

THE WITNESS:

An Unfettered Monthly Journal

— OF —

Biblical Literature, Expository Papers,
Notes of Addresses, Conference Reports,
Questions and Answers, Intelligence,
Poetry, Correspondence, &c.

EDITED BY

J. R. CALDWELL,

Author of "Because Ye Belong to Christ," "God's Chosen People," "Shadows of Christ,"
"Things to Come," "Earthly Relationships," &c., &c.

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The one condition of freedom from condemnation is being *in Christ Jesus*. It is this that distinguishes, as by a sharp line of demarcation, those who are "of faith" from all the rest of the world. To belong to the family of the first Adam is to be in the sin and under the condemnation that came by him; to be in Christ is to be like Noah in the ark, safe from judgment and in possession of the righteousness which is by faith. The expression "in Christ Jesus" tells of personal, vital union with Him who has been raised from the dead. Dying for us on the Cross, Christ made an end of our condemnation when He put away our sin, and now, united to Him and partakers of His life, we are as free from condemnation as Christ Himself.

To be condemned is an awful thing! It is solemn enough in a human court, but how much more solemn in the heavenly court of the righteous Judge of all. Yet every one *not* "in Christ" is "condemned already"; he is like a criminal under sentence, and only waiting for that sentence to be executed. Such was our condition by nature. What a change to pass from this state into that of being freed from condemnation! Do we dwell upon this as we should? If, by the teaching of the Spirit of God, our mouths have been "stopped," and we have owned ourselves "guilty before God" (ch. iii. 19), and God has in grace opened these lips that our mouths may show forth His praise (Ps. li. 15), should we not so dwell upon this marvellous work of His grace that our "new song" may constantly become deeper and richer?

In verse 2 we are told how these blessings which are bestowed through the death and resurrection of Christ become the possessed portion of each individual believer, and the apostle sets us an example of personal application by speaking in the first person, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus freed me from the law of sin and death." The "law of sin" is that terrible power that is in us all by nature, and "the wages of sin is death," therefore it may well be called "the law of sin and death." Opposed to this is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," that new life which is imparted to us

in regeneration by the Spirit of God. As God's great sentence of *justification* in His heavenly courts frees us from the *condemnation* of sin, so this mighty operation of the Spirit of God, which is an evidence of our being in Christ and absolved from condemnation, frees us from the *dominion* of sin. Only once before in this epistle has the work of the Spirit in the believer been mentioned—as shedding abroad God's love in the heart; but in chapter viii., where His gracious ministry is a special theme, He is revealed as the One who first communicates life "in Christ Jesus," and then takes up His abode in believers as members of Christ. It is not on the ground of deliverance that we are justified, but justification leads to deliverance, and the deliverance is really as complete as the justification, though it may not yet be so to our experience.

But the basis of all—whether the justification or the deliverance—is the sacrificial work of Christ, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (verse 3). The law was indeed strong to discover sin and condemn it, but it could not lead either to justification or deliverance; it was weak *through the medium of the flesh*, having nothing to act upon but what was already "under sin," and therefore under condemnation. But what was impossible to the *law* God accomplished in *grace* by sending *His own Son*. It was God's own purpose of love, carried out by *His own Son*, and as no creature could ever have devised such a work, so, even when the purpose was formed, no creature could have carried it out. Can we be too often reminded of the true glory of Him who was thus sent by God? He *was* the SON before He was *sent*. Before any creature existed the SON was with the FATHER in an unspeakable fellowship, shared by the Holy Spirit, and when, in lowliness, He stood among men He could say, "I am *from Him*, and He *sent Me*." God sending *His own Son* tells both of the greatness of the Father's love and the greatness of the work that had to be performed. Apart from God Himself there was no hope. Therefore the SON was sent

—not, indeed, in the external glory of God-head, but “in the likeness of sinful flesh”; not in the *likeness of flesh*, for He truly “became flesh,” but in the *likeness* only of *sinful flesh*, for He “knew no sin.”

The words “for sin” (verse 3) are often used in the Septuagint (over fifty times in Leviticus) for the *sin offering*, and it is clear that they here point to the sacrifice of Christ by which God “condemned sin in the flesh.” He condemned sin—*root* as well as *branch*—in Him, laying it to His account, that sin might not condemn us. He inflicted on it unsparing judgment that it should no longer have any claim on or dominion over those who are Christ’s.

The object of all this is “that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit” (verse 4). “The righteous requirement of the law” is, in the first place, the death of Him who has broken it. This has been fulfilled in our case by the death of Him who perfectly kept the law, and then, as our *Surety*, died under its curse. Thus it is magnified and made honourable, and all its demands are fully satisfied. But in another sense the requirement of God’s law is fulfilled in the believer who, though he could not present a faultless obedience that would find acceptance if he were “under law,” yet has, as the fruit of regeneration, a delight in God’s law, as that which he desires in his very heart to fulfil, and power to exercise that love which is its fulfilment.

BIBLE STUDIES.

“OTHERS.”

In Romans xv. we are

1 To help others,	- - -	verse 1
2 To please others,	- - -	” 2
3 To receive others,	- - -	” 7
4 To admonish others,	- - -	” 14
5 To minister to others,	- - -	” 27
6 To pray for others,	- - -	” 30

J. K. M’E.

THE “SOEVERS” OF SCRIPTURE,

Covering Person, Thing, Time, and Place.

Whosoever—any person	- -	John 3. 16
Whatsoever—any thing	- -	John 15. 16
Whenssoever—any time	- -	Mark 14. 7
Whitherssoever—any place	- -	Matt. 8. 19

T. B.

A RETROSPECT.

THE bygone century has been remarkable for progress and discovery in the arts and sciences, and has seen the rise of many and diverse movements pertaining to things civil, political, and religious. And not the least of these, from the scriptural standpoint, is what is known as the “Brethren” movement. In the early years of the century a number of God’s people, longing for a deeper fellowship with Him and with each other, found themselves drawn together by the attraction of the common life in the risen Saviour. It was an evil time. Formality in religion was the order of the day. In the stated “means of grace” there was, as a rule, little to nourish the divine life in the soul. And this is why many humble and longing hearts were led to “compare notes,” and see if haply the Lord had not some better thing for them than the dry bread and the dearth of fellowship with which so many seemed to be satisfied. That which took place in Malachi’s day was enacted again. “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another” (Mal. iii. 16). They experienced something of the sweetness of fellowship—real fellowship—the fellowship of hearts attuned by the hand of the great Master of Assemblies. At first they met only for prayer and edification, without separating from the ecclesiastical bodies to which they belonged. But as the movement widened and deepened, the new wine burst the old bottles. The saints came together not only for prayer and edification, but for worship and the keeping of the ordinances, as well as maintaining a regular Gospel testimony. The basis of fellowship was as simple as it was beautiful—“*We are brethren.*” We are brethren, not as distinguished from, but as identified with, all the saints of God. “We are all of One”; we are all brethren (Heb. ii. 11)—bound up, to the ages of eternity, in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. “The fellowship” was not the fellowship of a sect or a party. It was the fellowship of “all saints.” The “roll,” if we may so speak, was kept in heaven; for the great feature of the movement was the recognition of all who belonged to “the general Assembly and Church of the

firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Heb. xii. 23).

The truth relating to our gathering together in the one great Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, spread with wonderful rapidity. The "catholicity" of the movement commended itself to many. And perhaps even more were attracted by the spirit of love and humility that pervaded the assemblies of those believers at that time. The beauty of the Lord their God was upon them. Many saw it, and feared, and trusted in the Lord. As the movement was not projected on "popular" lines, there was but little in it to draw the carnal eye. Those who were really drawn were the godly—the men and women who found themselves saying, in the midst of a dead formalism, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." They found Him "outside the camp"—attracted by the savour of His presence among those of His redeemed who were seeking to give Him His true place as Lord in the midst. Thus it came about that many were gathered to Him beside those already gathered to Him. All denominational names were forgotten. The oneness of all believers was not only preached but felt and enjoyed. It was clearly seen that God's people had been separated from each other by barriers which God never made, while they had been joined in worship and service with the unregenerate—to whom the Lord had never joined his redeemed. These and many kindred truths were carried home to many hearts with emancipating power; while amid the revival of forgotten truth the Personal Return of the Lord Jesus was heralded forth with a clearness and unction which made the "Coming" a bright reality to many a weary heart.

We have thus briefly sketched the movement in the years immediately succeeding its birth. Let us now ask how it fared with the movement in the years that followed; and how it fares with the movement to-day. These are interesting questions. If the past century has lessons for us, it has doubtless its lessons in connection with that wonderful movement which drew unto itself some of the choicest spirits of the time—the "cream" of Christian workers—not a few of whom

were as eminent for their culture and scholarship as for their Christ-like character.

