasting life."

But to return. God says, " Fear not " here. And why ? Now I want this as a word for each of us, as we are going away. I am sure God has been speaking deeply to many of us ; we have trembled under the power of God's truth, and have felt, perhaps, " Well, how can I live this consecrated life ? I am going out again into the world, and when to-morrow comes, and the difficulties of my own home life, where there is no speaking and exhorting, and all is perfectly quiet, and where there are no Christians around, how can I live this life ? It is very, very much above the standard I have been living, I am afraid I cannot please God as I would

desire to do in this way." The Lord says, "Fear not." Child, weak child of His, whatever be the smallness of your attainments, and whatever be the low standard of your walk, as surely as you have leant on Jesus of Calvary, you are precious to His heart, and He will have you in yonder glory by and by; and though down here you may be low in your walk and attainments, do not doubt the blessed reality of your being risen in Him; realize that, risen in Him, we stand in the heavenlies, and it is only in the very heart and love of Christ that we will be able to see this clearly, as Christ would have us look at it. It is with no bondaged heart He would have you look at this consecrated walk. He says, "*Friend, come up higher.*" He says you were walking in the mire; I want you to get up into a higher position; I want you to see brighter glories, and to walk in brighter joy. And it is for this purpose I ask you to put these things to your consciences. Are you wholly given to Christ? Oh, dear friends, the "fear not" comes in; Jesus is yours, and you are His—"fear not."

And now the reason. "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Do not say this is all for Abram; for if you look at the 3rd chapter of Galatians, you see you have a full right to the blessings here promised to Abram; you will see it at the 9th

verse : " So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." " I am thy shield," saith the Lord. Now we had the armour in the 6th of Ephesians brought out for us the other day, and then we were told to use the shield. But what is the shield given us in the 6th of Ephesians ? or are there two shields ? You have in the 6th of Ephesians, " Taking the *shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked," all those demons we have been hearing about, all the fiery darts of all these devils, and now God says here, " I am thy shield : " and Paul, writing to the Ephesians, tells them to take the shield of faith. Are there two shields ? No, I believe not. Faith itself is no more than works before God, as a shield in itself ; but faith is the leaning of the creature upon the strength of the living God ; faith in Christ is the leaning of the soul upon Christ ; faith in God is the leaning of the soul upon God. God Himself is the shield to him who leans upon Him ; faith lays hold upon the strength of God, and God is the shield of the believer. When we go out into the world, how are we to get this shield between us and these devils ? How is it that God is to be a shield round about us ? We have the statement, you know, " The Lord God is a sun and shield. He will give grace and glory." The Lord is a sun shining in brightness and glory ;

the Lord is a shield to protect His people. The same truth is here. The shield is the Lord's strength; faith lays hold of it; you and I go into temptation, or are pressed by the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil. How are we to meet them? (and this is a practical question). The way we are to meet them is by that faith which lays hold on the strength of the Lord for His people. Satan tempts and presses me—"Lord, I trust Thee; do Thou deliver me." Here is the "stand fast." Here is the "stand" in the armour; this is using the shield of faith; it is a stand still so far as any work on my part is concerned. I stand, trusting the Lord; this is the shield of faith, and as the soul trusts the Lord, the deliverance will come, and the soul in faith says, "Lord, now I *expect* you *will* deliver me." Faith lays hold on God, grasps the promise, and finds deliverance. "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." If Jesus, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame," the Lord desires us to look away to what He has prepared for His people, and He says, "I am thy exceeding great reward." It is not the riches of Sodom; it is the exceeding riches which God has prepared, the exceeding glory that God has prepared, a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." God says, "I am thy reward;" not

merely, I will *give* thee a reward, but "*I am thy reward.*" Oh, beloved, it will be as we are able to take this in, we will profit by it. God Himself is what I want; I want Him to be all in all to me; not the approval of Christians, not the status among religious people, not what religious people think of me, not what I may be spoken of, or have to do in the Lord's work, or be said to do for the Lord, not what I may enjoy about the things of the Lord; but I want the Lord Himself to be my God, and that I should be His son. And if you and I, to-night, and as we go forth in daily walk, would grasp this truth as a reality, God is all in all to me His child down here, and in heaven He will be all in all to me; as we grasp this now, and as we anticipate the glory for a motive-power for service, and take it into our daily walk, God in Christ, the One alone to sympathize with us, to deliver us in our conflicts, to work for in our service, and to be the heaven of our future, it is as we realize this, that we will walk in communion with Him, and glorify Him on the earth.

# INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE DEFEAT.

By C. F. BLAND.

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**I**T is the privilege of every child of God to know that everything he does concerns God. God was pleased when His people were brought out of Egypt. He tells them to date their very existence from the day they were brought out. In the book of Deuteronomy He tells the object of His bringing them out: He says He brought them out that He might bring them in. Exodus tells us of His bringing them out. Joshua tells us of His bringing them in, and it shows us that after they were brought in, God gave them something to do in the way of possessing the land into which they were brought. It is a very common thing for Christians, when they are converted to God, to rest satisfied with being converted, and to forget that the fact of their being converted brings responsibility with it, and that everything they do concerns God. There are other expressions in the previous parts of the Word of God, and one or two after, something like that of Joshua. Israel on two occasions, when some little trouble occurred

to them, wished they might get back into Egypt. This was not Joshua's wish. Israel's wish, when trouble seemed before them, was that God had left them there: "It had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." In another place they lusted after the things of Egypt, and they desired to go back again. "We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic; but now our souls are dried away, there is nothing at all beside this manna before our eyes." And you know, dear friends, that those expressions and desires of the hearts of Israel did not result at all from the same thing that the desire of Joshua did. It was not that the children of Israel were afraid that the glory of God would be touched; but because their wicked hearts lusted after the things of Egypt, and they forgot from what they had been delivered. If one looks back at the deliverance from Egypt, it is perfectly amazing that anyone could for one moment allow the thought to rest in their minds of going back into it. They came out from bondage, where the waters, that should have been for refreshment, were turned to blood; where the air was filled with flies, and the judgments of God came down in hail. They were delivered out of darkness into a light which went before them by

day; and yet the people that knew what redemption was, and saw what God had done for them, actually forgot what God had done, and desired to go back again, one time because a little trouble was before them, another because they lusted for the things of Egypt. As I was coming down here to-night, I believe there was a ball at the Lord Mayor's, and I began to think of Egypt. There was a time when that was my occupation. What would it be to go back from what we feast on here to the fleshpots of Egypt—to the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic. I do not suppose there is anyone who has not detected his own heart (any Christian, at least, who cares for the glory of God), who has not some time almost found the expression of Joshua on his lips, when he found himself in circumstances where he feared the glory of God would be touched. But it is one thing to consider the glory of God; and it is another thing to think, like Israel, of eating of the fleshpots of Egypt.

Now, I am not going to refer in detail to the circumstances of this chapter; others have often done that before me; but I want to say a few words on the result of the defeat of Israel told of here, and the causes manifest. God never brought His people into the promised land, for the purpose of leaving them defeated; and God never brought a Christian

from darkness into His marvellous light, and delivered him from the power of Satan, with the purpose that he should be defeated; and therefore I say a Christian should never be content with defeat, or with being anything else than a victor. God is with us now, as He promised to be with Joshua, and if Israel is defeated, there is a reason for it, and if you and I are defeated in the conflict with the world and the devil, and in the conflict with our own hearts, there is a reason for it too, and the eye that could search out Israel, first by tribes, then by families, and then man by man, sees into every heart before Him, and knows what is the reason if we suffer a defeat. Joshua did not know where the wedge of gold or the Babylonish garment was; but the Lord knew it—Achan thought it was hid; but the Lord knew it, and not only was Achan punished, but Israel was defeated on account of it.

Dear friends, there is something more for Christians to consider than individual defeat; there is *collective* defeat; and these are the times when we should take it to heart as to what our position is, and see that our condition is not only individual, but collective. Now, a thing that would have been taken little notice of in the wilderness, would attract much attention in the promised land. The book of Deuteronomy is the reiteration of the

law of God—God making a covenant with Israel, and promising to deliver them from all their enemies, *provided* they obeyed Him. The book of Joshua shews God fulfilling His part. Judges shews Israel lamentably failing, and breaking their part. The key-note of the book of Joshua is “Gilgal;” and the key-note of the book of Judges is “Bochim;” and in all the victories Israel had, you will remark all the camp returned to Gilgal, the place of the putting away of the flesh; they were circumcised again at Gilgal; and if we dwell on the victory, remember that the flesh is nothing, or we shall meet with the same fate that Israel did before Ai. They trusted in their own strength in this case; in their own wisdom in the next; and in both they failed and suffered defeat. I do not know whether you have noticed this, how, when one reads the Word of God alone, it finds one out. When we sit down to read the Word of God together, God lets us, generally, find out something from it; but I find, when I sit down to read the Word of God alone, I generally get found out—that there is something there which speaks to my heart and conscience; something of the two edged-sword; something like Solomon’s sword—a type of the sword of the Spirit. One says, The living child is mine; and the other says, The dead child is hers; and Solomon’s sword is going to

divide the joints and marrow asunder, and thus the Word of God does the very same. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we read that the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow. Now, it is a sharper sword than Joshua's. It is one that goes into the thoughts and intents of the heart—it is a two-edged sword. There are parts of the Word of God which refer often to an unbeliever—a two-edged sword. Well, it is a blessed thing, when making a stroke at an unbeliever, to let it come back on ourselves, and see that we are proof against the other side of it. There are parts which speak to Christians, which remind an unbeliever of his condition—it is a two-edged sword.

But as I said before, it makes a great difference whether an act is done in the wilderness or in the land. In the Book of Deuteronomy God says, When you come to the land, recollect you shall do no more as ye have done, for ye are not yet come into the land. Everything, as they advance, has a new importance, and fresh responsibility for them. No one would have thought that Israel, who often in later times lost two hundred thousand men in a battle, would think anything of a defeat in which six and thirty men were slain. See the verse before

the 6th. "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide." Why did Joshua rend his clothes? Because there were six and thirty men slain; because the people who went out to battle were God's people, and God never intended His people to be defeated, even to six and thirty men. And Joshua falls on his face before God when six and thirty men fall. Dear friends, there is something in that little handful of men. Joshua might have said, "Heretofore we lost hundreds and thousands—it is nothing to the destruction in Egypt." But he takes note of six and thirty men slain. Suppose a man who was a blasphemer and a swearer, once a sinner; and known of all men as a sinner and a great sinner; but he is brought out of Egypt, and passes over Jordan into the land, and becomes a saved man; and that some little expression escapes him which is not worthy of God. Suppose the enemy thus gets the victory over him; it is six and thirty men. He may say, What is it to what I used to do; before I used to be seen drunk, reeling down the streets, and no one will take notice of this; it is six and thirty men. We must not be content with the smallest defeat; it is the Name of God which is concerned. Joshua failed, till he cast himself upon his face. He had to learn yet what was

the right thing to do when defeat came, to search it out in the presence of God, and to find out the cause. And if we are defeated we must search it out. It is not the little word only; but even the little thought. Why, I remember when thoughts would dwell in my soul for days, that would give me pain to have in my mind for one moment now; and so never qualify your defeat by what went before. If you do you are forgetting what is due to the great Name of God.

“And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan.” Dear friends, the Red Sea typifies death and resurrection. Jordan typifies the entering practically into the power of death and resurrection; it is realizing the power in our own souls, realizing the enjoyment of it—realizing that we are no longer brought out to be conquered by anything, even to six and thirty men, or by the slightest thing that is wrong; we ought to be more than conquerors; we should live above these things, where the temptation cannot reach us, in the highest communion with God.

If a man is hunted by a lion or a tiger, he may escape, or shoot it—he is a conqueror. But a man

may be on the top of a place like Nelson's pillar yonder—he is safe there; he is above the danger, and it cannot reach him. And when a man is in communion with God, there is no fear of his being defeated by that which is below him. "Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan." I have no doubt this tells in many ways. It may be some have been brought into a condition, or circumstances, where they ran well for a time, and thought it was a blessed thing to give up the world, and think of nothing but the things of God; and yet when they go away from Christ, and get into the world, there is the thought, "Would to God I had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan. I wish I had not got on so far in the knowledge of the truth." On the other side of Jordan it was out of Egypt; but it was a negative position; but something more—being in the promised land, there was constant acquiring. It was not only being out of Egypt; but it was every place where the sole of your feet shall tread, is yours." And there is a most blessed word there, where God says, (Ex. xxiii. 29, 30,) "When I drive out these enemies from before thee, I will not drive them out in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be in-

creased, and inherit the land." I am sure there are many Christians who clear the whole field at once, and then the beasts rise up against them. They take a step beyond their faith; they walk by sight, conformed to something else, instead of Christ, and the consequence is, when they have a great space round them, they are not able to occupy it, and the beasts of the field increase against them.

8th verse: "O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" Now, dear friends, there are two things here. Lower down it says, "Israel hath sinned." There is the collective loss, because of individual sin. Here Joshua takes the responsibility on himself when the whole of Israel has failed. 9th verse: "For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great Name?" In the 14th of Numbers there is a most beautiful expression, when God said He would cut off Israel. Israel had sinned, and God said He would cut them off, and make of Moses "a greater nation, and mightier, than they. And Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for Thou broughtest up this people in Thy might from among them), and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land; for they have heard that

Thou, Lord, art among this people—that Thou, Lord, art seen face to face, and that Thy cloud standeth over them, and that Thou goest before them, by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now, if Thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of Thee, will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which He sware unto them; therefore He hath slain them in the wilderness.” When anything seems to bring dishonour on the Name of God, does the first thought come into your mind, then the Egyptians will hear it?” And mark, in the case of Moses, the cutting off of Israel was to be his gain; but that was nothing to the man in the mount with God. The first thought is that the Egyptians will hear it. And suppose I am to get something that will bring me gain, but that the Egyptians will hear. What is to be my first thought? My first thought should be, the Egyptians will hear; they will say, It was because the Lord was not able to keep him. Every fall the Christian gets, the Egyptians hear of it, and watch for it, and say, God was not able to keep him. So Joshua says here, “Then the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land, shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth, and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great Name.”

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up, wherefore liest thou upon thy face?” The first thing Joshua should have done was to have gone to God. Now, dear friends, God gives us His Word to search us, and He gives us His Spirit to lead us into the knowledge of Himself, and if we get a knowledge of God, and what His character is, we will have no difficulty in finding out what is contrary to God in us. I do not expect to find in this Book a text for everything I want to do; but I do expect to find in this Book what the character of God is, and what is contrary to His mind and nature.

Now I have applied this little defeat at Ai to individual defeat, I want to say something about collective defeat. I want to ask all who are the Lord's here, Has the thought ever risen to your mind, Would God I had been content, and never come over Jordan; I mean with regard to the knowledge of the truth as to our collective privileges and responsibilities, and the figure we have cut before the world? Is it nothing that we are scattered? Is this a question of six and thirty men, and we are not to mind it? Is the glory of God touched by what we are? Suppose a man was converted in some heathen country, and after reading in Romans the wonderful truth of justification by faith, and finding in the 6th chapter death and resurrection,

and in the 8th, no separation from the love of Christ, and then going on and finding the responsibility which flows from his life in Christ, and from his not being able to be separated from Christ, and then learning in Corinthians what the church was, supplied with everything needed, with gifts of all sorts, great principles by which they were to be guided in everything;—he goes on and reads in Ephesians how God had chosen him in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in every epistle these wondrous truths followed up by exhortations to love one another, to bear one another's burdens, to be kind and tender-hearted one to another, even as Christ was;—and then he comes to his family, and speaks about the glory of this wonderful thing—tells them he read in the Word of God there was such a thing as the church of the living God, and the members of it cared for each other as the hand for the foot, and that each member of it did his appointed office, so that the various gifts had their various positions, and were required to fill them;—and never thinking he would find anything else, he came to England, and on the Lord's day he says, "I will go to where this whole Christian nation meets; and what a blessed thing it will be to go from that heathen country, where all is wickedness, and sin, and stealing, and lying, and cursing, and come

to a place where this wonderful body works in harmony, and how they come and worship together, and realize the presence of Christ in their midst, and act in the power of a present Holy Ghost, and how unbelievers come in and confess that of a truth God was there;—and he comes out and meets a person, and says, “Where shall I find the church of the living God?” “The *what*, sir?” “I want to find the church of the living God.” Where would the man direct him? Ah! dear friends, anyone who has looked at what the church of God is, what its glory is, and sees what it has become,—a number of factions and systems, and men taking individual positions irrespective of what the church of God is, sometimes the expression has almost come to my own lips, “Would God we had never come over Jordan.” If it did, I trust the voice of God would always come, saying, “Up, wherefore liest thou on thy face.” Now, dear friends, we are not to be content with these things; it concerns the glory of God. The Canaanites hear and laugh at us, “And what wilt thou do unto thy great Name?” We are too apt to recollect our individual walk and responsibility, to recollect our individual calling, and forget the collective one. It is *Israel* who have sinned. What shall *I* do, says Joshua. And then God, as He always does, points out what to do, to search out,

and the place to search out is where the thing is hidden. It may be hidden in my heart; I trust if it is, God will find it out. Israel would have been victorious but for the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment. "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff; therefore, the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." Now you see, dear friends, victory must always be had by the power of God resting upon us, and if there is not victory, but defeat, it is because there is something among us which hinders this victory, and because God cannot abide that which is evil. God says He cannot be with Israel any more except they destroy the accursed from among them. God cannot go before Israel when a Babylonish garment, or the wedge of gold, was among them. I need not say that the Babylonish garment and the wedge of gold typify something of the world. It may be one thing to one, another thing to another; but if it is hidden, there must be defeat instead of victory. Let us take heed of the defeat of the six and thirty men. If we take

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care of the little things, the great things will take care of themselves. He that is faithful in little is faithful in much; and he that is unjust in little, is unjust in great things. We must begin with the individual searching of the heart; but we are not to forget the collective.

# VICTORY AMIDST DEFEAT.

By HENRY GROVES.

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**I** WOULD just say a few words, dear friends, carrying on what we have been hearing. The last verse of that 7th chapter of Joshua contains that little word, "The valley of Achor;" and if you turn to the prophecy of Hosea (ii. 15), you will read, "And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth."

I do not know, dear believers in the Lord, a more important thing for us always to remember than this, that the place of a Christian is a place where hope always abounds, because it is a place where God is. Let us always remember that, and whatever the darkness of things around us might be, the children of God will be enabled still to go on; having a door of hope; but where? In the valley of Achor; in the very place that marked God's sorest judgments; in the place where Achan and all he had was stoned and burned with fire, that is the place God has given as the door of hope. Our brother has been

speaking to us of the sorrow and darkness around ; but, dear friends, God remains, and let our souls just lay hold on this ; the God of hope is there, and the God of hope is our God still. We are now as Israel was, some hundreds of years later, when God says to Zerubbabel, "Be strong, be strong." Why ? "For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you ; fear not." We often hear about dispensations failing ; thank God, no dispensation fails, because every dispensation fulfils what He who appointed it intends ; and, thank God, every dispensation accomplishes God's purpose. I often feel we get into terrible weakness by thinking of dispensations failing ; Israel's dispensation fulfilled the object for which it was dispensed, and the dispensation we are in now does the same ; for it shows that God is equal to every emergency and necessity. When we look at the history of the church of God, what do we need to realize more than that God says to Israel in the prophecy of Haggai, "My Spirit remaineth still," as the word is in the Hebrew, "My Spirit standeth still among you ?" Let us realize this, the Spirit of God standeth with us still : "I will be with you to the very end." Do we believe it ? We say yes ; and yet we find some dear children of God weeping

and mourning, as if God had gone. In Haggai Israel's kingdom had gone, and Israel's power and glory had gone; but God says, "I am there still," and that is enough. Then, dear friends, in the midst of every circumstance let God's children, individually and collectively, remember the truth, that all is not gone as long as God remains; and we have got that blessed assurance of our Lord and Master:—"I will be with you." How long? As long as you are obedient? As long as you shall see this, that, and the other? No, dear friends, but the word is, "I will be with you to *the end*." Oh! if the church of God could only lay hold on this, we should realize what God desired Israel to realize when He brought them into the land; and centuries after, when He brought them back again into the land, they had with them that one blessing which makes every other loss comparatively as nothing; for what are all other losses when God Himself remains, and remains, as He says Himself, "the God of hope." If you turn to the epistle to the Hebrews, and the sixth chapter, you will find they had been abounding in their work and love; but one thing they began to fail in, they began to fail in their hope; and therefore the apostle says, "I pray you may have the full assurance of the hope;" he was not content that their work might be abounding, or that

their love might be abundant ; but what he sought was, that they might realize the uplifting power of the hope which God has set before us. We want it now. In that verse in Haggai it is said that a door of hope is given ; and what then ? “ Then shall she sing as in the days of her youth.” Are the singing days of the church all gone by ? No, dear friends, “ Then shall she sing as in the days of her youth.” And why ? Because God Himself remains, and God has said, “ I have betrothed thee to myself.” Rest in that ; we are the betrothed of God for eternity ; nothing can break that ; it is an eternal covenant which God has made in His Son ; and so the apostle, when he seeks to comfort the Hebrews, as God sought again and again to comfort Israel, comforts them with this ; he says there are two immutable things, and what are they ? The counsel of God on the one hand, and the promise of God on the other. There was the counsel and the promise, and what was the counsel ? “ Willing the more abundantly to show the immutability of His promise, He confirmed it by an oath.” Let trials come, let dangers and sorrows, come ; for all personal and individual sorrows for all church sorrows, come from what source they will, for all of them God has given us one remedy, and it is God. You remember the burden of the 62nd psalm, “ God only.” It is easy to read that

psalm ; but to be able to say, as we get onward into clouds, and mist, and darkness, "God only," and to say, by God's grace, God is enough, is no little thing. Let us ask ourselves, Is it a great thing God requires of us, to be able to realize that first and last of all truths, that God is sufficient, sufficient for everything ? How slow we are to learn it. And what is God doing ? God is bringing His people individually, and His church collectively, where He may show them He is still the same, the resting place for all who trust in Him. It seems very little when God asks that we should trust Him implicitly. Yes, it is a little thing, and it ought not to be a hard thing, that we are called upon to trust Him who, out of the riches of His own grace, gave His own Son, that He might come and redeem our souls from present and from eternal woe. Let us seek to bring these thoughts to bear on our difficulties and our cares, and we shall find that God remains and is true to Himself. Ah, I have often thought of that little word repeated again and again, "Consider your ways." God grant that we do not say, as our brother remarked, "It is only six and thirty men ; they are very few." No matter how small the defeat ; if we take care of the little defeats, we shall get no great ones. But we get great defeats because we say, "Only six and thirty men."

Young Christians! if there is any one thing we would press upon you more than another, it is the bitter experience resulting from thinking little of a small defeat. God wants us to be ever upon our guard, He wants us to remember He has purposes of infinite grace, and gives Himself to us; and we have the words of the apostle Paul, who speaks of "the sufficiency of God," and that is what we have to learn. But what do we find in Haggai's history? "Every man went to his own home." There was the secret of Israel's sorrow and loss; and what was the result of every man taking care of himself? God left them to themselves. Now the grand thing for us to learn is, that if we want God to care for us, and watch over us, our eyes must be towards Him, remembering Him who said, "I have set the Lord always before me." God will take care to be at our right hand, if we only take care to keep Him always before us. Now, that is just the very thing Israel had not done, for they had been building every man his own house, and taking care of themselves; and therefore God says, "I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands." God sends the blight. Why?

Because every man was taking care of himself.

May God write this with His own finger upon our hearts, that we may ever have the joy of a living consciousness of His presence. Without it what is life? What is life without the consciousness of nearness and communion with God? There was a time when we got on very well in Egypt, and when Egyptian habits and Egyptian ways were our ways and habits; but when by the grace of God, He brought us out of Egypt, what was it for? "I brought you out to bring you to Myself." Now dear friends, there is no truth we need to remember more than that. The beginning and the end of all God's truth, is to bring us to Himself, and into His own bosom; and so Jesus, when speaking of the coming glory and kingdom, what is it? "I will come and receive you *unto Myself*." And as God's purpose is to bring us to Himself, He will allow of nothing to come between Himself and the believer. We need to learn this, not only as individuals, but as members of the church of God, and to realize that our one resting place is the bosom of our God. The one pillow on which we may rest our weary head, is the bosom of our Lord and Master. It is there that John rested; and it is there our God would have us to rest; and as we get into the bosom of our Lord and Master, we shall know the joy and peace God

gives to His beloved. Thank God for the trials of our way, and the difficulties of our path; and thank God for everything that proves that you are nothing, and that I am nothing; but thank God, that God is everything, and He is all in all; and the whole history of the bible is a revelation to us of this fundamental truth. And now, are we to be troubled because of the way, because of our failures there? Nay, rather let us thank God we have learned deep lessons—that we are nothing; but let us remember that there is a “door of hope” opened to us by our God in the valley of Achor, where we may learn that God is sufficient for all our needs, and able and willing to meet all our necessities. I believe it is very important for us to remember that nothing fails; because God always provides, and always remains; and so God says: “Yet now be strong, O Zerubabel, saith the Lord; and be strong O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work, for I am with yon, saith the Lord of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations

shall come ; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Notice how that word comes in,—“The Lord of hosts.” And then He goes on to say : “The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts,” and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts. This chapter is all connected with that one word, “Shake, shake, shake,” everything is to be shaken, to shew and to prove that there is One above all the shaking, and above all the confusion. Upon Him God wants us to rest ; not on that which is under the grasp and dominion of the wicked one ; but to rest where there is no shaking. And if God shakes the church, He has never given the church as a resting place for His people, but Christ ; and the more we realize this, the happier we shall be, and shall view calmly all the shaking going on around us. May the Lord grant to us, in the midst of so many causes for sorrow and trial, to realize that there is something above and beyond it all—and that is God Himself—and He is a faithful resting place. The Lord turn our eyes from ourselves, and from the difficulties of our path—from everything, that we might look up to God Himself, and be able to say, as our blessed Lord said, “I thank Thee, O Father ; for so it seemeth good in

Thy sight." Jesus found a resting place in God, and He was only giving us a lesson, that we might find our resting place in God too. Then, dear friends, let things be as bad as they may, it is but an opportunity for God to manifest Himself as the God of hope to our souls; but we must get down to the valley of Achor. Have we got there? Is the golden wedge and the Babylonish garment, burned with fire? for as long as we harbour the golden wedge, and wear the Babylonish garment, we have not got where hope can find us. God's children often say, "God is very good and kind." Yes, dear friends, but He is very *holy*. Let us thank God. we have a holy God to deal with; and let not the saints of God boast in the goodness and kindness of God, except they measure it by the holiness of God; for His mercy and kindness is in proportion to the holiness of His character. Let us remember this, and we shall thank God for bringing us down in the valley of Achor. We may have plenty to burn, and some things to bring again and again to burn in the valley of Achor; something dear to us as our own heart's blood, it may be; but, as we value the presence of our God, let us know nothing dear but God Himself. God give to us to know this; and then to go on our way; as I read in that beautiful little verse: that she shall come to the songs of her youth.

Oh, how God delights to hear these songs in these latter days, when all things are in confusion around, how sweet to God are those early church songs, which the church began to sing; and, thank God, we can sing them still. The Lord give us grace, and the Lord give us hearts, to put ourselves where they can be sung; for if we put ourselves beyond where we can sing them, we may tune our hearts in vain for the song. Let us remember that last word, "The valley of Achor," the place of burning; but the place of burning is the place of hope. The Lord give us grace, each one, to burn all that has to be burned. Just like Jacob, before he could go to Bethel, he must get the idols, and bury them; so must we. And do not let us try to bury other people's gods; but bury our own. Do not let us try to burn other people's garments; but let us bring our own wedge of gold, and our own Babylonish garment, and burn them before our God, and then we may have grace to go to a brother or sister, and say: Hast thou not some Babylonish garment somewhere? We do need to deal with our own souls before God. It is very easy to pluck out what is in the eye of another; but to pluck it out of *our own* eye! It is very easy to cut off *another's* right hand; but to cut off *our own* right hand and foot, is what we are called to do. The Lord help us all to begin.

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considering our own ways before our God ; and we shall then be prepared to be a blessing to the church of God and to the world—God Himself taking His own place in our souls, as the God of hope in Christ Jesus.

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# THE HOUSE OF GOD.

By JOHN G. McVICKER.

2 Chron. ii. 1—6.

WE were hearing this morning, beloved friends, about the great sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ for our sins, and these verses came very much into my mind as our brother was speaking to us about what Jesus had suffered for us : the determination of Solomon to build a house for the Lord God. Solomon, you know, was a man who had been left by his father a great amount of wealth ; no gathering of wealth ever made could be compared to the amount of gold and silver his father had left in his charge ; and if he had been so minded, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for him to have appropriated that wealth from the purposes for which David intended it, to his private use. We were last night hearing and being warned about that man who could not resist the temptation of appropriating the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment, when he had them in his power ; but here we have the case of a man with, I suppose, something like a thousand millions of treasure at his disposal,

and yet determining in his heart that he will use every fraction of it for the building of a house for the Lord God ; that he will have nothing of it for himself, but will appropriate it all to God. And, brethren, have we not in his case a weak figure of what our Lord Jesus Christ determined to do for the glory of His Father ? The wealth at the disposal of Solomon was nothing, in comparison with the riches (for “He was rich”) that our Lord Jesus Christ had at His disposal. There were some limits to Solomon’s riches ; but there were none to those of the Son of God. If you would gather all the riches, and all the glory of all the worlds in space, and all the angels in heaven, and put them all together, what would they be in comparison with the riches that the eternal Son of the eternal God had at His disposal ? And yet what was it came into the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ ? He saw us down here in our sins—enemies to God and perishing. And it came into His mind that, at the cost of all the riches and all the glory that He had, He would build a house for the name of the Lord God His heavenly Father out of the materials that he would find here, that He would redeem here, and quicken here, and cleanse here ; a glorious house for the indwelling and worship of the Lord for ever. And then remember that the Lord Jesus kept back nothing for Himself—He emptied Himself. I do

not know that there could be a greater contrast imaginable than between the glory of the Son of God up there from eternity in His Father's bosom, and then a little baby born down here. Why the poorest, commonest woman in the world, has a private room in which to bring forth her offspring; but the Son of God was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger. Oh, what a contrast between the glories of the Creator, for there was nothing in heaven or on earth that He had not made, and this poor helpless baby on a mother's knee. And yet if there could be a greater contrast, we find it when we go on through the life our Lord lived here, and through the carpenter's shop to that cross of which God spoke to us so solemnly this morning. Oh, think of it, the One in the bosom of God from eternity hanging on the cross outside of Jerusalem between two thieves. Suppose we had been looking at that sight, and some one came and whispered to us, "Do you know who that Man is?" and said, "That Man hanging there is the Maker of heaven and earth." Why, we would think he had escaped from a lunatic asylum. The Maker of heaven hanging on a cross! And more than that; for we know more than any one that saw Him on that cross; we know there were unseen sorrows endured by our Lord Jesus Christ, to which the sorrows that came from the nails in His hands and feet were as nothing;

when His Father smote Him ; when, as in the words of the original, "It delighted God to bruise Him." It delighted Jehovah to bruise Him, and He put Him to grief. Oh think of what our Lord sacrificed. Think of what our Lord did and suffered, that He might build a house out of the materials, part of which are gathered in this room this morning, that He found lying in the mire of sin, and build out of us the most glorious edifice that could be imagined, for God Himself to dwell in. I was looking at the 5th of Hebrews the other day, where the prayers of our Lord Jesus Christ are spoken of (7th v.), "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared." I used to think that verse concerned only Gethsemane, and that it was the strong crying and tears and suffering of our Lord *there alone* were spoken of here ; but it struck me, surely that is the description of the prayers and crying and tears of our Lord Jesus Christ through His lifetime. For any of you, who have known the value of souls, know what sorrow it is when God makes you feel the pressure of souls on your hearts, that there are thousands going down to the pit, and you cannot put out your hand to save. I know we can preach the gospel to them ; but God Almighty only can save. Some of you

know better than I do what it is to have the chair you are kneeling at wet with tears, and your very souls rent asunder, crying that souls may be brought to God. And that is what, I believe, it was with our blessed Lord when He was here. He had no business in death apart from us; it was we who were down in death; and He felt the pressure of our souls upon His Spirit; and oh, how He spent the night in tears and crying to God to deliver Him as the Head, and us as the body. There was nothing our Lord kept back. He had one determined purpose, from the beginning of His life to the moment when He hung on the cross, that He might save His people from their sins, and build up a house for the Lord God of Hosts to dwell in.