It is now simply a matter of history that the movement was marred by the attempt of certain leaders to *alter the basis of the fellowship*, and form the various assemblies into a united corporate body to be known as *the fellowship*. This attempt to form a confederacy of assemblies had disastrous consequences. The attempt was, to a large extent, successful, this being chiefly due to the personal ascendancy of one man. A considerable number of the assemblies joined the confederation—henceforth known as Exclusivism. A great many assemblies, however, perceived that this was simply a going back to sectarian principles, and maintained their position of *dependency* upon God, and individual responsibility to Him. They, therefore, continued to own that fellowship "which is written in heaven," in so far as they were able to recognise it on earth. In that condition—depending on God for everything, and recognising all whom they believed He recognised—lay their safety. Happy would it have been for all the assemblies if they had, in like manner, refused to come under the laws of a corporate body. In that case the Exclusive leaders would have found *no material* with which to build their system. They would have been met by the simple statement, "We are in God's fellowship, and are perfectly satisfied with it; and we shall continue to welcome those who are Christ's because they are Christ's." In many cases, however, the Exclusive leaders did not receive this answer. They found the material for a confederacy, and the sword of division was drawn in order to define the bounds of their habitation. But the sword which they took up has never left their house. Their testimony has been rent by one great schism after another. Indeed, the divisions of Exclusivism are, perhaps, in themselves the most powerful condemnation that could be pronounced on the confederacy principle. Wherever this principle is received there is the easy possibility of assemblies being divided; this takes place whenever a man or a meeting refuses to bow to the will of a few ecclesiastical leaders.

We therefore do not wonder that a great

many assemblies resolutely refused to be drawn into the Exclusive vortex. These assemblies kept the even tenor of their way, and their testimony has been largely owned of God. New assemblies have arisen in various parts of the country. In some cases the number of those who "sit at the table" runs into hundreds. Smaller meetings, however, are the rule. At the same time it must be remembered that a comparatively small meeting may mean a spiritual force that has to be reckoned with in the district where its lot is cast. A meeting may only number two or three score all told; but these all profess to be born again, and found themselves in the meeting because their walk confirmed their testimony. Even in that limited number there are probably some who preach the Gospel with acceptance, and others who are apt to teach; while there are those who do shepherd work in caring for the souls of the saints. Besides evangelists and teachers who devote their whole time to labouring in the Word and doctrine, there is a considerable endowment of gift among those who work with their hands. Sometimes there is a large and helpful "Conference," or perhaps a series of addresses to believers, at which the "ministers" are composed entirely of those who are engaged in a "secular" calling. Gospellers of this class are quite common, who preach "all the year round," either in their own locality or in other centres where their help is needed. In meetings of a special character there is a hearty recognition of the proved "labourers" who move about in the Lord's service, and the ministry of the Word is almost invariably in their hands when a series of consecutive Gospel meetings is to be held.

No doubt there has been failure. It must be conceded that in many cases the manifested life has not been commensurate with that separated position which we profess to occupy as outside the camp with the rejected Lord Jesus Christ. The chastening hand of our God has been upon us from time to time, and a new attempt to form a confederacy of assemblies, though it never made much headway, yet gave occasion for some to speak evil of the way of truth. But while admitting these things we would be unmind-

ful of the goodness of God if we did not bear testimony that, times and ways without number, "His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory" among us. There have been periods of wonderful revival, and times of patient continuance in the path of truth and the work of the Lord. Even in small assemblies, seldom visited by a passer-by, it has been found that the light had not only been kept burning, but that some of the excellent of the earth were there. We rejoice, also, to think that our brethren who honestly hold to Exclusive principles have been a testimony, notwithstanding, to the preciousness of the Name. Where "the life also of Jesus" is manifest in His members, that life shall be a light to them that sit in darkness. And the godly testimony of those who differ from us on Church truth has doubtless had its effect in "moulding the destinies" of many in those years that have gone. We have heard it said that the Brethren movement, as a corporate testimony, is dead. If by this is meant that the movement, as a *confederacy* testimony, is dead, we quite agree. We need not mourn the death of confederacy, seeing we are convinced it should never have been alive. If confederacy is all that is dead, let us be thankful. Let our care be to see that it does not come alive again. If we are content to go on humbly with God, cultivating the lowly mind, and seeking to walk with garments undefiled, we are satisfied that our God will not only deliver us from the devouring sword, but may let us see times that shall rival those of which "the Fathers" have told us concerning "the temple in its former glory." w. s.

A MISSIONARY'S HINT.

"I NOTICED while in England the need of brethren to ground God's children in the truth. May we be like Eliezer the servant of Abraham, who charmed the heart of Rebecca for Isaac. He spoke of him (Isaac and his riches). Here and all the world over God has but one food for His people, viz., JESUS—the Living Bread, the Bread of Life, the Bread of God. May the *Person and work* of the Lord Jesus be our theme for saint and sinner."

w. j. k.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

MATTERS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE.

MATTHEW V.

By EPHRAIM VENN.

SIX thousand years have well-nigh run
their course;

The troubled stream of Time, with cease-
less flow,
Fouled by man's sinful feet, e'en from its
source,
Still swells its dark and widening tide of
woe.

When four millenniums their course had run,
And proved that man in hopeless dark-
ness lay,
'Twas then, in wondrous love, God sent His
Son
To bring the light of heaven—salvation's
day.

Through Calvary's cross, out from this evil
age,
He saves His people. O the matchless
plan!

In words of light it shines upon the page
Of Holy Writ—the love of God to man.

Infinite wisdom planned the scheme profound,
That, with the Son of God identified,
All who believe in Him might then be found
In Him complete, together glorified.

Chosen of God e'er earth received her frame,
Redeemed by precious blood on Calv'ry
shed,
Called to confess and trust His peerless name—
The name of Jesus—Firstborn from the
dead.

With God one day is as a thousand years,
And e'en a thousand years as one short day;
In His own time He'll dry away all tears—
No haste th' Eternal knows, and no delay.

Six thousand years—six days of toil and sin;
E'en now the last sad hour is flying fast.
The seventh thousand soon will usher in—
The fair millennial Sabbath morn at last.

Earth's melancholy vision fades away,
Her long, dark scenes of war and carnage
cease.
Now faith can hail the long-predicted day—
Messiah's universal reign of peace.

WHEN we see religious worldlings
blindly reversing God's order—put-
ting works before faith, walk before life, and
vainly attempting to reach Christ through
the Church instead of reaching the Church
through Christ—we rightly pity them, and
should seek by all means to show such the
way of God. But there is the same natural
tendency in us all to overlook the weightier
parts of the will of God while pressing some
minor points into prominence. And shall we
indulge that in ourselves which we deplore
in others, and not rather honestly examine
all our ways to bring them into conformity
to the will of God?

In our Lord's discourse upon the Mount,
as given in Matthew, we find the word *FIRST*
three times used and in striking connections,
which, but a slight reference to our own
hearts and some little acquaintance with the
ways of saints show us, are of great import-
ance as bearing on our worship, life, and
service.

OUR WORSHIP.

"If thou bring thy gift to the altar and
there rememberest that thy brother hath
ought against thee, leave there thy gift before
the altar; go thy way, *first* be reconciled to
thy brother, and then come and offer thy
gift" (Matt. v. 23, 24). Although these
lessons on the Mount were not intended to
set forth the distinctive truths of Christianity
as afterwards unfolded by our precious Lord
to the circle of "His own" in John xiii.-xvii.,
and further developed specially through his
servant Paul, yet do they enforce truths and
principles of priceless worth to us as the
children of "Our Father which is in heaven."
Our double relationship comes out very
clearly in Matthew v.-vii., as no doubt that
of Israel in coming kingdom days. The
word "Father" in connection with us occurs
sixteen times, and the word "brother" seven
times in this discourse. God is *our Father*
and every one of His children is *our brother*.
The latter springs out of the former, for our
relationship with each other as brethren rests
upon our common relation to God as our

Father. It was a happy day when I first could take my place before God in the full consciousness of my eternal relationship with Him as His child, through faith in Christ Jesus; to know the unspeakable joy of "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." And it is a blessed thing, too, to learn that there is a "brotherhood" formed of all such as know the riches of His grace to them in Christ—a redeemed, regenerated company upon the earth now; a heavenly circle in which no "stranger or foreigner" participates: a family unlike all the families of earth, all begotten of the same Father, quickened into the same life in Christ, and born of the same Spirit; dear to the Father's heart, whose love has called them to have and enjoy fellowship with Himself and with one another.

But how slow we are to realise, though in measure we recognise, this spiritual relationship! This arises, no doubt, from the fact that it is a *purely spiritual relationship*, while every one who forms it, though made "spiritual" (as a new creation in Christ), is still indwelt by the flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit. All our difficulties with each other as children of God spring from this old root. There would be no jarring discords or divisions among saints but for the allowance of the flesh in us; never would brother trespass against his brother but for this; never should we see "a brother offended" amongst us if this "old man" were kept practically under. But just because we who live in the Spirit are so liable to walk in the flesh, in some of its many forms, the very nearness of our relationship brings us into special danger. What a display of the corruption of the flesh does it make that the life and love of God within us should so little control and characterise our dealings with one another!