Now, beloved friends, what becomes us who are the objects of this everlasting love, and who owe everything we have worth having and hoping for, to Him? And oh! what hopes we have before us! to sit with Jesus our Lord that loved us, and loves us, and gave Himself for us, to sit with Him on His throne for ever. Think, oh think of it. Not a thousand years distant from us; but *close at hand* to us—the glory we shall have associated with the risen Son of God for ever and ever. When the names now glorious on the earth shall be buried for ever in oblivion, then we shall be reigning for ever with the Son of God in

a kingdom embracing the entire created universe; for ever and ever. Oh, brethren, the world has its crowns, and its thrones, and riches and glories; we do not covet them, we would not look at them, by the grace of God. It would be coming down from a throne to a dunghill, to have anything to do with them. We want Jesus and the glory with *Him*, and we shall have it, as surely as we are gathered here to-day, for ever and for ever. And now, beloved brethren, is this in our hearts. "Solomon determined to build a house for the Name of the Lord." Is it the fixed, and settled, and deliberate purpose of our being, that we shall build a house for the Lord our God? I believe that those builders had sympathy of heart with Solomon in the great work he was doing; that those burden-bearers, and hewers of stone, were not mere hirelings; but men in sympathy with the Royal heart, and knew they were cutting stones for the house of God; and it did not matter whether they were burden-bearers, or stone-cutters, or what they were; they had their place appointed by the king, and were all building a house for the Name of the Lord, with one heart and with one purpose. And now what is the single purpose of our hearts? I remember once reading that the chief mark of all great minds in the world, is this—unity of purpose. I believe there is a great deal of truth in

that. True, we cannot all have great minds; but we can have this quality that marks them, by getting fully into our hearts the sacrifice our Lord Jesus Christ has made for us, and the place into which He has brought us, and that He designs for us, that we may lose ourselves in Him. I do not know anything sadder than to see that man we were hearing of last night, forgetting the glory of God and the welfare of Israel in his own miserable greed for that bit of gold and the Babylonish garment. And mark, the purpose of God in that victory at Jericho; and it was to be a model victory. The purpose of God was this, that there should not be a man in all Israel one penny the richer for all the victory; everything that could be burned was to be burned, and everything that could not be burned was to be brought into the temple of God, and no one was to be the richer for the victory. And now, beloved, are we of that mind? If we are seeking anything for ourselves—and God knows, and we know something of the self-seeking of our hearts; but if we are seeking to be the richer for the work we are doing for God, God will disappoint us, the power will be gone, and the victory will be lost. Ah, I have seen not a few evangelists, once men of power; but when they were strong they began to lift themselves up, and alas, the victory

was taken from them, and the power gone; for God could not use them. God knows the one who is speaking, is speaking to himself as well as to you. Let us search ourselves. Let us see to it, beloved brethren, that we are honest before God; that we want nothing, nothing, nothing for ourselves whatsoever, willing to be anything in the work of God; but oh, is it the single determined purpose of our hearts? Can we open ourselves to God and say, "Lord, Thou knowest it, I have lost my individuality in Christ; I have no purpose of my own now. If I spent my life in seeking honour for myself now, it would be clear loss; but I am lost in Jesus; and it is when Christ is glorified, that I am enriched." Have we lost ourselves in our Lord Jesus Christ? And is the one purpose of our hearts that Jesus, Jesus—Jesus, the One who gave everything up for us—the One who suffered everything for us, and the One (blessed be His Name) that on the very throne of glory has not forgotten us; but is continually occupied with us—should be glorified. Is that what we live for, and labour for? It comes into my mind, that when I am speaking now, I am speaking perhaps to a number of people in business, and they may say that I am speaking only to Christian labourers. I believe, if I was called to take up and carry on a shop, I could conduct that shop for God,

so as to be building up a house for God from morning till night. Such a shop-keeper is carrying on the building of the house for God in his own soul and heart. I believe our Lord Jesus Christ made tables and chairs as a common carpenter ; and He was building a house for God then, just as much as when He was hanging on the cross. It was all in utter subjection to God's will. Oh let this be the first thought, beloved brethren, when we wake in the morning ; let me be honest with God. What am I living for this day ? Am I serving God this moment ? Am I at this moment living in fellowship with Christ ? Is it for Christ I am doing this and that, for Christ I am doing my commonest work ? If we have this purpose in our hearts, to build a house for God, willing to do anything to carry forward this work, then God can make use of us, and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we shall be praising for ever, He will be glorified through us ; and is not that the end for which we live, and for which, through the grace of God, we would be willing to die ?

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# THE HOUSE OF GOD.

(Continued.)

BY J. M. CODE.

I WISH now to say a little from the prophet Haggai, premising that all that is said about the building of the house—both in the passage that our brother McVicker read, and that prophet—is about stone and wood, and gold and silver, in the literal sense ; but the application, or the anti-type of it, is found in that passage in the 1st epistle of Peter, 2nd chapter and 4th verse : “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” There you see people are stones ; Christ is *the* Stone, the living Stone raised from the dead ; and all believers constitute those parts, which being put together are a house. As the last speaker said, it is a manifest thing, not a secret thing, and while I merely want to attempt to expound this prophecy, I do believe that what is said applies to ALL believers, and not to a *part*. It is the

responsibility of all believers, when they know the mind of God, to obey. Now Haggai was one of those prophets that God raised up, when the work of His house was interrupted by the heathen powers, and there it lay in an unfinished state, until, according to the 5th chapter of Ezra, prophets were raised up. Connect the 23rd and 24th verses of the 4th chapter of the same book with what I am going to read. (Read Ezra iv. 23, 24, and 5th chapter 1, 2.) And it is the blessed expectation which the promise of God holds out to us, in reference to what His intention is, that encourages us to go on. But this house, however diminutive it may be, however shorn of its beams of glory, is yet to arrive at that which God has determined in the great future; and He has not given up His purposes about it. In Haggai this seems to be a leading and most essential consideration, that when God says that they have discontinued His house, He accounts to them for all their want of prosperity, because the house was neglected; therefore to it was to be attributed their want of prosperity. (Read Haggai i., ii.;) and the time did not appear to come at all, (3rd and 4th verses.) It is not this thing or that, this class or that; but *My house*. Now therefore, (5th verse), "Ye have sown much." They were literally sowing, and this might be applied literally or spiritually.

You do not know the amount of good, and power, and strength, and prosperity, and spiritual enjoyment that would be in our souls, if we would put that which was for God's glory before us, and before our own interests. "Consider your ways."

6th verse.—The low measure in which we have our spiritual enjoyment, and the retention of those things that would give us blessing, if used for God, may be here applied. Now then what is the remedy? And I will take pleasure, in what? I will take pleasure in *it*, and I will be glorified in *it*; and for *its* sake the blessing and prosperity were to come, "And I will be glorified, saith the Lord." (Read 8th to 13th verses). Build My house, make My house the chief thing, make My house, and My honour, and My glory the chief thing, —let it supersede your interests, and then your best interests are best promoted, (14th verse to end.) Then in the next chapter, (verses 1 to 4, not merely Joshua and Zérubbabel were to be strong; it was not merely their work to build; but, "Be strong, all ye people of the Lord, and work." Why? "For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts." The Holy Ghost was among them; and why is this mentioned? Because of His reference to the building of the house, and this is the reason it is brought out here, (verses 6 and 7). God says He is going to shake all these nations; but it is in connection with the

establishing of His own house. (Ver. 8.) "The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts ; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" ; that is the proper reading of it. There will be one whom we find in the 22nd Psalm was to rule, and peace was to be the prevailing and beautiful characteristic of His reign. Then again, 10th and 11th verses), What does the law say ? They were to consult the priests as to the language of the law about a certain thing, (verses 12 and 13). That is, a holy thing cannot make things clean ; but an unclean thing can defile the clean ; that is the meaning ; and what is the application ? Then answered Haggai, and said (14th verse), because of their neglect of God's house, they were in a state of uncleanness, (15th and 16th verses) ; that is, the produce was less than the sowing, (17th and 18th verses). Now see the consequences of obedience, (19th verse). You see what the former state of things was, that the produce was less than the sowing. Now there is nothing at all to be seen, the seed is yet in the barn, (19th verse). Because ye are building my house ; and then the last prophecy, for there are several in this little book, (20th, 21st, and 22nd verses). Remember that Israel will never have rest till their enemies are scattered. *We* can have rest, because at this moment the Lord may

take up His own, without disturbing anything or anybody ; but Israel will never get into their own land, or have rest, but by scattering their enemies ; and God says He will scatter those enemies, (23rd verse). So it will be, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ in that day will reign, as the result of the destruction and confusion of His enemies. God's glory in the earth is intimately connected and depends on the beauty and glory of His house, and the people in it ; so the application ; and you ought to see the application of this, that if we all that are constituent parts of the body of Christ, even stones of His temple, if we study to put the house of God in its proper place, and not *one* house, there will be spiritual prosperity in our own souls beyond anything we have ever experienced, and there will be glory to God.

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# REVIVAL.

BY MR. CROCKER.

WHAT is the intent of our gathering here from time to time? It is not the conversion of souls, though I judge your gatherings here have resulted in the conversion of souls; and yet, while the meetings held here have so resulted, the intent was not conversion, but the quickening of spiritual life—the getting the heart revived and drawn out to the Lord Jesus Christ; and, beloved friends, I think perhaps even more than that, not only the fuller power of the life, but the directing of the life by the grace of God. We have prayed here for a revival; I have heard it over and over again, yesterday and to-day, that when the servants of God asked for a revival, there has been a general response—“Amen.” If we want a revival—which we all want—we want it in the entire church of God. A brother remarked to-day, “We despair of all help, save the help of God.” That is what we desire. If we are those who are hanging on the arms of men, we shall not get a revival from God; but if, on the other hand, we feel that this is what we want

individually and collectively, and look for it to the Lord alone, I feel sure of this, that what we ask we shall obtain, and shall leave this meeting strengthened in soul, and go forth better fitted to serve God; but more than this, and beyond this, we shall see our place more in the church of God, and shall seek strength and knowledge and grace from God to occupy that place really and truly for Him.

In the 7th of 1st Samuel you see Israel required what we feel we require, and that is a revival. If you look over the history of God's people, you will find that at one season they are working with God, and have His blessing, and after a while the blessing passes away, and God gives them up for a little while, and they have to feel the bitterness of departing from God; and oh, remember the Word says, "These things are written for our admonition," that God is giving to us a picture of what is and has been going on since first God set up His Church. There have been times in the church's history when the church has been forgetting God, and when it has gone away, and ceased to be what the church of God should be, and I want this to be felt here this morning; not that *I* have got away from God, but the entire assembly—the church of God everywhere, has not answered the design of God for which it was created. Look at what the Lord Jesus Christ says

in the 17th of John. He there speaks of their being one. There are two places in the 17th of John wherein He speaks of His church's oneness. Blessed be God, the one will stand, and be fully accomplished by and by, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes down from heaven, and His saints are gathered to Him. The world will then learn the truth, that the church has been loved as Jesus has been loved. That is one view of the truths brought out in the 17th of John. And, beloved friends, it is well, amid the sorrows by which we are surrounded,—and I dare not close my eyes to the sorrows of the church of God,—to know that there is one eye and heart in heaven who sees and feels them; and we are called upon, as the saints of God, to feel them too. Just as Nehemiah felt the state of his nation, so we, who are God's people, are called upon to feel and mourn over the failure and desolation that has entered into the church of God. Blessed be God, man's failure cannot upset God's purposes; but when I come down from what is in the hand of God to what is hanging upon man, I am led to confess the entire desolation—that man has not been, and we have not been, what we ought to have been.

The oneness of the church of God, the manifest oneness of God's church, (not the spiritual oneness found by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, but the

manifest oneness before the world), was to be that whereby the world might learn that the Father had sent His Son, that the Father had given out His heart's affections to poor sinners, in that He has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. Now I do ask you here this morning, beloved, are we who love the Lord Jesus Christ in any measure the expression of that oneness, or have we not to confess that we have failed, that while God sets up the church to be a witness for Himself, it has failed? Should not our hearts feel these things? And, therefore, the cry for revival should be, "Oh revive [not me, but] Thy church; let Thy church see why she was left in this world:" and be sure of this, that as the Holy Ghost enlightens us, and shews us in the Word of God what God's intents and purposes are, we shall all see that we have failed, and it shall come to our hearts, as it came to the hearts of the children of Israel in the 7th of 1st Samuel, the desire to return to the Lord God; and I hope this is the desire of our hearts here, and the intent of gathering here twice in the year. It is blessed so to meet, like a foretaste of that happy day when the sound of our Lord's voice shall be heard, and we who by grace have been redeemed, shall rise up to meet Him *all* together, as we read, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord.