It is comparatively easy to bring our gift to the altar, and maintain the proper form and semblance of worship, for the flesh is not disturbed, but rather satisfied with its own form of worship. Cain was forward to bring his gift to the altar, and then went forth to slay his brother, and we are warned against his Spirit by John, for "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for

he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 John iv. 20, 21). This is the law of love in which we are commanded to walk, but if this has been violated, and my brother "hath ought against me," the *first* thing is to be reconciled to my brother. Not merely to feel willing, not merely to seek reconciliation, but so to act as to secure it, and that before drawing near to God publicly. To say, "Let him come and show me my fault," will not do; I must *go my way*, even from the altar, and leave the great question of approaching God in abeyance until I have approached my brother and become reconciled. Until this is done God will have no respect to my offering, He will bear no testimony to my gifts. It is only when brethren "dwell together in unity" that the Holy Spirit is ungrieved amongst saints, and where the "unity of the Spirit" is kept, God's blessing rests.

Oh, what power and blessing might be ours still if, as brethren, we were together "with one accord"! But, in looking back at our history, or on present circumstances in many assemblies, instead of spiritual concord how often has brother been separated in heart and spirit from brother, while the outward form of fellowship has been well kept up! And so wide has been the breach in some instances that brethren have "preached at" and "prayed at" each other in the meeting, only to drive each other further apart. If this sorrowful state of things continues everything spiritual must be paralysed, and the whole assembly thrown into disorder, "For where envying and strife is there is confusion and every evil work" (James iii. 16).

How can the saints be edified and comforted, or the Gospel go forth with power, until estranged hearts are "knit together in love?" For if the channels are not clear the spiritual supply must be hindered.

We are instructed, therefore, how to set such a matter right, and nothing can be plainer or more binding than the rule here laid down by our Lord, "Go thy way, *first* be reconciled to thy brother, and then come

and offer thy gift." Go *thy* way; each one concerned in the estrangement must be ready to act in grace, not waiting for the other to "come round." It is just here the difficulty comes in; we are so sure to find the greatest obstacle in our own selves; we are so loath to come down from our position, so eager to prove our side of it right, and to secure our own honour, that we forget the Lord's honour, or mistake our own for the Lord's glory. Whereas, if our hearts were set for His glory, we should at any cost to ourselves seek it by keeping His commandments to love one another (John xiii. 34).

"First be reconciled to thy brother." It may be a work that needs delicate handling and much prayerful diligence, for "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their *contentions* are like the bars of a castle" (Prov. xviii. 19). But the extreme difficulty cannot relieve us from the obligation. However repugnant to flesh and blood, or humbling to our natural pride, our own feelings must be laid aside, with "All malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings." We must by the grace of God conquer the greater difficulty—the flesh in ourselves, then it will be easier to overcome the lesser in the brother who has somewhat against us. May the Lord give us grace to obey His own Word.

In Matthew xviii. we have the other side of the same matter, "If thy brother *trespass against thee*, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Putting the two sides together, we see that the *first* thing is for each to go to the other. The offender in chapter v. and the offended in chapter xviii. are both instructed, not to "go *for* one another," but to go *to* each other, and if this were more often done in the spirit of forgiveness reconciliation would follow, divisions would be healed, contentions cease, and untold evils be averted. The closing words, "Then come and offer thy gift," intimate that our offering of praise and service rendered would then be acceptable to God, and thus the most blessed results would inevitably follow. Since our happiness is not secured by knowing, but by doing these things, may the Lord greatly help us to put them into constant practice.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO CHRISTIANS.

1. BE as frequently at the meetings as opportunity admits, remembering that it is said, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25). God has a special claim on part of our time, and we should arrange to give it to Him as systematically as possible.

2. Seek grace and guidance from the Holy Spirit that in meetings for prayer and fellowship you may be able to be helpful to others as well as yourselves (1 Cor. xii. 7, xiv. 31). At the end of every prayer, or even at the *conclusion of each separate request* if so disposed, respond audibly, "Amen!" as a mark of oneness in prayer and of earnestness in desire for the blessings sought. But do not keep up a continuance of amens and groans which are most distracting to others (Deut. xxvii. 25; 1 Chr. xvi. 36; Ps. cvi. 48).

3. Let *heartiness* characterise all your service for the Lord. Sing heartily, pray earnestly, speak cheerfully one to another, notice strangers, and try to commend yourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, by reflecting the spirit and example of the Master in all intercourse with one another.

4. Do not let your prayers be *long* at meetings for prayer—pray *briefly* and *to the point*; neglect of this rule often makes a meeting drag heavily which would otherwise be bright and profitable. Many more would be led to take part, and true fellowship be promoted.

5. Come in time. Coming late, unless absolutely unavoidable, is irreverent towards God, an injury to yourself, and a hindrance to the devotion of others.

6. When at a service which aims specially at the salvation of souls, wait earnestly upon God for help to be given to the speaker, for blessing to rest upon the words spoken, and watch for opportunities to be used of the Lord for the good of others.

7. Always remember that it is the *Lord* you go to seek and to serve. Let no *man* come

between you and Him; let the Master be first and foremost in your thought and aim, and the servant be regarded as sent of Him, and as in all things responsible to Him. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone gives the increase. "Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"

THE FATHER'S PITY AND THE CHILDREN'S PROFIT.

Remarks by Dr. A. T. PIERSON, at a Prayer Meeting in Bethesda, Bristol.

OUR FATHER'S PITY.

THE most emphatic passage in the Old Testament about God's Fatherhood is in Psalm ciii. 13, 14: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." We do not hear much about the Fatherhood of God in the Old Testament, but this is a very remarkable disclosure.

You know the difference between pity and compassion. *Compassion* often implies that we are on a level with people we compassionate—we have a fellow-feeling. But *pity* is the feeling of One who is not on our level, and who looks down upon us with infinite condescension; and we are told here, "Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."

The word "frame" is a very peculiar one. It means just what it says. He knows the way we are put together. Just as a man who frames a house knows all its weak and strong points; and as a man who puts together a machine knows exactly where a breakage is liable to occur, or any kind of friction.

He knows how we are put together, and He does not expect of us what is impossible. He knows that into our composition dust enters; and we are frail, made of the earth, earthy, finite; and He does not lay upon us any burden that we cannot bear, and does not look to us for any exertion or endurance or which we are unprepared. This is a most

wonderful disclosure of fatherly pity, most tenderly put.

HIS CHILDREN'S PROFIT.

Now the other passage, Hebrews xii. 5-13. The very reading of it is a sermon: "They chastened us after their own pleasure, as seemed good to them, according to their own judgment [or too often their caprice]; but He for our profit, that all might be partakers of His holiness." And there is not an affliction that comes to the child of God the object of which is not simply our profit, but the particular profit, viz., to make us partakers of His holiness. "Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down" because they cannot lift the load, "and the feeble knees," which sink in feebleness because they are unable to bear. Despondent hands and feeble knees don't belong to the child of God who knows the Fatherhood of God.

Now, just a word about this. Verse 5: "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." There are two temptations in affliction: one to despise it, and the other to faint under it. To despise it, that is, to take it in the spirit of a Stoic, "I can't help it; it is my fate," and steel ourselves against it; or, on the other hand, to say: "God must be very much displeased with me; look how He tries me; I do not know what I have done to deserve it," and to faint, and become despondent. The Lord says: "Don't treat My chastening as one to be lightly dealt with, as a matter of fatality, and don't faint under it," getting into despondency and despair, as if the Lord were displeased with you, and judged you.

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." We have never been accustomed to regard the chastisement of a parent as a sign of love, though it may be, but God says His chastisement is, and that it is also a sign that we are children. If you have no affliction you lack the sign and confirmation of sonship. How beautiful this, that God loves us so, that He cannot let us stray and get wrapped in what is earthly, sensual, and devilish, or allow us to neglect prayer, to neglect His Word, and therefore He chastens us, because there is no other way to bring us back to

Himself, and there are some results that can only come from chastening. *Patience* is one of the two most important virtues of Christianity. *Patience* is never developed except in suffering; for no *patience* is needed where there is nothing to be patient about. It is a night-blooming flower, and if you want to see it and smell its fragrance you must have the night, for it never blooms in the day.

Although I have been allowed to have a measure of success in life, I can say distinctly that God has taught me more through my defeats than He has taught me through my successes, and that if I were going to plan out my own life, and choose if the dark days were to be left out, I would pray God to leave out any of the bright days, but none of the dark days, for I can distinctly see that God has taught me more in the dark days than in the bright—that I got my deepest lessons in days of darkness, and learnt more through my defeats and disappointments than through the fulfilment of my hopes, and what men call success. God's dealings with us are wonderful!

If you and I had infinite wisdom and love, and could plan our lives, we should not have deviated in the least from God's dealings; and if we get hold of that last name by which God is revealed, "*God is love*"—if we only get hold of the idea that God *is* love, not loving, lovely, but that He is the representation, the embodiment of love, we should get infinite comfort and consolation, even in the most severe and afflictive dealings, knowing that the hand that governs is not only the hand that guides by infinite wisdom, but that the very sceptre of God is a sceptre of love. And I believe we are going to spend part of eternity in looking back over the past—over God's discipline—to see that where we thought, like Jacob, "All these things are against me," God saw that all these things were *for* me; and the very things we should have avoided were the very things we could not have avoided without disaster; and the very things for which we prayed, we should not have prayed for if we had known; and the very things we shrank from, as from the surgeon's knife, were the things that took out the spiritual tumour and cancer, and made spiritual health possible.