Now mark what Samuel says to the people when they come to him and desire to return. He says, "If you desire to return to the Lord, if your heart is to go back, if you want to get back, put away the idols." That is the first thing Samuel says to them, and remember, as we were told last night, that when Jacob went back to Bethel, when his soul got a new view of his God, he could not stand the idols then; at once the idol was seen to be an idol. But, dear friends, I want to let you see this, that the idols of the 7th of 1st Samuel are not the idols of Genesis. In Jacob's case it was the individual idol, and he has to bury it, and to put it out of sight, before he can get a heart uplifted to God. When I turn to the 7th of 1st Samuel, it is the idol, not in the heart of the individual, but in what was the kingdom of God, that is, that people, among that people, who called Jehovah their God. And, dear friends, the same thing is true with regard to us. We may have here to-day our own personal idols, and if we have aught that occupies our heart to the exclusion of God, if God has not our heart, to reign supremely there, revival cannot come. But besides the individual idol, there is the collective idol; and the Word of God comes to us, not only, Put away the personal idol; but as we read in the chapter, "If ye do return to the Lord, then put away your idols." And, beloved,

the intent was so honest and so real, that we find the people put them away at once; they were given to see their lost state, and so desired to go back to Him who is their only source of blessing, that at once, like Jacob, they buried the idols, and cast down that which had taken the place of God. May I hope that will be the result of our meeting here to-day; that we will read our bibles with a new purpose. We have read them not only to find out the way of salvation, blessed be God we can say, "Through the grace of God we are saved, and are linked with Him who is now in the presence of God for us." He was once on the cross for us; but not now on the cross we know Him; but at the right hand of God, ever living to make intercession for us. Let us remember that, as we read the Word of God we see something more than salvation there—we see what our brother spoke about last night, we see there is a church in the Word of God, that we have not only responsibilities and duties, as people left here to walk an individual path before God; but there is member acting with regard to member, that we are those who stand eternally connected, and that we are those who are called to manifest God's truth, and to act out God's truth as given to us in His own blessed Book. Be on your guard, beloved, with regard to being satisfied with your salvation. If you have found Christ in

the Word, make *that* the beginning, and not the *end* ; or rather, if you have found Christ there, seek to understand by the Holy Spirit's teaching all the truths concerning Christ, not only in the future, but in the present. But the people here put away their idols. I remember a brother saying here once, "Lord, what hypocrites we are." I have never forgotten the words, and I fear that in a meeting like this, that God sees we are to a large extent, hypocrites, with regard to our confession and desires. I would not sermonize ; but I speak from my own conscience. I know the tongue can go before the heart, and I fear it is too true, that our prayers express more than our hearts are willing to go with.

Now look at the next thing. It is not for those who are seeking for the Lord Jesus to save their souls ; but God wants to instruct His people with regard to their revival. It is no use to cry for a revival if we are not willing to follow God. The next thing is, that when the people are gathered together, Samuel begins to act for them ; he gathers the people to Mizpeh, and he pours out the water ; and what do I understand by the pouring out of the water ? I understand this by it ; it is the confession of the people's state and condition. The water poured out tells of the weak state of that people ; not merely what they are because they have gone

away from God ; but the pouring out of the water says more than this ; it is the state and condition of God's people. You know the word of the apostle Paul : " I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." So again, the Lord Jesus Christ says, " Without Me ye can do nothing." The people are brought to have the right hand of their power withered up : " Lo we have no strength or might." It is the expression of the truth I just spoke of now, which our brother uttered in his prayer, " We despair of all power save the power of the Holy Ghost." Have we taken in that truth, that we have no might of our own ; but that just as our natural life is upheld by the hand of God minute by minute, so we have no power in the spiritual life to do anything but by the power of God. It is easy to express these things ; but it is hard for our hearts to feel them. How hard day by day to carry out the thought, I have no power of my own ; to pour out the water before God. But Samuel does not do that. He connects with the pouring out of the water, the offering of the lamb ; and here I get Samuel's hands extended two ways. His one hand upon the people in the condition of their ruin, and wretchedness, and misery ; and his other hand is placed upon the lamb, the expression of all the fulness, and all the blessedness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now I

ask, Can we stand where Samuel stood? Can we stand where the prophet stood here on behalf of the people? Can we say, in the words of Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," and while we say that, in our hearts *realize* it? Can we at the same time look up to where the Son of God stands in God's presence, and adopt, and know to be true as regards ourselves, that, "as He is, so are we in this world." People call these high truths; but they are essential truths for the reviving of God's church. If we are to be revived, we must be revived after the fashion given to us here. We must go down, but not to despair—not to say God is gone from us; but while we own we have failed, own also that God is true; we lay our hand upon the lamb; we offer the evening sacrifice, and we rejoice in the truth, that "as He is, so are we in this world." Now, how does God act on behalf of those who thus humble themselves before Him, and while humbling themselves in the condition of their sins, say, Our God is faithful—they offer to Him the evening sacrifice? God takes their part. God comes in, and their enemies are scattered. If we had only hearts to search the Word and say, "Lord, shew me Thy will? I am willing to follow Thee—follow Thee where Thou dost lead—follow Thee at any cost!" Beloved friends, if that is the real

and honest desire of our souls, God will act for us, and we shall find out the exceeding blessedness of the word : “ If God be for us, who can be against us ? ”

The end of the chapter is, the stone is set up, and Samuël calls the stone, “ Ebenezer : hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” Oh, I do pray that our God may see working in the heart of every child of His here to-day the desire that there should be no turning back, that there should be no reserve. Oh stand beneath the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and as you stand, not for your soul’s salvation, but for your revival, ask yourselves the question, Why did Jesus do this ? The Lord who loved us did not give gold or silver for us ; but gave *Himself* for us. Yes, Himself purchased us, as we are told, “ not with corruptible things, as silver and gold ; but with the precious blood of Christ.” As you stand in faith this morning beneath the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, ask yourselves what is the return you are to make to Him. Hear His words saying,—

“ I gave My life for thee,  
My precious blood I shed,  
That thou mightest quickened be,  
And risen from the dead,  
I gave Myself for thee.  
What hast thou done for Me ? ”

Oh that God might revive us ; not revive us merely as to our individual walk before Him ; that must be, that will be ; but I want that we each may be enlightened from God's Word, and seek to answer the purposes of God ; that while we find it sweet and blessed and precious to come here, and know no name save Jesus—no name save Jesus ; for that is the gathering Name here 'this morning, the Name of Jesus : " Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them ;" but while it is most sweet to gather together as we are doing this morning, oh do remember this, that we are responsible to God for gathering in this way twice in the year. It is God's truth for to-morrow, as well as for to-day.

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# SEPARATION TO GOD.

By JAMES BARTON.

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WE have had solemn truths before us these last two days ; and I would ask you just to take a word in the 13th chapter of Exodus, as one that may be practically useful to us, just at the close of these meetings. “ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto Me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb, among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast ; it is mine.” “ Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn.” The people of God are these firstborn. The firstborn of Israel were a beautiful picture of the blood-bought people of God, of whom a number are assembled here to-night. And God said from His own throne, “ Sanctify unto Me the firstborn.” Many speak of sanctification as if it were a kind of growth in holiness within the children of God ; but this is rather the result of sanctification, than sanctification itself. And this setting apart—for this is the meaning of the word sanctification in Scripture—this setting

apart of the people of God is a solemn truth, which has been borne upon by many of the words we have heard in the last few days. "Sanctify unto Me the firstborn." Oh that this separation of the children of God, to God, may be effected in a more decided and manifest manner by our meetings, and then we will rejoice to have met. Whatever truth we have heard, if it be not powerful to set *you* apart, and to set *me* apart for God, may be pleasant to listen to ; but it is not practical truth.

And now, friends, if you will just look with me at two or three texts that speak of this sanctification. Look at the epistle of Jude, 1st verse, and we find this sanctification spoken of here, and by God the Father : "Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." There is a wonderful order ; the first step, "Sanctified in God the Father." In the past eternal purposes of Jehovah, God set apart, before He had framed this earth, set apart in His eternal purpose, a people who should be joined to His blessed Son incarnate, in time, and who, through their union with Jesus, should be brought up into the glory with Himself, to be the brightest expression of His glory, and the manifestation of it throughout eternity. "Sanctified in God the Father."

And I think we have the use of the word "sanctified" in the Old Testament, just parallel to this. If you look at the 2nd chapter of Genesis, 3rd verse, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Then God rested on this sabbath day, and the sanctification of it was, that God rested, and rejoiced in it, in all that He had done. See the beautiful thought that Scripture gives us there of sanctification in God the Father. God has determined to have a people in the glory. Oh! that you and I poor sinners, should be allowed the right to say that we are within that blessed circle of a people set apart in God's eternal purpose, and in whom He will rest, and rejoice, in the work that He has made.

We have in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, 1st chapter and 2nd verse, the word "sanctified" used again with regard to the soul: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." Now you have the calling again here; in Jude it was, "Sanctified in God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." Three steps: set apart in the eternal purpose, preserved from condemnation at the cross by Christ, and called by the Holy Spirit into life and union with Jesus. And now it is "the church of

God (belonging to God) which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." Set apart by the precious work of Christ, as the people purchased with His own blood ; and then the Spirit's voice has been heard in the dead souls ; and they have been called to be saints. You have a parallel to this in the use of the word in the 13th of Exodus, where God says, "Sanctify unto Me the firstborn." They are bought with the blood, set apart by having a price paid for them, the blood of the paschal lamb. "They are Mine." You know the firstborn of Israel—passed over by the destroying angel, because of the blood on the door posts—were a people saved from destruction, and set apart by God. This grand step is the second one in sanctification. Each of us who have been brought to know Jesus, have learned that this great fact of sanctification in Christ Jesus, took place for us long ago at the cross. There a people were sealed, and set apart by the blood of Christ Jesus, given by the Father to His Son ; and the Father having given this precious gift to His Son, the Son undertook to carry out the salvation ; and He said it is His Father's will, that of all He had given Him, He should lose nothing. And now, if you look at the beginning of the 1st epistle of Peter, in the 2nd verse we have the same word again : "Elect, according to the foreknowledge

of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Here is sanctification of the Spirit. This again is not the work of holiness indwelling ; but a setting apart of the people unto obedience ; which is, I believe, the obedience of faith, leading them to obey the gospel and to receive Christ ; and then sprinkled with the blood, they are set apart as the family of God on earth. Now we have them set apart for a certain purpose. The Holy Ghost seals the believer, as he believes, to set him apart upon the earth for God, to set him apart for a variety of purposes, for which God needs persons on the earth, and for which He needs you and me. You will find something to illustrate this in the Old Testament. In the book of Exodus, 40th chapter, where all the vessels of the Lord have been arranged in order, Moses is desired to sanctify them,—this is the Holy Ghost's office shadowed out. What were these vessels for? For holy uses, for worship. And he is desired to sanctify, or set apart, the priests for the sanctuary, for doing the work and service of the Lord, for bearing the burdens of the Lord, and for everything the Lord wants done on earth by Israel. Then this is the work of the Holy Ghost, to set us apart for holy uses. Oh, brothers and sisters, that you and I might get this deep upon our souls. We

have had the word, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." He was sent forth a holy vessel. He was sent forth in all the variety and the circumstances of His life, and thus He tells (and may it be a subject of study for each of us) how He was sent forth. He was a holy vessel.

God has sanctified by His Spirit a people here, and if we are believers, we are set apart by the Lord, and if it was desecration to take these vessels, and take them for unholy uses, and if it was impious of those priests, to be priests of God and men of the world; so it is with you and me. "Set them apart," said the Lord; "they walk in a world going to hell; they stand where judgment will shortly rage, and where the wrath of God will soon fall; and I have bought them with a precious price, and sealed them with an indwelling Spirit, and set them apart for Myself." Oh do we acknowledge this position? Do we realize it in the depth of our souls? Set apart for God! Oh, that we realized it more! then would we go forth, saying, What am I to live for? The Lord. I am one of His vessels; I must be holy; I must be clean; I have a work of ministry of some kind; it may be as an individual of a family at home; it may be a ministry of suffering; it may be a ministry of more open service; it may be of one kind or another; it may be to carry the fire of the

Lord ; it may be to wash the feet. Whatever it be, as a vessel of the sanctuary and priest of God, God's people are sanctified and set apart.

And how does the Spirit lead them ? It is not only that He gives you life, and power to realize truth, and a life in union with Jesus ; but He does, from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, take this blessed Word which He has written, and He applies it, in the study of it, and in the prayerful reading or hearing of it, to the soul ; and thus the prayer of Jesus in the 17th of John is being carried out : " Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth."

Brothers and sisters, it is as this Word, that we have been listening to, is by the Spirit's power sealed upon our souls as a sanctifying power, that we will be set apart for God. If you only get a few new notions to speak of to your friends, or to talk of this or that address, your time has been poorly spent at these meetings ; but I do trust that the mighty power of the Lord, felt by many of us so deeply, will have written upon our hearts truths we shall not have so easily let go. Are you set apart, and given simply, and wholly, and entirely for the building of God's house ? Are you set apart, body, soul and spirit, to give yourselves to the Lord, to bring in stones to His house, to hew down timber, that it

may be made into that house, or to be burden-bearers, or builders together with God ?


Dear friends, may God write these truths, in their various aspects, upon your souls and mine ; and let us remember we are sent forth by God, each one of us, consecrated and anointed with the Holy Ghost—set apart for God. Amen.

# SERVICE IN THE GOSPEL.

Phil. ii. 1—11.

BY MR. PLOWMAN.

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 DEAR brother has been showing us some of our privileges, and the enemy with whom we have to contend. We are left here by the Lord, to serve Him in passing through this evil world ; and of course those enemies we have to contend with, and the devil, are very wily, and their efforts will always be to hinder our service. Though some of this epistle speaks of our privileges, it treats especially of service from the very outset. Notice its opening sentence :—“ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ.” Now Paul here takes the place of a servant ; he does not speak of his being an apostle ; he never assumes that place in writing to the Philippians ; it is that of a servant. And in speaking of the Philippians themselves, he says, “ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy, for your *fellowship in the gospel* from the first day until now.” In every prayer of his he speaks of their fellowship

in the gospel. We are not to confound this with the reception of sinners. "Fellowship in the gospel" is another thing—it is partnership, it is co-operation, it is being of one heart and mind and spirit with the apostle in the work which God had sent him there to perform, it is the propagation of the gospel. In the present day there are many of God's dear children who have no fellowship in the gospel, no desire to send out the gospel to the lost; they know themselves saved; but they do not look at what they have been delivered from, and therefore there is a great want of sympathy, (of course I am not speaking of all). And Paul speaks in the 37th verse, still further shewing *the spirit which should characterize them*; he says, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." Now this was not alone for individuals, but for all, the whole Church at Philippi, and that founded upon the fact of the apostle knowing their fellowship in the gospel. With one heart and mind they were to strive together for the faith of the gospel.

Now he brings out very plainly this *spirit* of service in individuals. In the 2nd chapter, 9th verse, he says, "I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you." Here was an individual imbibing that spirit of service. Then he speaks of another in the 25th verse: "Yet I sup-

posed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that *ministered to my wants*;" and then in 27th verse we read, "For indeed he was sick nigh unto death." Now Epaphroditus "being nigh unto death," was not caused by his own preaching; it was supplying Paul's temporal necessities; for he said, "Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life to supply your lack of service toward me." Then he tells the Philippians afterwards, they "*ministered once and again to his necessity*;" but here Epaphroditus laboured for Paul the prisoner; Epaphroditus becomes his servant, works for him, sustains him. "For the work of Christ he was nigh unto death."

In the 4th chapter he speaks of other service; because the principle I see running through this epistle is that of service, and service especially in connection with the gospel. In the 3rd verse (chap. iv.) he says, "And I entreat thee, also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which *laboured with me in the gospel*, with Clement also, and with others my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life." He addresses here a true yoke-fellow, and he exhorts him to help the women that laboured with him in the gospel. We are not told how they

laboured with him ; but labour they did. To labour in the gospel, it is not necessary to preach ; they can co-operate ; they can receive to their homes those who go forth. And then there were others whose names are not recorded here, but are in the book of life.

He speaks in the end again of the Philippians themselves, and their service of supply to his wants while he was a prisoner. It was "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice, acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But," he adds, "my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Now we have seen through this epistle service embodied in various persons and ways ; while, in the second chapter, our blessed Lord Himself is brought before us in the character of a servant. It is that which, in my mind, together with the other, gives distinctness to this epistle. Where there are many servants, there is, perhaps, that which draws forth nature ; there is a danger of emulation, of self-seeking, and seeking their own glory ; and, therefore, Christ is brought before the Philippians, and before us, in such blessedness. "If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded,

having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." "*Consolation in Christ!*" Oh! what consolation in Christ's heart for His people! It is in the hour of trial they know this; for He has a sympathy and feeling for them none other has; and therefore the apostle says, "If there be any consolation in Christ." It is not mere love; but the "*comfort of love,*" where there is the *fellowship of the Spirit, bowels and mercies*. Oh! the feelings of Christ to His people! Therefore he says: If those things be in Christ Jesus now, "fulfil ye my joy, that ye be *like-minded.*" Be like-minded with Christ Jesus. Do you minister comfort and consolation to your brethren? Oh let there be in you the bowels and mercies of Christ, "having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." And then again, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." Nothing the Lord hates more than strife; He hates and detests it. We are not to submit to evil, and identify ourselves with it; but, then, we are not to strive. God is revealed to us as the God of peace: "Dwell in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you." "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." Oh! if the servants all strove together for the gospel, as God has gifted each to minister—no one intruding on that which God has given to another; but each one in lowliness of mind esteem-

ing others better than themselves! Here is really what secures the foundation of it, "lowliness of mind," and the learning to esteem others better than oneself. Do we not know more of our own heart, and walk, and spirit, than of anyone else? and, therefore, is there not that to teach us to esteem others better than ourselves? We are not to look only on our own service, and think such only valuable; let us look on the service of others: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation." "He made Himself of no reputation!" He had reputation; but He gave it up. He had the highest place; but came down and took the lowest: "And took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The blessed Lord humbled Himself; His death on the cross was an act of obedience to God; and so every act of ours should be an act of obedience. Here is where the *will* comes in; and if we look to ourselves, how much do we find in ourselves, the strength of our own will, doing that which is pleasing to ourselves, and not to the Lord. But "He became obedient unto death, even the death of

the cross ; wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

I would just remark, in conclusion, that service in this epistle appears to be especially connected with the gospel. Of course there is service in a much larger sense than this—that each one is called to serve the Lord in the place God has put us in ; though it may be the work of our hands, it is our privilege to serve Him. In Colossians it is that servants are not to be serving their masters as men pleasers ; but in singleness of heart, fearing God ; and " whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men." There is one to preach the gospel of Christ ; he shall receive the reward of the inheritance. Oh ! is it not the language of many of the Lord's children, " If I were in other positions, I could serve Him ?" Do what you have to do in the position in which God has placed you ; and if it be done unto Him, the reward of the inheritance will be given. If we are doing it to the Lord, there will be fruit to His glory, that will be acknowledged by Him. Then each one of us is a servant ; we are


every one of us stewards: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Thus we see service is a large thing, we cannot fix it up to a point. The service of one man varies from the service of another, and the thing is *to be doing what the Lord would have us do*—to be in the circumstances the Lord would have us, and to be SERVING HIM, so that when He comes, He will be able to say, "Well done, *good and faithful servant*, thou hast been *faithful* in a very little, have thou authority over" so and so. When the Lord Jesus returns by and bye, He will give the reward of service to the servant. He is a tender Master, and He enters into all the trials and difficulties of His people by the way. And oh! remember that precious word, "If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the *same* love, being of *one* accord, of one mind." And may we each be His faithful servant, serving Him acceptably, for His precious name's sake.

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# CHRIST'S COUNSEL TO BACKSLIDERS.

By A. A. REES.

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HRISTIANS are often like little children, not only in their good, but also in their bad qualities ; they are docile, and they are foolish ; they will sometimes cry for what they don't need and cannot have. They frequently have false wants, and don't know their true ones—clamouring for what would do them no good, and careless of their real deficiencies. It was thus with the Laodiceans ; they said and thought “they were rich and increased in goods, and had need of nothing ;” whereas “they were poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked.” It was a great mercy, therefore, for the High Priest, in the midst of the golden candlesticks, to step forward and rectify this confusion. And here He is with His venerable white locks—the true senator and counsellor, interposing with His sage advice.

“I counsel thee,” says He, “I, the wonderful Counsellor, who am made unto thee of God, wisdom”—

“I counsel thee to buy.” A piece of commercial advice; and we know how ready commercial men are to buy, when they have the prospect of a good bargain; though, alas, their purchases and sales are of the trashy things “that perish in the using.”

But Christ's counsel relates to heavenly and enduring goods. The Laodiceans said they were rich. “No,” says Christ, “ye are poor.” “But if ye would be rich indeed, I counsel you to buy of Me.” Let us, too, who are apt to be foolish merchants, though we may think we have goods laid up for many years, let us listen to this wise admonition. Here are three commodities for sale—of which I shall notice the last first—“eye-salve.” I repeat it, these articles are for the health and wealth of the soul, not the body. Laodicea was not literally blind, but spiritually; though she thought she saw clearly enough in every sense, as she certainly did in a worldly sense; yet she was not *absolutely* blind in soul, otherwise “eye-salve” would have been of no use; for ointment is not for blind eyes, but for sore and weak ones; not for downright blindness, but for pur-blindness. These Christians, that is to say, were very defective in their spiritual perception, and knew it not; they could not distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, in their lighter shades of difference; hence they sometimes confounded them,

because they could not discern the line of demarcation. And this, alas, is a common case. How few Christians have such keen eyes as to penetrate the nature of things at a glance—to discover Satan under robes of light, or Christ in a carpenter's costume ; a rotten apple beneath a glossy skin—mildew and must under a sound nutshell.

How many “see no harm,” as the phrase is, in a thousand little things in which there is much harm—harm in principle—the germ of great and manifold evil. How many do a thousand things which they ought not to do, and which they would not do, if they were not guiltily blind to their nature ; and, what is worse, when the evil is pointed out, the only response is, “I don't see it ;” which in most cases simply means, “I won't see it ;” for the will is at the bottom of this blindness. What, then, is the cure ? “Eye-salve ;” and what is that ? It is the conviction or reproof of the spirit, which, like salve, smarts while it heals. It is the operation of the spirit on the conscience—the soul's eye—which lets in the light of truth, and reveals moral actions in their true colour. And then, how differently things are seen from what they were, good and evil no longer confounded ; much less is evil justified. It is not now, “I don't see it ;” but “I do see it,” and “God forgive me that I did not see it before.”

But in reference to this "eye-salve," the High Priest says, "Anoint thine eyes," which implies co-operation on our part; and means, *take* reproof, receive correction; which is, buying it at the cost of humiliation. It is saying, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness."

Alas, if the pur-blind are many, the self-anointed, the receivers of correction, are very few; for there is nothing we dislike more than the smart of applying "eye-salve." Nay, the very attempt to apply it on the part of others, in most cases encounters a repulse, and not unfrequently the friendship of years is finally broken up by it.

The second commodity is "white raiment." What is this? It is not the robe of Christ's righteousness, for this is not affected by our walk and conversation, nor without it could a man be a Christian at all, or come under the wholesome instruction of the High Priest. *That* robe can neither be torn nor tainted—nor once on the soul can it ever be taken off. "White raiment," then, here, as elsewhere in Scripture, and especially in the Revelation, is a spotless life before men, a blameless walk, an irreproachable behaviour, the want of which is moral nakedness and *shame*; for it is *seen*, and the world's finger points at it.

Alas, how many are in this condition, like Laodicea, and know it not; *they* know it not, but every one

else does. Not the unconscious nakedness of innocence, like that of our unfallen first parents; but the unconscious nakedness of brutish stupidity, and obdurate shamelessness. "Naked!" says the world. "I don't see it," is the rejoinder. "Naked, naked," says the Church. "I don't see it." Of course not; for thou art blind, and needest not only "white raiment," but "eye-salve," to cure thy blindness, and reveal the spots in thy clothing. Yet thou wilt see it all one day; the sooner the better.

To such Christ says, "Buy of Me," buy white raiment, blameless walk in all the relationships of life, civil, social, business, domestic, religious; that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not appear; that "your light may so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

The third and most important article is "gold," tried gold, fine gold, purified from dross. "Buy this," says Christ, "that thou mayest be rich." Now what is this? The Laodiceans said and thought they were rich, and had need of nothing. "No," says Christ, "ye are poor; but if ye would be rich, buy fine gold of Me." What is it? Who would not buy gold at a bargain? How many Christians "make haste to be rich"—that they may be poor—laying up treasure on earth—coin and bank-notes, which on

a death-bed will be of no more value than so many October leaves.

Happily, we are not left to conjecture what this gold is. It is undoubtedly the "faith of God's elect," of which Christ is the "author and finisher." It is "precious faith," whose trial even is much more precious than of gold that perisheth,—that commodity wherewith God enricheth the poor of this world, making them "rich in faith;" and according to the amount of which any man possesses, so is he richer or poorer in the sight of God. In other words, what money is to a child of the world, and to such "it answereth all things," that faith is to a child of God. It is the procurer of all he needs; nay, it appropriates God Himself, as He said to Abraham, the father of the faithful, "I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward." "All things are yours," if faith is yours; but the *realization* of this depends on the *measure* of faith. But let there be no mistake here. Christ is not telling the unconverted to buy saving faith from Him; that is "the gift of God," absolute and unconditional, though it is the same in *quality* as that of which He here speaks. *Quantity* is here spoken of, not quality; for the least faith saves as fully as the greatest, and the weakest as the strongest. Hence the penitent thief was not a whit less saved and justified than the apostle Paul; he went straight to Para-

dise from the cross, though but a babe in Christ. But in the conflicts, trials, and duties of post-converted life, our peace, and happiness, and triumph depend on the "*measure of our faith.*" "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Well, Christ says, in reference to this, "Buy of Me." Then something must be paid. What is the price? Not literal gold for spiritual gold—"thy money perish with thee;" but spiritual labour for spiritual hire—"the hand of the diligent maketh rich"—faith for faithfulness—faith for watchfulness—faith for prayerfulness—faith for self-denial; as Luther says, "*fides pinguescit operibus,*" faith grows fat by works, and lean by laziness.

Here, then, is "trade" for a Christian—"buy," "buy," "buy;" here is "business," wherein, if he is "diligent," he is sure to be rich, in spite of, or rather by means of, bad times on earth, in spite of strikes and fluctuating markets; "rich," I say, not perhaps towards man, but towards God. And for this trade Christ's shop is always open, the shutters are never up, and customers are welcome night and day. Oh Christians, go and "buy," and be more anxious to get an additional grain of this fine gold, than to add house to house, or field to field—than to emigrate from town to country—from a small dwelling to a large one—than to travel on wheels rather than on

foot—than to have two, three, four horses, instead of one—than to get up, and uppish in the world. Alas, poor prosperous, mis-named pilgrims and strangers on the earth, repent and do the first works. Take the counsel of the High Priest ; get riches that will go with you when you die, “ a treasure in the heavens, that faileth not.”

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## SARDIS.

REVELATION iii. 1—6.

BY F. C. BLAND.

**T**HE epistles to the seven Churches hold the same place in the New Testament, that the book of Malachi holds in the old. Each is an appeal to those who were God's witnesses in the earth at the time they were written. Malachi is the last word that God spoke to Israel in the time of their declension ; the epistles to the seven churches are the last appeal that God makes, and that which takes the place of being His witness on earth now until He

come. There is a remarkable similarity between them : Malachi begins with God telling Israel " that He had loved them ;" and Israel having forgotten His love, answers, " Wherein hast Thou loved us ? " The address to the church at Ephesus begins with, "Thou hast left thy first love." Both speak of declension, with exhortation to recovery ; and in each (in the midst of apostacy) there is a remnant found who fear the Lord. It is always a proof of the apostacy of the thing treated of when a remnant is manifested, and is addressed by God, either in exhortation or promise. In answer to the Lord's appeal to them, those in Malachi's time who feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and in Sardis there are found " a few names which had not defiled their garments, who should walk with Him in white, for they were worthy." In Malachi there was no slackness in the number of sacrifices offered ; but they offered that which was torn and lame. In Sardis, and the other churches, there was no lack of works ; but they were not found perfect before God. The new moons and sabbaths of Israel religiously kept, were a weariness to God, and even incense had become an abomination ; and it is possible for us to abound in services, and to hold religious meetings in thousands, which may be an offence unto Him. Ephesus was quite ready to try those which said they were apostles and

were not, and to prove them liars, while she failed to judge herself; and judgment of others often continues long after self-judgment has ceased. Jehu could boast of his zeal for the Lord, and invite others to come and witness it. He destroyed Baal out of Israel; but he left standing the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan, and departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin. Jehoshaphat (2 Kings xii.) is minded to repair the house of the Lord, and collected money in abundance to do so. Twenty and three years were the priests receiving money for the repairs of the Lord's house; but in the three and twentieth year *the breaches of the Lord's house were not repaired*; we are gathering up truth at these meetings, storing it, and carrying it away; but are we repairing the breaches in the church of God?

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die," is a solemn exhortation, applicable to individual believers in the church—applicable to truths once known in power in our souls, but which have become weakened; and applicable to the condition of our own hearts and consciences also. Many a truth which Christians held in power has become moribund: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain." We read of one in the Old Testament (Josiah) who set to work to repair

the house of God when judgment hung over it ; and we read of another in the New (Luke xxi.) who cast in all that she had for the same purpose, just as the prophecy was about to be fulfilled, that one stone of it should not be left on another that should not be thrown down ; and the call to us is now, in the spiritual house, to strengthen the things which remain, which are ready to die. The promise is still true, that those who respond to God's appeal shall have this place in His book of remembrance, and one peculiar promise is still true, that where two or three are gathered together in Christ's Name, there He is in the midst ; and if, in following Him outside the camp, one is led so far away that he cannot find even one with him to join in claiming that promise to two or three, he has still left him that one given to the overcomer, in the midst of apostate Laodicea : " If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with ME."

# DEATH, DEFILEMENT & DEFEAT.

By G. F. TRENCH.

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IN the epistle to Sardis we see three dangers to be dreaded, if we would escape the state to which that Church was reduced. They are—death, defilement, and defeat. “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art *dead*.” “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not *defiled* their garments.” “He that *overcometh*, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.”

DEATH.—The Lord Jesus Christ came from heaven to the scene of death's reign, to bring life, and immortality to light in that scene, and to rescue us from that captivity, and to give us life eternal. This is the primary and principal feature of His work on Calvary—through death to destroy him who had the power of death, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Of this life and deliverance all saints partake. He who knows not Christ as the giver of life to his dead soul, knows Him not at all; and we are here to-day the living, to give blessing and praise for this blessed assurance, that we are passed from death to life, even to life everlasting.