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY—CHAP. I.

By F. S. ARNOT, Author of "Garenganze."

DEUT. xi. 10-12.

"For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is **not** as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

WHEN Abram first entered the land he journeyed from Haran, which we are told means "dry," so that Haran and Egypt might represent two opposite poles, with the land of Canaan between. If Haran was dry, Egypt was a land easily watered; leading from the great river that flowed through its plains, canals were dug, and from those canals smaller trenches were made, covering the land, and from those smaller trenches the water was let into the furrows of the fields at the will of the farmer, who usually broke a hole in the weak mud bank of the trench with his foot, and so allowed the water to flow into the field at will. The great river thus became the god of the Egyptians and the source of all their wealth and supply; but the land into which Abram was called to sojourn was a land dependent upon the rain of heaven; there the farmer, after having prepared his fields and sown his seed, had to look up to God continually for the early and the later rains.

Then, Egypt was a level country and easy to travel in, but Canaan was a land of "hills and valleys." The accounts of the journeyings of the patriarchs are often touched with weariness and pain. Jacob lay down exhausted, with a stone for a pillow. Abram was refreshed by Melchisedek when returning weary from following the kings of Shinar. The Lord, too, travelling from Judea to Samaria, sat weary on the well. Hills and valleys also suggest joys and sorrows. What a study of joy and sorrow the lives of all the Lord's people present throughout all Scripture! See to what a height of joy and ecstasy the Apostle Paul rises to at the end of Romans viii. (no separation), and to what a depth of sorrow he descends in the beginning of Romans ix. ("great heaviness and continual sorrow").

The early trials of the patriarchs were all connected with the question of food supply, and the temptation always seems to have been to look towards Egypt. Haran, the land of drought, was not so attractive. In the same way the backslider does not think back to the drought and bondage of his former state, but to the ease and comforts of the world. The first lessons, too, that the Lord gave to His disciples were specially suited to meet such trials of want and privation when they came to them, as they afterwards did as His apostles. Many of Abram's sorrows resulted from his failure at his first severe trial of famine. When he sought refuge in Egypt, did not Sarah bring Hagar back with her? And did not Lot bring back the memory of the well-watered plains, that opened his eyes to the value of the plains around Sodom, that were so "like the land of Egypt as thou comest unto Zoar." And, alas! how we, who profess to be followers of such in a path of faith and dependence, fail at our first trial and our first lesson.

But has Egypt anything to contrast with the 12th verse? The rain may seem to fail, but have His eyes grown dim or weary? Are they not continually upon us "from the beginning of the year to the end of the year?" Elijah on Mount Carmel having seen the sacrifice ascending, knew that God had heard him concerning the rain also. "Go again seven times" is his only answer to the servant who came back, having seen "nothing." Christ our Sacrifice is accepted and has ascended. "What can God now withhold? The rain will come; the rain must come, although each day throughout this year there may be the appointed time of watching and waiting."

"FEAR NOT."

"Jesus Christ, he same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

I,

MANY of us know what it is to look anxiously at our small stock of money and mentally to calculate the demands likely to be made upon it. We have to give up first one, and then another, and yet another thing that we deemed not only desirable but necessary, in order that the supply may hold out for what is really indispensable till the replenishing time comes. Cheerfully we re-

linquish the idea of a new dress or jacket in order that the children, or the overworked husband, or aged parent may have all their wants supplied. Less cheerfully we own the need to curtail their requirements. But it has to be done, and we resolve to make the best of it. After all, if the little indulgences the invalid has been accustomed to can still be managed, we can be content. But unforeseen expenses come, and even they must be lessened. This is harder than all. It may be that the thoughtlessness, extravagance, or selfishness of one who should help, not hinder, is the cause. That increases the sadness.

We weary our brains devising plans for augmenting the income, or diminishing expenses. In vain we lie awake thinking, thinking, thinking, with only this result—we rise unrefreshed and unfit for the burden of the day. But is it not written, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee" (Ps. lv. 22)? Think of our Saviour leaving the haunts of men for the solitude of the desert. The people who had listened to His tender, soul-stirring words and had seen His miracles followed Him. Instead of evading them, as He could easily have done, He pitied them and healed their sick. Seeing His acts of mercy, and listening to His words, they forgot the flight of Time, forgot they would need food. Or, if they remembered, they cared not, too entranced for the time to think of physical wants. But the Lord was ready, and instead of sending them away, as the disciples suggested, He supplied their needs abundantly.

Remember, too, the disciples after their night of unsuccessful toil—unsuccessful because wrong. At dawn, weary and dispirited, they looked to the shore. They saw Jesus, but knew Him not. "Children, have ye any meat?" They answered, "No." He then told them to cast their nets again, which they did, this time successfully. As soon as they came to land they saw a fire with fish on it, and bread. Their needs were supplied without their efforts. This was the doing of the Lord, who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

In both cases we see needs met by the Lord. Does this give us license to be improvident? Assuredly not. We are to act in strict obedience to His leading, and have no fears

for the result. "My God shall supply all your need" (Phil. iv. 19). Oh, for the simple trustfulness of the little child, who trusts to its father to supply every want! But a very few years ago a reverse came to one that threatened to deprive her and another entirely dependent upon her of every means of subsistence. She laid the matter before the Lord, and was enabled to trust Him that all would be well. Then she made active efforts to obtain something in the place of what was going. But all at once she found that, without any effort of her own, the thing that she had feared losing was secured to her under better conditions. Two Christian friends had indeed been at work; but was it not truly God working through them?

Fear not, burdened one! He who fed the Israelites in the wilderness, He who fed Elijah by the ravens, He who gave bread to the five thousand, is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." But it may be thoughtlessness or extravagance of our own has caused the difficulty. Then let us confess our sin to Him who "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," and He will "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He will lead us out of the difficulties we have brought ourselves into, and teach us to seek constant guidance from Him on the smallest matters.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

JESUS IN THE MIDST.—Please explain Matt. xviii. 20. Is Jesus in each assembly now, as in John xx. 19, or in the midst of all gathered ones as one body?

PHILANTHROPY.—Does the example of Christ warrant believers to engage in philanthropic work?

"MINISTER" AND "DEACON"—WHAT DIFFERENCE?—Are not the words "minister" and "deacon" synonymous—minister from the *Latin*, deacon from the *Greek*? If so, how is it that the word deacon came to have as its meaning a subordinate office-bearer in the Church, associating it with Stephen and his fellows, where it is never used, the words *ministration* and *ministry* being used (see Acts vi. 1-4)?

HOW DOES LOVE COVER SIN?—What is the meaning of the latter part of 1 Peter iv. 8, "For charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins"?

"FOREVER" IN HEBREWS x.—Does the term "forever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

THE BODIES OF BELIEVERS—HOW AND WHEN REDEEMED?—We would like to know your thoughts as to what the Scriptures say of the bodies of God's people—whether they are presently redeemed by the death of the Lord Jesus, or if they are sinful bodies? And if they are not presently redeemed, how and when they will be redeemed. Is the flesh spoken of in Romans vii. 18 the same thing as the outward man spoken of in 2 Corinthians iv. 16, and in Romans xii. 1? If the body is sinful, how can God accept of it offered up a living sacrifice? A few of God's children are anxious to know the mind of God from the Scriptures on this subject.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

QUESTION 428.—Please explain the term "Kingdom of God" in John iii. 5. Is it synonymous with the term "Church," as taught by some?

Answer.—No; the term "Kingdom of God" is never synonymous with the term "Church" in the New Testament. The "Kingdom of God" is the sovereign rule or authority of God over the heart and conscience, and over the motives of action. The Lord Himself describes the Kingdom of God with wondrous clearness in Luke xvii. 20, 21. He says: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you." The margin is not so correct as the text; *entos* in the New Testament always means inside, or within. The Lord said to Nicodemus (John iii. 3), "Except a man be born again he cannot see (discern) the Kingdom of God," and the Spirit by Paul says almost the same in 1 Cor. ii. 14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Then (John iii. 5) the Lord said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." That is, become so subject to that dominion that it regulates the actions and controls the motions of his life. In order to this he must have new life by the Spirit of God and new light by the Word of God.

J. S.

[The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink,

but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.—Ed.]

CHRISTIANS AND THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS.

QUESTION 429.—In cases of persecution, injustice, oppression, assault, &c., from which protection is clearly granted by treaty or law, is it for a Christian, regardless of rights and privileges, to meekly suffer himself to be wronged, or ought he to apply for the protection legitimately his due? In case of theft, should he notify existing authorities, or merely commit his case to God?

Answer A.—In cases of wrong-doing suffered by Christians it is necessary to distinguish between cases where the wrong is (1) merely a private one, affecting only the sufferer, and (2) others where the law of the land, and (3) where the law of God is publicly transgressed. In the first case, and indeed in all cases, the Christian is commanded to forgive the injury done to him personally. But no one has a private right to condone an offence against the public, much less the Divine law. So, while making it clear that they neither seek nor accept compensation, or purely personal rights through political channels, and that they prosecute offenders in a forgiving spirit themselves, and with the sole object of honouring Divine and social order and justice, a Christian ought to notify existing authorities.