DEFILEMENT.—But it was not for this alone our

Lord gave up His body to the death. He had more in view than merely to save us from hell. See Titus ii. 14 : " Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." This passage teaches us of another purpose of His death, viz : to make His redeemed a holy people. There are some, I fear there are many, Christians who think it enough to rejoice in the knowledge of forgiveness, and stop short of this further obligation, which is the proper result of that assurance. " His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." Why? That we might be saved from eternal ruin? That we might have the assurance of our forgiveness? No! Read what Peter says, " That we being *dead to sins*, should live unto righteousness." That with garments " undefiled," we should pass through a polluted and polluting world. It is a blessed thing to be clad in the " garments of salvation ;" but it were better for the Lord's glory through us here on earth, that we never wore them, than afterwards to defile them by loose or inconsistent walking. Remember, fellow-Christian, the same blood that redeemed you from death, must save you also from defilement ; and I charge you never rest till you have learned what that aspect of Christ's death meaneth of which Paul says, " Knowing this,

that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. vi. 6.

DEFEAT.—And yet another step. To be saved from hell is a great blessing, and to be kept from sinning is a great blessing ; but there is a higher attainment set before us here, in the words, "He that overcometh." It is *negative* Christianity, if I may use the expression, which consists in not doing wrong merely. It is, as I say, a very important thing to master the evil habit and besetting sin, and walk unspotted by open transgression ; but still this is a poor and weak and low measure of experience, compared with what is set before us. If we were under the law of Moses that might do ; but we have now that inexpressibly higher thing—"the law of the spirit of life in Christ," which not only sets us "free from the law of sin and death," to which we were once in captivity ; but also develops in us all the energies of positive fruit-bearing, the result of indwelling life in the Spirit. Brothers, we are called the "conquerors," and "more than conquerors," through Him who loved us. And thus we triumph, not only over things positively sinful, but over all those so called "innocent" pursuits which tend to divide the heart's affection with Christ, and to divert the soul from its single purpose to live for Him. By

this we also *serve*—we go about, not only seeking to avoid defilement ourselves, but to rescue others from it, and even from death. Would to God this active energy and service, this higher, holier life, this *positive* Christianity, were more general among us. We are too easily satisfied. Our ambition is too low, and feeble, and common-place. Where is the whole-hearted zeal of the pioneers of our religion? Is it all gone? Hear this call and be warned in time. Defilement leads to defeat and death; and though those who live in Christ can “never die eternally,” there is much amongst us that is “ready to die,” if we strengthen it not. Many names must be blotted out of registers kept on earth; but never one from the Lamb’s book of life. But there is this present death as to fruitfulness and experience to which the saint is liable. Hear then the Lord’s solemn word, “Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain.” “Hold that fast which thou hast,” (verse 11.) Then in separation from the absorbing vanities of the world, in active service for God among our fellow men, with holy conversation and garments undefiled, our path of life will be a path of holiness and victory, and our reward to be clothed in white raiment, and to hear our little humble name confessed aloud by the Lord of glory before His Father, and before His angels.

# LOVE.

By JOHN M. CODE.

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**B**ELOVED Brethren in Christ. The subject which it is my heart's desire to bring before you is *love*. I quite feel my feebleness to do justice to such a theme, which, the Holy Ghost tells us, "passeth knowledge." But I will endeavour in His strength, which is perfected in weakness, to select some striking passages of Scripture, to prove the *leading place* which this essential of Christianity holds in the divine counsel for testimony to His Name.

It is deplorable and alarming to observe how little *manifestation* of love there is in the professing church; and that this failure is specially and emphatically seen among those who are best instructed in the knowledge of the written Word. This, alas, is the very opposite to what should be expected under the great advantages possessed in this present day. For what is Christianity without love? It is not Christianity. It is a body without a soul—a name that we live, and are dead.

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The notes of this address having been revised by the speaker, have undergone some alterations, and have received some additions.

When the world was deluged with sin, and exposed to the indignation and wrath of God's righteous judgment, then it was that He sent His only begotten Son into the world, on a mission, not of judgment, but of love; even as He said Himself, "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

But whereas the first man's obedience was only to abstain from the fruit of a tree, which was a mere negative obedience; the second man's obedience, which was positive, consisted in declaring His Father's name of love to a disobedient and gainsaying people. What a contrast! When the world was full of the iniquity brought in by Adam's transgression, the Son in the bosom of the Father came, as it were, with this instruction: "Go, My Son, and declare My love to this ungodly generation, face this stormy scene of rebellion, and meet it in patient and unfailing love. Let no wrongs, no contradictions against Thyself, no heart-breaking reproaches, deter nor discourage Thee from this labour and conquest of love!" He hath done the will of Him that sent Him, He hath finished the work that He gave Him to do.

Ah, surely, none but the Son, who was always dwelling in His Father's bosom, could be the true and faithful witness of such love as His. In this love He abode; for this love He fought, and for it He died;

and by this love He prevailed against the hatred of men, and of the devil ; so that in the end He could say, " I have overcome the world," because He loved on to the last breath He drew.

" His love to the utmost was tried,  
And firmly endured as a rock."

And not only did He bear this faithful testimony to God's love to the end ; but He so delighted in it, that He earnestly desired that the world might know that God had at least one man on earth who loved Him at all cost and at any sacrifice. Even as He said : " The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me ; but that the world may know that I love the Father ; and as He gave me commandment, even so I do." Though Satan had no claim upon Him through sin, yet He would *shew the world* that He loved the Father, *by dying for us*.

But was it intended that this testimony to God's love should be limited to the personal walk of the blessed Lord Jesus, and as a record confined within the covers of the bible ? Or that it should be carried on, or rather repeated on earth by living men, dwelt in, and led by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ? Doubtless it was to be continued ; for the blessed Lord hath " left us an example, that we should follow His steps." Accordingly, because we are sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ, God hath sent forth the Spirit

of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. As sons, then, and having the Spirit of His Son, "the true and faithful witness," He hath made us sufficient to carry on the great and blessed testimony of His love; not merely to talk of it, but to *walk* in it towards one another, and towards all men.

We will now look at some of those scriptures which testify to the supreme place which love—practical and manifested love, holds in the eternal counsel and revelation of God, and which therefore enjoin upon us the indispensable duty, as well as privilege, of walking in the same, as dear children of God.

The first scripture I quote is Matt. ix. 13. At first sight this may not seem to illustrate our point; but on comparing it with Hosea vi. 6, it will be evident. The Scribes and Pharisees were carping and caviling at the disciples about defilement, because they ate and drank with publicans and sinners. The Lord takes up the matter, saying: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; but go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Not I will be merciful; but I will have *you* to be merciful. Hosea vi. 6, to which the Lord referred the Pharisees, shews that this is the meaning of His words: "*I desired* mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." God required that they who occupied the place and

responsibility of His witnesses on earth, should shew His mercy to the nations. Instead thereof, "the name of God was blasphemed among the gentiles through their means." Alas, what better testimony do we give for His name in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation? To this requirement of God none but Christ, the Son of His love, and none but those in whom He dwells, and who abide in His love, and are led by His Holy Spirit, could answer.

My next quotation is John xv. The great truth taught in this chapter is that Christ is the true Vine, and His Father the Husbandman thereof; and as fruit is the only thing for which a vine is valued—the one thing looked for, and insisted on by the Divine Husbandman, is fruit. But then what is fruit—what is its character? It is love, love is the very pith, the essence of the true Vine. The Lord does not content Himself with saying, in a general way, Abide in Me; but He narrows up the point of adhesion for the branches; He says, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; abide ye in *My love*." The fruit produced by abiding in love, must be love. This love is practical, it is social, it is visible, for it *glorifies* the Father. It is not a mere secret sentiment between the soul and God. This fruit is permanent—it "remains." And the very joy which Christ himself has with the Father, is the joy with which they

are full who bear this precious fruit. It blesses him that gives, and him that receives, and glorifies God.

Then there is that scripture with which we are all so familiar—would that we were better acquainted with its power—1 Cor. xiii. What is the eloquence of the most perfect linguist? To speak the languages of men and of angels, without love, is to become but the sounding of brass, the tinkling of a cymbal, in the ears of God. It is only making a noise, (Amos v. 23.) To have the gift of prophecy, to understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, to have all faith, so that one could remove mountains, without love, is to be *nothing*. To give all I have to feed the poor, to give my body to be burned, without love, it shall *profit* me nothing. Prophecy and knowledge, faith and hope, last but for a while, and pass away. Love *remaineth*.

In Galatians v. the apostle contrasts the works of the flesh, which are “manifest,” with the fruit of the Spirit. Against the former is the law; against the latter, that is, the fruit of the Spirit, there is no law. How beautiful is this fruit! But what is the first named in the cluster? *Love*. Is this fruit of the Spirit to be less “manifest” than the works of the flesh?

Again, in addressing the churches in Ephesus and in Colosse, if the apostle speaks concerning the min-

istry of the Word, and edification of the saints, and knitting together of the various parts of the body of Christ, it is by speaking the truth *in love* (iv.), that we may grow up in all things unto Him who is the Head. When also he teaches concerning the supplies which come to and through the several parts of the body from the Head, it is for "the edifying of itself *in love*." If he tells the church in Colosse of the great conflict which he had for them, it is that their hearts might be comforted, being "knit together *in love*."

Then we come to 1 John, which from beginning to end, insists upon the manifestation of righteousness and love, as the criterion of Divine Sonship. But in chapter iv., the special subject is the responsibility of all God's children to discern the spirits of all those who come to them claiming to be ministers of Christ, and to be received as coming in His Name. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Now, if trying these spirits meant looking into men's hearts, of course that would be impossible to all but God; but this is not what is meant. The word "try" means *prove*: put them to the proof as to what manner of spirit they are of. What, then, is the test by which you prove them? The confession of Jesus Christ,

who has come in flesh. "Hereby know ye *the Spirit of God*, Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ who has come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ who has come in the flesh, is not of God." This is the true rendering of those important words. As they stand in our translation, there is no test as to whether a teacher is "of God" or not. To say that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh," is the mere confession of a *fact*; but, as truly translated, it means the practical confession of a person, the *Person* Jesus Christ, who has come in the flesh: and to be able to put the pretensions of these teachers to the proof by their agreement or disagreement with such a standard, involves our spiritual acquaintance with the great original, whose ministers and followers they profess to be. To require the mere verbal confession, that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, might reject a Jew or an infidel; but this confession would be no proof that a teacher was "of God." Besides, the command is to try "*the spirits*," not merely the orthodoxy of their creed.

How solemn and searching is this criterion! Every spirit which confesseth Him, in the sense of practical subjection and imitation of Him who left us an example, that we should follow His steps, is of God; but every spirit which confesseth Him not thus, is the

spirit of Antichrist, which is already in the world, for if we are not manifestly "of God," what are we manifestly of? Is there any medium of Christian profession between these extremes? Of course these false ministers do not take the place of open and avowed opposition to Christianity; if they did, there would be no need of warning the children of God against them.

It may help to shew that the confession here required is personal, and not merely verbal, if we refer to Rom. x. There the question is about the salvation of a lost sinner, and there the confession of Christ is qualified by the words "*with thy mouth.*" These words are interpreted lower down (v. 10, 13) by the Holy Ghost thus—"With the mouth confession is made unto salvation, for whosoever shall *call upon the name of the Lord* (Jesus), shall be saved." This confession may be made in the secrecy of our own chamber; but the other (1 John iv.) must be made "*before men.*" Matt. x. 32.

Now let it not be wearisome to you, if I dwell upon this chapter a little longer. I quote two or three verses, (v. 4,) "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." He tells the dear children of God that they have overcome these false teachers. Why? Because God the Holy Ghost

dwelling in them, was greater than he that was in the world. It was a contest between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error, and the fact that the spirit of truth was *in them*, identified them with Him who had gone up on High in His victory, and had made them competent and accountable to overcome those false prophets, practically also. And observe He does not say, greater is He that is in you than he that is *in them*; but greater "than he that is *in the world*." Thus we have clearly defined the character of these spurious ministers; they are under the influence and dominion of *the god of this world*. They are thoroughly men of this world. Accordingly, this is what we are taught about them in the next verse. (5.) "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." "They are of and out of the world." "The world is the hot-bed that has produced them, they are at home in it; therefore speak they of (or out from) the world." Their teaching is in accordance with the world; they lower the tone of Christianity to harmonize with men's worldly-mindedness; and "the world heareth them." No wonder that the world should "hear" those who are the production of its own institution! The worst feature in this their falsification of the truth, is that they reduce that which is of God to the level of a religious system, with which the world can agree: and

thus they make the true God, and the god of this world (which is the devil), to be virtually one.

We go on to verse 7, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Here let me repeat that the great criterion whereby those that are of God, and those that are not of God, may be distinguished, is not doctrine merely, but *personal character*. Far be it from me to undervalue sound doctrine; there can be no true godly character without it; but there may be, and there often is, much orthodox doctrine without godly character. But let true doctrine and true character go together, and then you have a man of God. After saying, "*They* are of the world," and that "ye are of God;" he then adds, "Beloved, let us *love* one another, for love is of God." It is plain that there is no love in the world, and that the grand mark of distinction in them that are of God, is *love*. And love is not a thing which may or may not be in Christianity. There is *no Christianity* without it—"Every one that *loveth* is born of God and knoweth God; he that loveth *not*, knoweth not God, for God is love." There is no testimony for *God* where love is not conspicuous. It must be manifested so as to be seen of all. How could we know those who are

of God, or those who are otherwise, without their being manifested? God's love has been manifested—"In this was *manifested* the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." Is not the activity of life, love? Does not faith work by love?

We pass on to Rev. ii. 1—7. This is the first of the Lord's addresses to the seven churches in Asia. Here is a church noticed by the Lord for its works, its labour, its patience, its intolerance of those that were evil, its faithful detection of those who said they were apostles, but had been found to be liars; nevertheless He had against them that they had left their first-love. For this declension in love He threatens to remove their candlestick out of its place, unless they repented by returning to their first-love. "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do thy first works." The energy and fervour of their first-love imparted its character to their works. Therefore He saith, Do your first works—the works which you did in the vigour and freshness of your first-love. Here then we have the proof again of the primary place which God gives to *love* in any testimony for His Name. The candlestick is to be removed if the light be obscured.

Where love is not conspicuous there is no light—

nothing worthy of being called a testimony for God. If they didn't repent and return to their first love, the Lord would not own their collective testimony for Him.

There was no use of the candlestick if the light was gone. Love is evidently the light—the very flame of the candle. “You have left your first-love—I am about to remove your candlestick out of its place, unless you repent.” To stand forth upon the platform of the world, professing to be a witness for God, and not to walk in love, is to be a false witness of God, whether in an individual or in an assembly. To bear a false witness against our neighbour is bad enough; but to bear false witness against God—to belie Him as a Saviour, to misrepresent Him in that which to Him is dearest, and in which He most glories; is most injurious to Him, to ourselves, to the church, and to the world. Again I say, that God will not acknowledge anything to be light but love. Of course no one can question that this light is for man's good, and not to give light to God.

The last passage I refer to, though not the last in scriptural order, is the epistle of Jude. I quote it last, because it contemplates a condition of things subsequent to that which I have observed upon in Rev. ii. This epistle of Jude contemplates a state of ecclesiastical and moral confusion and desolation,

where all manner of evil is rampant and prevails, and yet love is still insisted upon as holding the first place in the scene of testimony. In the midst of the ruin around, the saints were exhorted—First : to build themselves up in their most holy faith. Second : to pray in the Holy Ghost. Third : to keep themselves *in the love of God*. Fourth : the conduct enjoined upon them, and as consequent on the fulfilment of those pre-requisites, was to deliver others from the evil—"Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted with the flesh." Thus, no matter what the desperate hopelessness of the existing evil, love never fails, nor shall we fail in love, if we keep ourselves in the love of God. The holiness of the faith loses nothing, but rather becomes more conspicuous because of the evil it is in the midst of, and with which it is contrasted. Here, by way of intensity, it is called by a title which is nowhere else given it in the bible—"our *most holy faith*"—its holiness being the more carefully maintained, the more jealously insisted upon, by reason of the prevailing corruptions of the truth—as a lamp shines more brightly by night than by day.