G. B. M.

Answer B.—In dealing with a brother in Christ concerning the above questions, we have clear guidance in the Scriptures as to what we should do (1 Cor. vi. 1-8). But if an unbeliever continues theft, injustice, &c., as man to man, then a Christian is justified in using the lawful means to hand to have it discontinued. Not out of spite, nor for revenge, but that a quiet and peaceful life may be led. We have ample proof of this in the letters received from our labouring brethren, more especially on the Continent, who often have to seek protection from the law. But an example is to be found in 1 Peter ii. 21-23. W.A.

Answer C.—The two instances in which Paul insisted on his rights as a Roman citizen abundantly answer queries in the negative (Acts xvi. 35-39; xxii. 24-29). A Roman citizen could not be bound by the Valerian law, be beaten with rods, or have his liberty put in the power of the lictors (sergeants, xvi. 35) by the Porcian law, but yet at Philippi Paul suffered from all these illegalities, and, greatest of all, against the clearest maxims of Roman law, was condemned and punished unheard. By his subsequent action he not merely claimed that protection should have been his, but was determined that the magistrates should be humbled for their illegal action, so that the people at large might see he

and Silas had been unjustly condemned. In Acts xxii. Paul asserted his rights before any violation of them could be carried out. Doubtless he protested at the first at Philippi, but amid the Babel of noises his protestations were unheard. His example shows us we are under no obligation as Christians to give up our civil rights.

J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—As to this question, we are not helped by 1 Cor. vi. 7, for it applies definitely to disputes on matters of justice and injustice among believers. In such a case it is assumed that the judgment of godly men would be accepted and submitted to. But let it be noted that even in such a case the divine instruction is not simply to accept the wrong without recourse to any means of redress, but rather to seek just judgment at the hands of those who have rule in the Church. Failing this, then it is better to "take wrong," committing the matter to God alone, than to go to law in a civil court and so expose to the world the shame of those who are the Lord's.

But in the world, government is a divine institution. The magistrate is "*the minister of God to thee for good*" (Rom. xiii. 4). It is God's will that law and order be maintained. It is therefore the Christian's duty to submit to "every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." That is, for His sake who put the legislators and administrators of the law into the place of authority, we must be subject to the existing laws, whatever they be, so long as they do not necessitate our disobeying the Lord.

To claim the protection of those into whose hands God has put the power to protect the law-abiding citizen, is as much a Christian duty as not to resist the power, because it would be resisting the ordinance of God. Romans xiii. is most explicit as to this.

The appeal to the existing authorities for the protection they are ordained of God to administer, is a very different thing from personal enmity or revenge. "The law is made for the lawless," and it may be in the power of the Christian to show grace or kindness to an evil-doer after the law has had its course. But to condone an outrage against law and order by submitting to it without appeal to the authorities, would be to take sides with the forces of lawlessness instead of supporting those who are "God's minister's to us for good."

Where the authorities belie their calling, and fail to afford protection or redress, as happens oftentimes in heathen and in Roman Catholic countries, then the Christian's path is plain. He has the very highest court of all still to appeal to, as did his Lord and his Exemplar; he can commit himself to Him that judgeth righteously.

MEDITATIONS ON THE EIGHTH OF ROMANS—II.

FLESH AND SPIRIT.

By W. H. BENNET.

THE standing description of those who are freed from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and in whom the righteous requirement of God's law is fulfilled, is that they "*walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Rom. viii. 4). The word "walk" is common in Scripture to denote the bent of one's life, and it may well remind us that none of us is stationary; we are all moving on to one of two goals. A man's feelings, desires, and actions are the outcome of what he is, "for they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit" (ver. 5). The "flesh" here denotes that principle of moral evil which rules in the heart of fallen man, and is only overcome in those who are born of the Spirit, and led by Him. Thus the whole world is divided into two classes—those who being still in their natural state "are after the flesh," and under the controlling influence of the flesh, and those who being born of God "are after the Spirit," and are ruled and guided by the Spirit who dwells in them.

To "*mind*" signifies to be engrossed or taken up with something as the object of desire or pursuit. "The things of the flesh" are not limited to what is gross and debasing. Human philosophy and the highest intellectual attainments may be congenial pursuits of a mind that knows no subjection to God. Man may soar into the heavens, or search the depths of earth, and yet never think of honouring or even acknowledging Him who created both. The apostle Paul, when taught of God, reckoned all his attainments in religion even, as "things of the flesh," which hindered his knowledge of Christ (Phil. iii. 4-7). So in the present day it is possible to practice any form of religion, from the highest ceremonial downward, yea, even to profess to own no Name but that of Christ, and yet only to *be* and to *walk* "after the flesh."

"The things of the Spirit" are those things of the Father and the Son which the Spirit

delights to unfold" (John xvi. 14, 15), "those things which are above," the heavenly ministry of our Lord, and the things He has in store for His own, as well as the grace, lowliness, and obedience of His life on earth in which we are called to follow Him. These are the things on which those who are after the Spirit set their mind or affection, as exhorted in Colossians iii. 2.

If the dividing line is thus clear and definite, the result also is equally marked, "for (to have) the mind of the flesh is *death*; but (to have) the mind of the Spirit is *life and peace*" (ver. 6). "The mind of the flesh is *death*"—a present condition of spiritual death, unholiness, and alienation from God, leading to death eternal—because it is "enmity against God," the Giver of life; it "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." It is a simple impossibility for an unregenerate person to be subject to God, for the mind is in a state of actual hostility to Him; "so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." They are "children of disobedience," and the principle of obedience being absent, there is neither desire nor ability to please Him.

"But the mind of the Spirit"—the state of mind produced by the Spirit—"is *life and peace*." The Spirit by revealing Christ to the soul imparts life, and by still unfolding Him, gives us to know that life in increasing fulness (John x. 10), till we prove its power in resurrection glory. And with *life comes peace*—"peace with God" as the fruit of justification, and an ever-growing peace as we learn in fuller measure to trust in God, and have our minds stayed upon Him (Isa. xxvi. 3), while we press onward to the undisturbed and everlasting peace in His presence above.

The solemnity of these truths is perhaps little felt. Men think that training and education are improving human nature; but the question is, Do they lead to *pleasing God*? We are slow to learn that nothing can enable anyone to do this but the impartation of a new life, with its holy desires and aspirations. It is by diligent meditation on such words as these that we may more perfectly learn what *we were*, and what is the true state of all who are not "in Christ

Jesus;" and surely if these truths are thus brought before us as children of God it is that we may be led to a deeper sense of the *grace* that has made us what *we are*, and may also have the heart of compassion towards those who know not the "life and peace" which the Gospel brings.

The question may be asked, Is man responsible for that which is beyond his power? Hence it is well to remember that our inability to please God is entirely owing to our utterly sinful nature, the owning of which is the first step towards deliverance. But this is just what we are not ready to own. We may at times think of the future and the unseen, and how we may escape the consequences of the wrong things we do; but, instead of turning to God, we shape our efforts according to our own thoughts, which are quite contrary to His. If, however, we accept God's testimony as to our *condition*, and believe that we are so sinful and helpless that we "cannot please God," we shall not rest till we find deliverance. Though Satan, working through the flesh, may exercise great power over those who are within the sphere of his dominion, he cannot keep anyone from Christ who is determined to seek Him, and the feeblest acknowledgment of sinfulness before God, if only it be true, is a turning into the pathway of "life and peace," for it brings the mighty and willing Saviour to the rescue.

Between such an act on the part of the sinner and the gracious operation of the Spirit of God we cannot distinguish, for they go together, and the Spirit who shows the sinner his need glorifies Christ by revealing Him as the Saviour of the lost. To all who, however feebly, know Him thus, it can be said, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you" (ver. 9). All who are "in Christ Jesus" are "in the Spirit." Wherever the Spirit of God has wrought in regenerating grace He takes up his abode, and the thorough change experienced by the believer, and manifested to others, gives the assurance of his having "passed from death unto life." This is the decisive test, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." This does not mean what men often

call a "Christian spirit," or disposition, but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In the next verse we read, "If Christ be in you," showing that where the Spirit dwells as the Teacher and Guide, there Christ dwells as the willing and welcome Guest.

How searching are these words! Whilst many, with no profession of anything higher, walk "after the flesh," many take the place of being Christians and yet give no evidence that they really know the grace and power of the Spirit of God and the Christ whom He reveals. The Spirit ever exalts Christ, and puts honour upon the Holy Scriptures which testify of Him. There may be much dealing with the Scriptures in an intellectual manner, or the practice of much ceremonialism after the precepts of traditional Christianity, without "the Spirit of Christ"; but it still remains true that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

THE NEW COVENANT.

By the late Mr. THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of
"The Englishman's Bible."

Exodus xxxiv. i.

"AND Jehovah said unto Moses, 'Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.'"

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, after the first forty days which he had spent there, he brought with him the two tables of stone—the tables of testimony—written with the finger of God, graven upon the stones. But when Moses saw the transgression and idolatry of the children of Israel, he brake the two tables at the foot of Mount Sinai.

It would appear from Rom. i. 18-21, that the LAW OF GOD was originally written on the heart of man; but under the law by which the iniquity of sin was made manifest, that law being broken, it is written "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20), hence the necessity for the New Covenant, founded upon Atonement, and in the power of the Pentecostal Spirit, as we read in Jer. xxxi.

31-33, "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts." This covenant will be ratified with Israel when God brings them back to their own land; meanwhile through our union with CHRIST, the MEDIATOR of the NEW COVENANT, its spiritual blessings are ours, for all the promises of God in HIM are yea, and in HIM amen, to the glory of God by us.

God commanded Moses to prepare two tables of stone like unto the first, and present himself before God, with God's promise that He would write upon those tables the words that were on the first—a beautiful emblem of the believer coming up into the Mount in communion with God, with heart prepared for the workmanship of the Spirit of God on the fleshy tables of the heart.

In 2 Cor. iii. 1-6, we have the spiritual exposition of this portion of the Sacred Word. To the heart of the apostle, the best letter of commendation which he and his fellow-labourers could present, was to point to the CHURCH OF GOD at Corinth, as an epistle of Christ, individual believers constituting the letters, and the whole Church the epistle; written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart.

And this is the true work of the Christian ministry, so to minister Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost to the heart, as that Christ might be seen and manifested in believers before the world. The only sufficiency for such a work must come from God Himself.

THE IMMENSITY OF BLESSING.

I HAVE been much impressed with two things to-day, viz., the Lord has given me "all Christ"—a most incomprehensibly great gift; and then (Deut. xxix. 4), on the other hand, I have not understood it all these many years: The Lord has not given me eyes to see and a heart to perceive until this day. Oh, that He would do much for me to-morrow, giving me eyes to see and a heart to take in the immensity of blessing—"all Christ."—A. BONAR.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PAPER II.

TURN with me now to Exodus xii. You remember how the Passover was to be a lamb, the firstling of the flock, fitly to represent Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was the first born of His mother Mary. Then you know it was to be "without blemish," and in 1 Peter i. 19 we see how He answered to the "Lamb without blemish and without spot." Then, it was to be kept up for three days, separated from the rest of the flock, and, as it were, under observation, living before the eyes of those interested in it: three days in which they might examine it, look upon it, and ponder it, to see if it was without blemish.

This may answer to the three years of Christ's public ministry before the gaze of men, watched, provoked, examined, tested in every possible way, and what was the result of it all? "I find no fault in Him," said Pilate. "Truly this was a righteous man," said the Centurion. "We know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God," said the demons. Judas said, "I have betrayed the innocent blood," and God from above testified, "This is My beloved Son!" All conspired to declare Him to be the holy, spotless Lamb of God! O how fitted was He to take the sinner's place, and by His own precious blood to vindicate the character of God, and bring in everlasting righteousness for us!

Then one point in this 12th chapter you will find in the 46th verse:

"In one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."

Now turn to John xix. 33-37:

"But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs;

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

We are never asked to believe anything that is not true. God claims to be believed on the ground that His Word is truth.

"For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, 'A bone of Him shall not be broken.' And again another Scripture saith, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced'."

The Holy Spirit here emphasises the fact that in the providence of God the legs of the Lord Jesus were not broken, when those of the two thieves were. It was the fulfilment of the Scripture which said of the Passover Lamb, "Thou shalt not break a bone of Him." It must have required very careful work on the night of the Passover to carve the lamb into its pieces and hand it out to all the family, and not break a single bone. The beloved Son of God was wounded and bruised, His precious flesh cut with the Roman lashes, His brow with the thorns; but, oh! amidst all these sufferings God saw that His word was fulfilled, and there never was a bone broken. How perfect was this foreshadowing of the Cross, telling us that "Christ died for our sins."

Then, again, look at Psalm xxii. 16:

"The assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me; they pierced My hands and My feet."

This psalm was written by David. In spite of all the professors, I still believe it was written by David. Were the hands of David and the feet of David ever pierced? We have no record of such a thing having happened to David. He was speaking by inspiration; his tongue was "the pen of a ready writer"; the Writer was God Himself. It is the Spirit of Christ in David who is here speaking, and who says, "They pierced My hands and My feet." He goes on to say:

"I may tell all My bones; they look and stare at Me."

That Blessed One felt the shameless staring of that crowd that surrounded the Cross; and notice here that if it could have been possible for any human intelligence to forecast what might happen at so distant a date, it could never have entered into the mind of man, especially of a Jew, to suppose that one should be put to death by crucifixion. The Jewish method of execution was by stoning, but they could not stone a man to death without breaking bones. The idea of crucifixion could only come from Him who foresaw that His Blessed Son would be deli-

vered into the hands of the Romans, and put to death according to their custom. And so the Spirit of God says, "They pierced My hands and My feet."

But how is there no mention of His side? Clearly the piercing of that holy side formed no part of His suffering. You may take the body of a dear one after he has departed, and that body may be cut up for a *post-mortem* examination, but that gives him no pain; it is no part of his suffering. And so it was not until the Lord Himself had breathed out His Spirit that His side was pierced, and so it finds no place in this 22nd Psalm which is the record of His suffering, and thus the perfection of the Word of God is shown.

It reminds me of that 69th Psalm where He complains:

"I am become an alien unto My mother's children."

But He never was an alien to *His Father's children*. His Father was God, and all who are the children of God love Him. But He was actually an alien to His mother's children.

These are some of the accuracies of Scripture, and these little points go to show us that the Scriptures are indeed divine.

Put a magnifying glass upon the finest piece of human workmanship, and the more you magnify it the more evident are its imperfections. But put a magnifying glass on the wing of a butterfly, and as you discover that every particle of dust on that wing is a perfectly-formed little feather, you say, That is not man's work! You get a little sand from some parts of the world so fine that it would do for a minute-glass for boiling an egg, and yet when put under the microscope it is found that every particle is a perfectly-formed shell. You say, Man never made that.

God has two books in which He has revealed Himself; one is the book of NATURE, and the first half of the 19th Psalm tells us of God's glory displayed in Nature. But God has also a written Book, and that is referred to in the second half of the 19th Psalm, the Book we have in our hands—the BIBLE.

Man puts it at the bar and criticises it

just as Pilate put Christ at the bar and cross-questioned Him; but it is man's madness and folly: he might as well judge and criticise the book of Nature. The Lord Jesus shall judge Pilate, and the words of this Book will judge the very men that are its shameless critics.

Let God's children seek the child-like spirit which will go to the Book and reverently enquire in His holy temple, and then you will discern how glorious it is; depth after depth you will find opened up to you, and you will be consciously in the presence of God.

Then another passage I don't like to omit—in the Book of Numbers, 21st chapter and 8th verse:

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

"And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Now, we know how the Lord Himself referred to that passage in John iii. 14, 15:

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth," taking us back, as it were, to the very words of the 21st chapter of Numbers. The serpent, the type of sin; Christ on the Cross, "made sin for us, though He knew no sin."

Then look at the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. I need not go over the details of this very familiar chapter, but there is one point in it that I would direct your attention to in the 9th verse:

"And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth."

I think we have very good authority for saying that this might equally well be read, "His grave was made with the wicked, but He was with the rich man in His death"—that is to say, there were three executions to take place upon that day. I think it is exceedingly probable, although I only throw it out suggestively, that the centre cross was intended for Barabbas. He was a notable prisoner, and a murderer. We know that

the Jews rejected their King, and chose Barabbas, and so God's blessed Son, the Prince of Life, took the place of the murderer, but naturally there would be three graves dug for the three criminals, and we read:

"His grave was made with the wicked, but He was with the rich man in His death."

God in His providence again interposed, that no indignity, no unnecessary dishonour, should be heaped upon that Blessed One.

After He had finished the work, after His side was pierced, and the last word that was written concerning the suffering, dying Saviour had been fulfilled, then God interposed, and the hands of love took Him down from the Cross, the hands of love bore Him to the sepulchre, "wherein never man lay," hewn out of the rock, the memorial tomb, *provided by the rich man, Joseph of Arimathea*. In that wondrous sepulchre there was no taint of corruption, nothing but the fragrance of spices, "for He saw no corruption."

How marvellously exact the fulfilment of the words of the old, despised Book—a Book that is despised and rejected by the world that knows not God, and yet, in spite of all, is working its conquering way and saving its thousands.

To be concluded in next number, and followed by papers on "Christ Risen"—"Glorified"—"Coming"—and "Reigning."

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY—CHAP. II.

By F. S. ARNOT, Author of "Garenganze."

GENESIS xii. 5-7.

"And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem [between the shoulders] unto the plain of Moreh [teaching] . . . And the Lord appeared unto Abram . . . and there builded he an altar unto the Lord who appeared unto him."

THUS we see that Sichem, or Shechem, was Abram's first halting-place; and if between the shoulders be the right interpretation of Sichem, then it is an exact description of its geographical position, for Mount Ebal lies directly to the north of Sichem, and Mount Gerizim to the south, thus placing Sichem in a deep valley.