From the above scriptures, it is plain that God intended that the very frontispiece of the testimony committed to us should be love. If, therefore, we

would "give all the substance of our house instead of love, it would be utterly contemned." How blessed an evidence is this that God truly delights in love!

But has the Church been true to this mission? Alas! there has been preaching enough about love; but as a matter of practical testimony, where is it? What does the world know of it? What reason have we given it by our ways with one another and towards all men, to believe that God is love? We may think that the points of truth on which we differ are so important as to justify our divisions. But what does the world know about these things? They only see our divisions, and that, all about *unity*! They only hear our wranglings about *love*! Yea, the bitter strife and discord of God's house within, by reason of the evil practices of its inmates one to another, have become so loud, that the noise of the uproar has reached even to the streets of the city, and the world, as they pass along, have taken notice of the shame! thus God's house, instead of being known as the abode of peace and love, has become notorious for the very contrary! Is it not time that we should repent of having left our first-love? and should we not wonder at the greatness of the grace which exhorts us to repent; thereby encouraging us to hope that we may be, at least individually, recovered from the state into which we have fallen?

Is there not a remedy for this dismal state of things? We cannot know the remedy if we do not know the disease. The root of the disease is the feebleness of our faith. Increase the faith, and the disease is conquered. The apostle says (2 Thes. i. 3): "We give thanks because your *faith* groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Here we have the secret of our cure. We want to believe more simply and confidently in the love wherewith we ourselves are beloved of God; we want to drink more freely and abundantly the streams of love which flow into our own vessel from Christ, before we can pour into another's; for we must be consciously loved before we can love others, whether our brethren or the world. Christ is the object of faith, His love the subject of our faith; let our faith in that love to ourselves grow exceedingly, and our love will abound towards one another. Another text bearing the same testimony is in 1 John iii. 23. "And this is His commandment, that we *believe* on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love *one another*, as He gave us commandment." You see, then, that accordingly as we believe His love to ourselves, it will exercise its influence on our hearts in reference to others.

But what has been our personal experience? What is the testimony of our life's retrospect? We

have had our convictions, our confessions, our prayers, our groanings? How often have we groaned out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We have had our desires, our promises and purposes, as to the future, and have they not in the hour of temptation, miscarried as to the manifestation of love? Have we not been baffled, in bringing forth that love, for the manifestation of which we have been left in the world? Surely these desires and purposes have been, like children, brought to the birth, without strength to bring forth. I speak now about the manifestation of Christianity, not whether one is a Christian, nor about what will save a sinner; but I will say that it is not enough that we fancy we have the love of Christ in us, or that we really have it in us; there is no testimony for God in that merely, though it may lead to it; He requires of His own dear children, that if His love be in them, they should not hide it, but bring it forth into the light, so that men may see it. This love must come out, or we are of no use here, we are cumberers of the ground. "No man lights a candle, to put it under a bushel." Without this positive practical testimony of love, we do no good for God, and no harm to the devil.

It was true, quite true, that Peter loved Christ;

the greater the pity that he did not shew it. He could say to Christ when so sorely pressed : "Lord, *Thou* knowest that I love Thee." But that would not do for testimony. Peter could not say to the High Priest's maid, "Thou knowest that I love Jesus," nor to the servants with whom he warmed himself on that dreadful night. In the law the frankincense was not to be mixed up in the leaves in the tabernacle ; but to be put on the top of the shew-bread, the crown, the glory thereof. Thus should we be God's shew-bread, conspicuous for love before Him continually. Let us abide in His love, that we may bring forth love.

Now let me conclude by reminding you that the devil is the distinct personal antagonist of the Son of God ; and that he is at the bottom of all this falsification of His name. The world is opposed to the Father. (1 John ii. &c.) The flesh is against the Spirit. The devil against the Son. Satan shewed his murderous enmity against the family of David, all through the history of the Old Testament. And when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, then he caused the slaughter of the babes, in order to cut off the infant Jesus ; and when, after the devil had succeeded in cutting Him off on the cross, by the will of God, and God raised Him from the dead, the malignant aim of Satan has been to falsify and corrupt the testi-

mony to His blessed and beautiful Name on the earth. He has determined that there shall be no true, practical confession and manifestation of Christ, in His saints by their walk in this world. Alas, too well has he succeeded. He has no objection that we should preach, and teach, and sing the finest things about Him, and about His love ; but, I repeat, he will not permit Christ to be practically and personally confessed. He has no objection to the most accurate criticisms, the clearest intelligence, and understanding of mysteries, dispensations, and heavenly calling, provided we maintain those precious things in a hard, severe, and proud spirit, thinking much of ourselves and despising others. It pleases Satan when we thus shew ourselves, and hide the Son of God.

If we know that this is Satan's design, we are not ignorant of his devices. "To be forewarned, is to be forearmed." When the prophet told the King of Israel the counsels of the King of Syria, who warred against him, his plans of war, his ambushes, and the positions of his army, the enemy's plots were counter-plotted by the intimations of the prophet. (2 Kings vi.) They were Divine warnings. Now God virtually tells us the words the devil speaks in his council-chamber. That which Satan sets himself against, that is the point where all our force is to be directed, not merely as a spirit of opposition to him, but in

the spirit of love to Christ. How shall we counterplot Satan, who would banish the real Name of God's Christ from the earth? By abiding in His love and manifesting *Him*.

If we know these things, happy are we if we do them!

“O Lord, when we the path retrace  
Which Thou on earth hast trod,  
To man Thy wondrous love and grace,  
Thy faithfulness to God;

Thy love to man so sorely tried,  
Proved stronger than the grave:  
The very spear that pierced Thy side  
Drew forth the blood to save.

Faithful amidst unfaithfulness,  
Midst darkness only light,  
Thou didst Thy Father's name confess,  
And in His will delight.

Unmoved by Satan's subtle wiles,  
By suff'ring, shame, and loss;  
Thy path, uncheered by earthly smiles,  
Led only to the cross.

O Lord, with sorrow and with shame,  
We meekly would confess,  
How little we, who bear Thy Name,  
Thy mind, Thy ways express.

Give us Thy meek, Thy lowly mind;  
We would obedient be;  
And all our rest and pleasure find,  
In fellowship with Thee.”

# LESSONS FROM GETHSEMANE.

BY C. RUSSELL HURDITCH.

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THE few thoughts I have to express are in connection with our Lord's visit to Gethsemane, as recorded in Mark xiv. ; but rather in reference to the sleeping disciples, than the praying Lord. How thoroughly we learn from the scene before us our utter inability to share in the sufferings of Christ, or to watch with Him one single hour, except as sustained by His divine power, and ministered to by His unfailing grace. Whoever would have thought that disciples such as these would be found sleeping at such a time, and in such a place ! But so it was, and we find the counterpart of this in ourselves, as our own individual experiences, and the repeated confessions we have together made at the throne of grace, too clearly prove. How searching was the question addressed to Peter—"Simon, sleepest *thou* ? couldst *thou* not watch one hour ?" But alas ! Peter, with the other disciples, fell asleep again immediately their Lord had left, to resume His strong crying and

tears on the spot where He had previously agonized in prayer. And how often, brethren, does the Lord seem to say to us, "Sleepest thou?" while we have, year after year, month after month, and day after day, to confess that, in more or less measure, it is even so. This has appeared all the more solemn to me while reflecting on the fact, that,—

The disciples *slept while in companionship with Christ*. And so it has often been with us; yea, though we are linked with Him in the most endearing ties of relationship, as "accepted in the Beloved," and indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and brought into fellowship with the Father and with the Son; yet, alas! our eyes are often heavy, and we fall asleep when we should be watching and praying.

But the disciples were *witnesses of the agony of their Lord, and the fervency of His prayer, yet they slept*. And so with us; with the Word ever in our hands, we seem to have Gethsemane and the dark scenes of Calvary before our very eyes, with the dying cry of our precious Lord and Master ringing in our ears, and the blood pouring from His broken heart; and yet, alas! we slumber and sleep.

These disciples *had companied with Christ in the past, and had received out of His exhaustless stores of grace and truth, and yet they slept*. And what have we not received, brethren, out of the abounding riches of His love, and

power, and grace? Oh, it is solemn to reflect that albeit many of us have been learning Christ these many years, receiving from His infinite fulness grace upon grace; yet we are too often incapable of watching with Him even one hour. Some of us joyfully confess having been in Christ for ten, twenty, and thirty years, and some even more; but is it not also a most *humbling* confession to make, that we have been in Christ *so long*, and yet walked, and watched, and worked *so little* in the power of God?

But we shall find something even in Gethsemane to cheer our drooping hearts. I was greatly struck with the fact that the Lord Jesus paused again and again amid His agonizing cries, in order that He might minister comfort and strength to His sleeping followers. What a delightful glimpse is this of the character of Him who served us on earth, and still serves us in glory! Well may we say, "We have *such* an High Priest!" One indeed "who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And if He could stay amid His supplications, in that awful crisis in His history, to minister to His failing disciples, how much more will He, amid the glories of His present enthronement, readily respond to the necessities of His faltering people!

But note, though the disciples may fail to watch, *He* could not; though they may sleep and not pray,

“He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground,” until, strengthened by His Father for the last great conflict with the powers of darkness, He could bid them “*sleep on now and take rest.*” The watching was over, the praying well nigh past. “It is enough,” said Jesus. The mighty work was as good as done, and our eternal rest was secured by the cross—the dark shadow of which had just fallen across His path. But, brethren, it is on this very ground that we are *now* exhorted to be wakeful. We could not watch and pray with Christ for even one hour *before* the cross; but we are exhorted to “watch and pray without ceasing” *since*; for it is not the cross, but the glory, that is now before us, for which we look and long.

With this subject I would link a word the Holy Ghost has given us in 1 Thess. v. 6, which may well be addressed to us now, while watching for the very breaking of the day—“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

Brethren, we have unlimited power in our risen Head, sufficient to keep us awake if we will but respond to His call. We *ought not* to sleep. Therefore let us awake *to more persevering prayerfulness of spirit*. I rejoice that there has been much prayer at these meetings; but there is indeed need for a vast deal

more. I fear we know too little of what it is to be “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” If we are to see a fresh revival in the church of God, it must begin here. The history of all heaven-given revivals has just been the history of prayer. Oh that we may believe this, and thoroughly awake from our slumbers, to continue in prayer, both in our closets and when we are gathered together!

We should also awake *to more increased devotedness to the Person and work of Christ*. I fear we know little of what it is to be followers of the Lord *fully*—to be “sanctified wholly, spirit, soul, and body,” unto the Lord—to be unreservedly given up to His work, for the promotion of His glory in the salvation of perishing souls. The fields are everywhere white unto harvest, both at home and on the continent; the cry is going up for fresh labourers for the Lord’s vineyard. There never were such vast, open doors for the preaching of the gospel in Great Britain, France, Spain, and Italy—yea, even Rome itself—as at the present time, not to speak of China and India, with their teeming millions. Oh, will not some more men of God respond to the urgent cry, and unreservedly consecrate themselves to the blessed work of pointing perishing souls to the living Christ, as well as mani-

fest more practical devotedness to the Lord in all the various details of daily life.

Yet, once more, we should solemnly awake *to a more practical realization of the power of the blessed hope of Christ's speedy return*. It is sad to reflect how much the hope of Christ's coming is held as a doctrine in the head, rather than as a living power in the soul ; and I humbly judge that there has been a declension in this matter. A few years since, did we not hear far more respecting the coming of the Lord than we do now ? and we often find in gatherings like these it is thrown in in the shape of a hymn or a word now and then, so as to give a little tone to the meeting, instead of its being seen and felt to be the one living, buoying-up power that God has designed it should be. Oh, brethren, let us awake, trim our lamps, watch and pray, and be like unto servants waiting for their Lord, and as the bride waiting for the Bridegroom. It is easy to sing, as we did just now,

" I can almost hear His footfall  
On the threshold of the door ;  
And my heart, my heart is longing  
To be His for evermore."

But oh ! brethren, do we realize it in our souls ? If we did honestly believe this to be true, what prayerfulness, what devotedness, what watchfulness would be manifested by us this very night and henceforth.

What earnest prayers should we offer for our unsaved ones around, what tear-blotted letters we should write them, beseeching them to come to Christ! What now-unsanctified possessions and hoarded means should we lay at the Master's feet, to be employed in His service! What zealous devotedness would characterize our whole being, if we but believed what we have just sung! Yet on the Lord's part it is true; for He says, "SURELY I COME QUICKLY!" May our God give us grace to awake from our slumber, to watch and pray—crying from our longing hearts "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

"Hark! 'tis the watchman's cry—

Wake, brethren, wake!

Jesus Himself is nigh,

Wake, brethren, wake!

Sleep is for sons of night,

Ye are children of the light,

Yours is the glory bright,

Wake, brethren, wake!

Call to each wakening band,

Watch, brethren, watch!

Clear is our Lord's command,

Watch, brethren, watch!

Be ye as men that wait,

Always at their Master's gate,

E'en though He tarry late,

Watch, brethren, watch!"

# THE RIBBAND OF BLUE.

BY HERBERT W. TAYLOR.

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**W**HAT a strange distinguishing mark was this! A peculiar people characterised in their peculiarity by a ribband of blue—simple but striking badge of the heavenly calling of God's people. Behind them was Egypt, with its bondage chains and slavish lash; its darkness, plagues, and death. Canaan, with its fountains and depths springing out of valleys and hills, the land of oil-olive and honey was before them. They pressed on towards their home. But whilst they trod the desert that lay between, they wore the reminder of their separation to God. In the borders of the garments was to be the fringe, and upon the fringe was the ribband of blue. It would thus completely surround them, cutting them off and isolating them from the scene through which they passed, as those who found no place in it. In the figure of the fringes we may see the small details of life, and the same being on the borders of the garments was emblematic of the

lowest things connected with this world. This may well speak to our consciences, that in all the daily little things we do, there may be seen that heavenly characteristic which makes us as a heaven-born and heaven-bound people.

It is to this the apostle refers, after the heavenly truths of Ephesians and Colossians, when, in closing these epistles, he tells saints not to give place to the devil, not to steal, nor lie, nor to let corrupt communications proceed out of their mouths; as well as enjoining wives, children, and servants to obey, and husbands to love. Here is the ribband of blue running through the fringes on the borders of the garments. Thus, in the family, in the business, and in the social circle, this ribband of blue is to be unmistakeably seen. There is to be this marked difference between the Christian child and the unconverted members of a family. The servant in the household that serves the Lord Christ will display the ribband of blue. And the heaven-born boy at school will be different from his worldly fellows. The tradesman and the merchant will let it be seen; the false practices of trade and the grasping spirit of the evil age he will be put off from, by the isolation of the heavenly ribband. In the morning call, and in the dress of the child of God, the ribband of blue will find its place. Oh! that it may be said of us

by some friend or visitor, as he leaves our company, "We have seen the ribband of blue upon the fringes of the borders of their garments; the dress, and appearance, and speech of those people tell that they belong to a scene as different from this world as light from darkness, as *heaven from earth*."