Not only was Sichem Abram's first halting-place and the site of his first altar, but when Moses gave his instructions to

Israel (Deut. xxvii. and xxviii.), he tells them to make the valley between Ebal and Gerizim *their* first halting-place; there they were to build an altar with unhewn stones, from which the Levites assembled were to call out all the blessings and all the curses of the law to all the tribes of Israel arranged up the sides of the two mountains. Those on Mount Ebal were to respond with an "amen" to the curses, and those on Mount Gerizim were to respond to the blessings. All this is very striking and must be full of meaning and instruction, but the interest in this wonderful spot is greatly increased, when, on turning to the New Testament, we see (John iv.) how it was in sight of those two mountains, which spoke of the blessings and cursings of the law, that our Lord sat weary on the well (for Sychar stood on the site of Sichem). Up to this time the Lord seems to have confined His ministry to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," and even among them we do not read that He ever went after the heedless and careless individual. All came to him; and to the multitude he spoke only in parables. But in John iv. the Lord crosses over, not merely from Judea to Samaria, but from the Jews of Judea, who wearied Him with their unbelief, to seek out this Samaritan sinner, "who would love him," as Bunyan puts it. "according to His liking." John iv. is the foreshadowing of the present dispensation of grace, and the ground was broken most fittingly between those two mountains of cursings and blessings—where Abram and Joshua's first altars were raised on their entrance into the land. Christ Himself was that altar, and He, taking all the cursings of Ebal on Himself, could pour upon this Samaritan and us Gentile sinners to-day all the blessings of Gerizim.

FOR THE NEW CENTURY.

"WE know not yet 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" (1 John iii. 2). "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. vi. 19).—ROBT. C. CHAPMAN.

CHURCHES OF GOD:

AND THE DIVINE PURPOSES IN THEIR FORMATION.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

PART I.

MAN is a gregarious creature. This is a matter of common observation. The One who originally created him, and knows him through and through, in the spiritual realm, makes use of this social instinct. That "God setteth the solitary in families," is as surely true of the heavenly as of the earthly relationships. Methinks, concerning other than the original subject, we may hear a beneficent Creator and Redeemer say, "It is not good that man should be alone."

Since God is infinitely wise, He ever acts according to reason. If I knew that there were two opposite ways to accomplish a given task, and observe that a wise man who undertakes it definitely chooses one of these in preference to the other, the conclusion follows that he has chosen the best way, all things considered, of accomplishing his object. The same reasoning may be carried to higher things.

In bringing about certain great results, God chooses to unite saved sinners into spiritual communities rather than to ordain that each should wend his solitary way heavenward. Practical, common-sense men in creating a society or league do so because they believe that certain objects will more assuredly or more easily be attained by that means than by any other. All around us we have many striking proofs that, whether for good or for evil, "union is strength." In the purpose of God every regenerated person on earth belongs to a local assembly, as well as to the one great Church of first-born ones whose names are enrolled in heaven.

It may be assumed as a principle that in New Testament times the only believers outside of local Churches, where they existed, were such as had been put away for wicked conduct or fundamental error; and of this we may rest sure: in spite of all the trials, labours, sorrows, and anxieties of Church life, a Christian will make more spiritual

progress, and will be more useful to his Master and to his fellows, among a company of Christians than in any independent path he may choose to pursue. We say in a company of Christians, for spiritual life is the *sine qua non* for a place in a scriptural Church.

From the New Testament it is evident that the Lord ordained that the formation of Churches should normally follow the labours of the Gospel preacher. In the present day various attempts are made to go in for soul-saving work without aiming to gather the converts into communities. Such efforts are usually very unsatisfactory. They carry within themselves the germs of disintegration. By the law of self-preservation it drifts into some form of Church life, otherwise it ceases to exist.

With the New Testament in our hands we wish to enquire, What are the purposes God designs to accomplish by ordaining the formation of Churches in different localities? Speaking broadly, we may say these purposes come under three great divisions.

I. *Purposes Godward.*

II. *Purposes Churchward.*

III. *Purposes Worldward.*

In that order we propose to briefly consider this important subject.

I. PURPOSES GODWARD.

We must ever aim to put first things first. The great end of every Christian should be to glorify God.

1. To provide frequent occasions for *united worship* is surely one great reason for a Church's existence. Truly to offer praise and worship to our God is to glorify Him. Certain things are true of regenerate souls wherever they are found. They have spiritual interests in common; they are definitely taught of God on certain points. Of true believers everywhere it may be said, they "*worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*" (Phil. iii. 3, R.V.). While it is certainly the duty of all men to worship God, as a matter of fact only those who have been born from above ever truly do so. The two

chief elements of worship proper are *adoration and thanksgiving*. Because of what He is in Himself, God is infinitely worthy of adoration and praise; and for what He does for men in providence and grace He merits continual gratitude and thanksgiving. Unthankfulness characterises the natural man whether in heathendom or Christendom, whether in the past or the present (Rom. i. 21; 2 Tim. iii. 2). Hence a company of His own children assembled together to praise and thank Him must be a sight which His eye and heart can rest upon with peculiar joy and complacency. In announcing the great principles of New Testament worship the Lord swept away all mere bodily pose or genuflexion. He did away with all worship which chiefly consists in robes and ritual and outward observances; He abolished completely all distinctions of times and places: and now it can be said *wherever or whenever* children of God come together acceptable worship can be offered to *the Father, in the Spirit, through Christ* (John iv. 19-24; Ephes. ii. 18). Singing, certainly, affords a helpful means for united worship; but worship consists not in the mere harmonious sounds or intelligent expressions which even the natural man can appreciate; it is rather that in which at the same time the individuals are "*singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord.*"

In a scriptural and spiritual assembly united worship, then, will ever occupy a prominent place; and such ministry of the Word and exhortation as will conduce to keep it sincere and spiritual will ever be welcome.

2. God designs a Church to be a *witness for Himself*. When He would show to men and angels His manifold wisdom He pointed them not to the old creation but to the new; not to wisdom as displayed in nature, but to wisdom as seen in redemption (Eph. iii. 8-10). And that angels are interested in and learners from local assemblies, we see from 1 Cor. xi. 10.

A company of Spirit-filled saints, however small, is a witness for God in its own locality. They can individually testify to the saving and keeping power of Christ. Some of them may have lived notoriously ungodly lives; others were wholly absorbed in money-

making or seeking after worldly pleasures ; and a few were religious without knowing Christ or enjoying peace with God. But Divine grace has united them in a common testimony—the power of Christ to save and keep, to give peace and full satisfaction. Such testimony is needed on all hands. It is daily being borne by righteous, loving, Christian lives ; it must also be borne by the lips.

In all divinely-equipped assemblies there will be one or more with a measure of gift and grace for preaching the gospel. These men have been given by Christ to His people ; and, while acknowledging their individual responsibility to the Lord, they should aim to remember their relationship to the assembly, for they often have to speak as the mouthpiece of the saints as a whole.

And the believers generally should see to it that they take a prayerful and practical interest in all the gospel efforts of the assembly. These include the Sunday school and open-air preaching, as well as indoor testimony. It is anything but a sign of advanced spirituality when one, either by word or act, says : “ Oh, I am not going out to-night ; it is only a gospel meeting ! ” *Only a gospel meeting !* One scarcely knows how to properly characterise such a statement concerning an hour which may have *eternal issues*. Yet one must conclude that such ideas are too common. How otherwise can we explain the lack of interest in gospel effort of many who are regularly found at the worship or teaching meeting ? These things ought not to be. Though it does not justify, yet it helps to explain why Christian young men often take up with outside work—they have so little to encourage them from those in the assembly they are connected with.

Yes, an assembly of believers, to answer one of the great purposes of its existence, must “ *stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.* ”

THE TWO LEADING THOUGHTS of the mind of God are the humiliation and the glory of Christ. Yes : they are the only two points—the two pillars on which the whole of Christianity rests. Can you say they are the only key of all your thoughts ? G.V.W.

“ FEAR NOT. ”—II.

“ Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. ”

ANXIOUS one saddened by the thought of unsaved souls, take them in faith to Him who is “ the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. ”

How our hearts yearn over those dear to us who are still strangers to the Saviour of sinners ! How we strive to get them to hear first one gospel preacher, and then another ! How we bring books and tracts under their notice ! We say to them what we think words of wisdom. We would fain compel them to seek their souls' salvation.

Father, mother, have you not often spoken loving words of entreaty and solemn words of warning, and, ‘ alas ! sometimes, perhaps, in your disappointment, impatient words ? And yet your beloved children remain apparently untouched. Or it may be impressed for the time, only to forget all too quickly.

Teacher, has not your faith been sorely tried by the indifference of that scholar who sits Sunday after Sunday quite unmoved by the story of the Saviour's love ?

Husband, wife, brother, sister, friend, have you not wondered what more you could do or say to rouse the slumbering soul of the loved one to cry for pardon ?

Perhaps we have all relied too much upon our own efforts, and our prayers have been that they might be blessed. Instead, let us take them in prayer to our loving Father, and ask Him to do the work in His own way. We need to see and acknowledge our utter helplessness in dealing with a human soul ; and ask for guidance when to speak, and when to be silent ; when to act, and when to refrain ; rather than to plan our own words and actions, and seek blessing upon them.