And we may well ask, What is this heavenly life? What are some of its characteristics? "Learn of Me," says He who perfectly displayed the ribband of blue, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." What a contrast this to the making broad the phylacteries, and enlarging the borders of the garments. Nay, but "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," (Phil. ii. 3—8), and be ye clothed with humility. There is no vaunted ostentation in this, no pretending to be sanctimonious—far from it, it is simply: he that is born again manifesting the life of the new creation.

But this ribband of blue was not only for the benefit of the strange nations and outsiders through whom Israel passed; it was for themselves to look upon; and when they looked upon it they were to "remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them." They were no longer to seek after their own heart or their own eyes; the time passed in Egypt would suffice for that. The blood which had redeemed them from the tyranny of Pharaoh, had also

purchased them for God. We, too, do well to bear in mind, that it was with one and the self-same stroke Christ paid the debt of sin we owed, and bought the debtors as His own. So, as *we* look upon the ribband of blue, we remember that we belong to Another, whom we are to serve in newness of life. The one work which saved our souls, also delivered us from this present evil world, and set us free from ourselves, that we might no more "seek after our own heart and after our own eyes, after which we used to go a whoring;" or, in other words, that we should "set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

"It is Thy precious name I bear,  
It is Thy spotless robe I wear,  
Therefore, the Father's love I share.

And when I in Thy likeness shine,  
The glory and the praise be Thine,  
That everlasting joy is mine."

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# THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND THE GLORY THAT SHOULD FOLLOW.

BY LORD RADSTOCK.

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**I**N 1 Peter i. we are told something about "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." This is what God would direct our thoughts to. As Christ has suffered, the glory has begun. Therefore the glory (coming in in consequence of the sufferings of Christ) is bound up with the sufferings. A soul says, "I have failed in everything; yet how is there glory?" I am reminded of a passage in Deuteronomy (and you must remember this was spoken in the eleventh month of the fortieth year of the wilderness journey). We read in the 16th verse of the 8th chapter: "Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." He led them just to humble them. I thank God I have got a humbling. Well, they had been brought to a certain

point, and God says, "Hear, O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself." Thou, Israel, who hast been so rebellious, art "to go in to possess." And why? Read the 5th verse: "Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess the land . . . ; but that He may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers." It was simply because God made a promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, four hundred years before.

Now pass on to the tenth chapter:—"At that time the Lord said unto me, hew thee two tables of stone." At what time? The time when they had departed from God most grievously. Ah! at that time God put the tables of covenant into the ark. How often I think of my failures, and then remember how He keeps His covenant! Yes, He is "made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." In verse 8 we read, "At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, . . . to stand before the Lord." You say, young believer, "Am I to stand in Christ?" Yes, you are separated to His service, and to blessing in His name. Those who belong to Christ are not only blessed; but they are made a blessing. Let us look at one more passage in reference to this wilderness picture.

Let us see God's thought on Numbers xxiii. In verse 8 we find Balaam saying, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?" God *has* blessed; I cannot reverse it. "I do not behold perverseness in Israel. I undertook to bless, because of the seed of Jacob." He did not look at *them*; He looked back four hundred years before. That is our standing before God, blessed be His name! When God looks at Christ, He says Christ is the conquering One; just as in the case of Jehoshaphat: "The battle is *not yours*;" the Lord smote the enemy. When the Lord said, "The battle is *Mine*," He really meant it. Beloved friends, we should be more joyful; we ought to be more constantly praising the Lord; we belong to a Conqueror; but people say, "I can't realize it."

Let me bring you back to the 28th of Exodus: "And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel." We have *our* Aaron, our High Priest. (The High Priest is in reference to the failure of the people.) And here is something for Jesus' glory, and Jesus' beauty. It was for Aaron's glory to wear all these names; and so, blessed be God, it is with Christ; He could not enter heaven without all these names on His shoulders. Yes! that is something for His glory, "that we should be to the glory of His grace." As

certainly as you are a believer in Jesus, so certainly is Jesus bearing your case before God, for ever and ever. It is all to the praise of His glory, it is His triumph; He is the successful Workman; when we are brought to nothing, then we are to His glory and to His praise. God's glory is manifested in taking up the weak ones.

“We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.” May our eyes be unto God. May we be filled with praise. May our God give us grace to abide in Him, and to see His glory; for He has blessed us “with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

[NOTE.—In consequence of Lord Radstock's absence on the Continent, we were unable to obtain a revision and enlargement of these brief notes of an address which brought refreshment to many who heard it at Willow Park.—ED.]

# THE LORD'S COMING.\*

BY JOHN M. CODE.

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**T**HIS is the great crisis that we wait for—the termination of the long-protracted course of God's gracious dealings with this present evil age: and, as far as I may speak with any certainty, the only thing that delays this grand expectation and blessed hope to those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, is His waiting till His elect be gathered in unto Him. "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved," that is, Israel's prospects are in abeyance until the full number of the Gentiles is complete, who, along with the Jews who are called, constitute this body, of which all who believe are members—members of Christ's body—of His flesh, and of His bones. And as that event as to its time depends upon the completion of the number that are to constitute that body, God

\* This address, in order of date, should have appeared earlier in the volume; but it is placed here as the most appropriate place for teaching on "that blessed hope" so very soon to be realized to the full.

ED.

only knows the moment when what is declared in this passage shall be fulfilled :—"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." And while we hear of the attractiveness of Christ crucified, the mind is carried on a step further to this our hope, when we shall be caught up, and caught up by the attraction of Jesus. Nobody whose creed, whose orthodoxy is uncertainty about their present salvation, nobody whose creed teaches them to depend in their dying moments upon the offices of a priest, none such could ever consistently hold a doctrine that puts aside all human preparation, and takes us all up just as we are, as the Lord's people. We must be safe, we must be spotless, we must be ready in *God's* account of us, in order that we may be partakers of that rapture into the air to meet our heavenly Lord.

How good it is, beloved, that when we are saved our affections should be under the influence of this everlastingly attracting object, the cross. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto Me." That meant the cross ; the context itself explains it. "This He said, signifying what death He should die." He

has been lifted up there, and He is now the attracting object in heaven.

It is to my heart a beautiful word He spoke in John xiv., when He said, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself." Now, is not that happy? It is as if the Lord reckoned upon its being a delightful thing to everybody who knew Him that He should come, and not only take us to heaven, but as the sum and substance of blessing, as the climax of every step of glorious blessedness, receive us UNTO HIMSELF. Do you like that? Is that pleasant to you? Is that better than heaven to you? Is that better than a crown to you? Is that better than a kingdom to you? It is the best thing that could be given to us, and heaven will be nothing, and glory will be nothing compared with JESUS. *He* is that glory of our glory, and the heaven of our heaven *Himself*.

And, oh, what a conquest is this when we consider, beloved, how reluctant we are to have anything to do with Him! How constantly we find the tendency and propensity to forget Him and avoid Him! The carnal mind is enmity against God, but the blessed Jesus performs such a conquest

as to attract this mighty multitude that will go up to Him, with not a reluctant heart; every one attracted to Him; everyone running to Him with joy and gladness, Not a single thing in them that could withdraw them from Him, but everything in them that will respond to that mighty Magnet. And how blessed for Jesus, when He comes to the air, and waits for all those He has loved, and whose affections He has died to win; how blessed for Him to stand there and receive them *unto Himself*! And what a smile of joy, what a beam of brightness will be in His countenance when we see Him! Oh, the blessed happiness of Jesus when He gathers us all around Him, when we flock around Him as the centre He has become to us! Oh, how blessed is this!

There is a little incident recorded in the last chapter of John, which has been full of blessing to me. There was Peter, who had denied the Lord Jesus Christ, in a ship; he was fishing, and he ought not to have been fishing, for the Lord had called him away from his nets, to become a fisher of men. They went forth and entered into a ship, and that night they caught nothing; and the Lord stood on the shore and asked, "Children, have ye any meat?" and when they answered, "No," He said unto them, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find." It was a sort of rebuke to

them. And John, when he saw that the blessed Jesus was the speaker, said to Peter, "It is the Lord." The moment Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat unto him and rushed into the surf to reach Him—no thought of his own sin, it all vanished at the sight of Christ—no thought of his ship, his nets, his fish, before the attractive power of Jesus. We don't think of our sins or anything else as a hinderance when we see the love of Christ. Jesus stood as conqueror there, He drew him to Himself.

What a word is in Thessalonians! It is said, "We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." To meet *whom*? To meet *the Lord, the Lord Jesus*. There are two things in connexion with this being caught up—we shall see *God*, we shall see in the man Christ Jesus the image of the invisible God. There is an object which, while it transcends, imparts its lustre to all around it—the one Man Christ Jesus; and then, secondly, we shall be caught up to the Father's house. The blessed Son of the living God comes down to the air, and draws us up to Himself, and then takes us to our Father's house, *our home*. And that is what every natural man is seeking after, a peaceful and a lasting home, but never gets it; but God will give it to us—a peaceful, happy home—nothing to disturb, nothing to mar that peace, with all the bless-

ings that the God who gave His Son for us can give us.

But these two words—"Caught up together." We are to be caught up. How? *Separated*. Our brother has spoken of the separating power of the gospel. Here is what we expect—here is the separating power of Hope—you who believe in this truth, expect to be caught up, caught up out of the world, caught up from our friends and relatives, caught up from every association that would bind you here, caught up from everything. How would you like that? Would you like to be caught up now out of the world? Are you ready now? It is a *separating* principle, and should mark every step of our way now. It is separating—it is also *uniting*; separating from the world, uniting to one another. We are not only all caught up, but we are all caught up "*together*." This hope must, therefore, while separating from the world, unite to one another; for we shall have no independent place. The saints in Thessalonica were in difficulty because of the saints who had fallen asleep; the apostle tells them, "We shall be caught up *together*." You see there is a bond of union between saint and saint. How separating from the world this is! The very thing that unites us to each other separates us from the world; and the very thing that binds us to the

world separates us from one another. Nothing will separate you from the world but *this hope*.

Well, it is necessary, therefore, for us to consider, beloved brethren, whether our circumstances in the world help or hinder us in this expectation. It may appear a trifle, but there is a meaning in this, that the Lord Jesus Christ, when He ascended up, did not ascend out of the heart of Jerusalem; He might have done it if He pleased; but He led them out as far as Bethany, and from Bethany, *outside Jerusalem*, He ascended. And surely, we are told to "go forth unto Him *without the camp*, bearing His reproach, for here we have no continuing city."

And now, beloved, I put this question to you in conclusion, Is Christ such an attractive object to your soul, not merely an attractive object whereby you are drawn to Him for life, and for forgiveness of your sins, as on the cross, but the attractive object that has put out every other light—the attractive object in heaven that has captivated your heart, and taken your affections from every other object?

Oh, beloved, we shall be caught up to be with God, to be in God's home, to be "for ever with the Lord"—not a transient season of joy, but to "be *for ever* with the Lord;" not a consciousness of His love for a moment, or for a day, but "*for ever!*"

Oh, the power that is in God ! Oh, the attractiveness there is in Jesus to satisfy the demands of millions of needy and dependant souls throughout eternity ! Oh, the need, the unsatisfied hungering of poor souls in hell, is put in contrast with the blessed fulness and power of God to satisfy every desire of our hearts ! What confidence He must have in His own power ! What confidence God must have in His own resources to make us happy ! He binds us to His Son in an indissoluble tie of the unity of the Spirit of life, so that if *we* are not happy, then *Christ* is not happy—that if for a moment in eternity *we* flag in the vivacity of our joy, then that moment *Jesus'* joy will fail. But He is the source of *eternal* blessing, of *unfailing* streams of joy. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus !” Blessed be the Lord, we shall soon be taken away, soon be with the Lord. And though separated from those love here who are still in their sins, who are still in ignorance of Christ's attractive power, the intenseness of the love of Christ in our hearts shall put away every sorrowful consideration and reminiscence, and we shall be happy as eternity is long. Oh that we may now live, and, if need be, even die for the salvation of sinners !

# A POSTSCRIPT.

By C. RUSSELL HURDITCH.

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I AM reminded, at the close of these happy meetings, of a verse in the third epistle of John which forms a kind of postscript to the apostle's letter, in which he says:—"I had many things to write; but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee; but I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be with thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name." Now, without any strain of interpretation, may we not, beloved friends, discern in this a sweet little intimation of what the thoughts of the Lord toward us are during the time of His absence?

It seems to me as if "that disciple whom Jesus loved"—possessing much of his divine Master's spirit, was now acting in sympathy with Him towards the beloved saints addressed, with whom, while absent in body, he gladly communicated by letter; thus manifesting his affectionate interest in all that concerned their advancement in the truth and love of Christ. Therefore he writes unto them "with ink and pen," in order that they may be instructed in those things which it was highly important they should know. But while he thus communicates with

them on subjects of present importance, his large and loving heart longs to impart to them something more of its fulness of tender sympathy and grace.

This, however, is reserved for the time when they can speak "face to face," "that"—as he remarks at the close of his second epistle—their "joy may be full." Meanwhile, his salutation is given: "Peace be with you!" And being desirous that *each* saint should realize his personal interest therein, he adds: "Greet the friends *by name*."

Thus it is with our adorable Lord and Master. He has, in His infinite mercy, given us His written Word, to instruct and comfort us in His absence; and we may be assured, that whatever is contained in these precious "pen and ink" communications, is of the utmost value for our souls—revealing as they do His will as to our life and hope, our walk, worship, and work. Oh, that we more deeply felt this, and more diligently studied the precious epistles of our God! the general teaching of which may be described under these seven heads:—

What He is.

What He has done.

What He will do.

What the world is.

What we are.

What we should do.

What we shall be.

All of which is surely of immense importance; and which it is our solemn responsibility, as well as our happy privilege, to know—seeing that nothing has been written but that which “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) Oh, what words of pardon, peace and power are therein given, for our soul’s prosperity and joy! yet all that has been communicated to us by our precious Lord forms not a tithe of what is treasured in His heart of boundless love—of that wondrous fulness of wisdom and grace which He longs to communicate to us, when He will no more speak to us through the Book; but “FACE TO FACE.” Surely then our “joy will be FULL!”

What should we think of that child, who, when his parent returns after long absence, has to confess that his Letters have been almost unread, or only just glanced at? or of that bride, who, on the coming of the bridegroom, to claim her as his own, has to acknowledge that his “ink and pen” instructions have been almost unheeded, and, as a consequence, left her in unpreparedness for his coming? Surely it would result in confusion of face!

Then, brethren, let us take heed that it be not so with us. The Lord has been giving us many precious lessons during these happy meetings—opening out

much of His Word, and giving us to "sit down under His shadow with great delight." Let us see WELL to it, that we treasure those lessons in our hearts, and that we sit more constantly at His feet, diligently learning those things which he has caused to be written to us "with ink and pen;" so that when He comes, we may be found on our watch-towers, earnestly waiting for the sound of His gathering shout. Thus shall we "have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." (1 John ii. 28.)

In the meanwhile, may we all know, in realized enjoyment, the full blessedness of the portion expressed in the apostle's salutation: "Peace be with you:" and may each one prove the sweetness of Christ's personal love towards even the weakest and humblest of His saints, thus echoed in the significant closing words of this Apostolic Postscript:—"Greet the friends *by name*." Thus may we "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," and "be FILLED INTO ALL THE FULNESS OF GOD."

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephes. iii. 20, 21.)



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