One who had been long prayed for was for some time in close contact with Christian friends. They prayed much for her, and frequently resolved to speak to her ; but whenever opportunity offered their lips appeared sealed. She left, and those behind were prostrated with grief at their reticence. Three of them joined in prayer on the evening of her departure, and while they were praying the Holy Spirit revealed the Saviour to her soul, and she became a new being in Christ Jesus.

But let us beware of being silent when we should speak. If we look to the Lord for our orders we shall not err.

He who said to the leper, "I will; be thou clean (Matt. viii. 3), and to the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. ix. 2); He who said, "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isa. lxv. 24), He who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9), is the "same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

FOR KING AND QUEEN.

ALMIGHTY King of kings,
With healing on Thy wings
Shine on us now.

In this our hour of grief.
Who else can give relief?
Thy Word inspires belief—
'Tis Thou alone.

We praise Thee for our Queen,
Whose noble life has been

A brilliant light;
And though her sun has set,
The after-glow is yet
Such we can ne'er forget
In this our night.

For her most gracious reign
We would Thee praise again,
Almighty God.

Seated on Empire's throne,
Thy sceptre she did own,
And Thy blest Son alone
She called Lord.

The prayer which long had been
"God save our gracious Queen"
Is answered now.

Safe from all hurtful foes,
From dangers, toils, and woes,
Heaven's purest bliss she knows—
Blest be Thy Name.

For him who comes to reign,
We humbly ask again
Thy blessing, Lord.

Thyself to him make known
As King of kings alone;
His heart Thy royal throne:
"God save the King!"

MATTERS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE.

Matthew vi. 33.

By EPHRAIM VENN, Author of "The First Division in the Church," &c.

II. OUR SERVICE.

IN our life before men, is there not a solemn evidence of a very general reversal of the Master's injunction, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (that ye have need of) shall be added unto you."

In the last ten verses of this chapter the Lord gives us seven great reasons for not being *anxious* or "of doubtful mind" about the necessities of this life.

I. He who gives us the greater—life and the body—will not withhold the lesser—food and raiment (ver. 25).

II. He who feedeth the fowls of the air will *much more* care for His own children (ver. 26).

III. Besides, our anxiety will not really improve matters; it is of no avail, we cannot turn the wheels of providence (ver. 27).

IV. Even God's lavish expenditure on things inanimate should rebuke our anxiety and inspire confidence as to the certainty of our Father's care for us (ver. 28).

V. And again, to be so concerned about earthly things is to act like the world, and is most unworthy of the children of God (ver. 31, 32).

VI. Is not the Father's knowledge of our needs, and well-known readiness to supply them, ever enough for faith? (ver. 32).

VII. Beyond a doubt all these things *shall certainly be added* to all who seek *first* the kingdom of God (ver. 33).

Surely this ought to be enough to set our minds at rest, and furnish us with some leisure and heart for the things of God. What can we want more?

"What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and this lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Are there any Sauls in our day accumulating luxurious hoards of Amalekite spoil, at the unspeakable loss of the Kingdom, which far outshines that forfeited by Saul? That strange noise in the camp is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry from being overcome. Spiritual warfare and victory are out of the question when

golden calf is set up and worshipped; for "he that warreth entangleth not himself with the affairs of this life." A sorry soldier was Achan, who, by covetousness, brought death to himself, disaster to his house, and defeat to the whole army of Israel!

Oh, that the "Achans" and the "Sauls," with all who to-day allow things of earth to govern the heart, could be persuaded, or at least reminded, that we are not called to live delicately on the earth, in self-indulgence, nourishing the heart in a day of slaughter (James. v. 5), but to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, nourishing our hearts, by looking for that blessed hope, so that we love His appearing.

It may be our blessed Lord threshed out this matter in such detail, in view of our special danger of allowing cares for to-day and anxieties for to-morrow, discontent with the necessities and lust for the luxuries of life, as to crowd out of our minds and hearts "the kingdom of God and His righteousness," well knowing that the seed of the Kingdom is oftentimes choked with "the cares and riches and pleasures of this life"; and brings forth no fruit to perfection.

It is startling to see the tide of worldliness rising fast among Christians almost everywhere, with a corresponding ebb in the desire for spiritual prosperity; on all hands there are abounding symptoms of spiritual decay, which it is to be feared will be followed by increasing ambition for fleshly advantage. Our Master's question may well ring in our ears and consciences to day: "What *do* ye more than others?" Not what *know* ye more than others. We may pride ourselves on knowing the things of God, which the poor worldling cannot possibly perceive, but if we spend all our energies, crowd our minds, engage our affections, and tax our wits for present worldly advantage, do not the men of this world the same? If we content ourselves with just the Lord's-day observances and meetings, do not religious worldlings the same? If we do not bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in a godly walk, in faithful testimony, and devoted service, what do we more than others? The most convincing book to the worldling is our manner of living, but if, withal, we are as

hard in our dealing, as keen for selfish gains, as inconsiderate for others' rights in our bargains, as shrewd and tricky in running our business as the most wide-awake worldling, he will not believe the book, for its author is a living contradiction.

But the sad result is that Christ is wounded again in the house of His friends, and His holy Name is dishonoured. He is misjudged by His foes, because misrepresented by His friends. It is one thing to be saved by Christ, and quite another to be satisfied with Him; but very many claim Him as Saviour who never seem to make any further acquaintance with Him. As the one Centre in the midst of all, the one Lord above all, and the one Object above all, how little is He known; and while the conscience has been relieved by His work, the heart is not attracted to His Person, and therefore is not detached from the world and worldly aims. When Christ is engraven on the heart, we become His epistle, we speak for Him in our life before all men: but when the Spirit of worldliness has seized the citadel, Christ is either veiled, or so distorted is the view of Him, through us, that the unsaved are driven from Him rather than drawn to Him.

It is utterly impossible to run the heavenly and earthly business on the same level: one or the other must be on the top; the mind cannot be set on things above and on things on the earth with equal devotion. Both cannot be "*first*": one or the other must be. One must increase, the other must decrease. The question is, Which shall I make my object?—"the kingdom of God and His righteousness," or "all these things" after which the world is seeking? Never was a greater mistake than to think I can compete with the worldling in the pursuits, the possessions, the pleasures, and the politics of earth, and finally come off as a Spiritual overcomer. No: that which ministers to the flesh wars against the soul, and it is impossible to secure the present without loss, both present and future, for "he that loveth his life shall lose it." Let us honestly examine our ways, as to which of the two objects is occupying the supreme place in our hearts—Christ or self. Do we "mind earthly things," or is

"our conversation in heaven" (Phil. iii.)? Have we counted the cost of true discipleship, to suffer the loss of all fleshly gain, for the surpassing gain of Christ? Which is it to be?

May the earnest cry of our souls be: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

The BLESSEDNESS of LOVING GOD.

By the late JOHN DICKIE.

WILL you permit me to say to you what I am constantly urging on my own heart, and that is, to seek as one seeks for nothing else, to be filled with the fullest possible measure of love to God. It is this love which constitutes holiness, and which floods the soul with joy. We should meditate often and deeply on the glories of the divine character, as so clearly revealed in the lovely face of Jesus, and also on other themes fitted to foster this love; and to all, add prayer for it without ceasing, remembering that our heavenly Father is infinitely more ready to bestow than we to ask. With far more loving readiness than any mother ever gave her breast to her starving child, does He give the Holy Spirit, the Creator of this love, to all who ask (Luke xi. 13).

As we love God, just as much and no more shall His love to us be our unspeakable delight; for unless we love any one, we care nothing for his love to ourselves. Just as we love God, shall all His providential dealings, whether afflicting or comforting, bring a ceaseless joy to us; for, if we love God, we shall be perfectly pleased with all that He does. Just as we love Him shall duty be a pleasure, worship an exquisite enjoyment, and self-denial sweeter than any self-indulgence could be. Just as we love Him shall earth become like heaven; this waste, howling wilderness shall be lovelier to our vision than Eden was—it shall be a Holy of Holies, filled on all sides with the tokens of our Father's majestic presence. Let us then seek, importunately seek this love; and just as we open our mouths wide for it will He fill them (Ps. lxxxi. 10). The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God (2 Thess. iii. 5).

NOTES FROM A YOUNG MAN'S BIBLE—X.*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

Chap. viii. 32.

THE truth shall make you free." The fullest and most entire emancipation from every form of slavery. The most perfectly free man is he who continues in the Word of God.

Chap. ix. 5.—"I am the Light of the world." The world sweeps on, and when the great ages of eternity have come there will sink beneath the horizon of the past many a tall column that stands high and flashes light from its summit to-day. But no distance onwards nor any fresh illumination will ever pale the light that shines from the earthly manifestation and bitter passion of the Christ, the Revealer of God.

Chap. xi. 5, &c.—Christ Jesus knew that household at Bethany. He knew the place that Lazarus occupied in each of those sisters' hearts; and yet this seems such a strange way, such an unaccountable way of showing His love. He does not go immediately, nor does He give any special grace to uphold in the coming trial. No doubt Martha and Mary would have liked to bear their trial in a noble and glorifying manner, but this was not vouchsafed them. This is one of the ways the Lord brings us low, that He may be more to us than He has ever been before. And when Mary seems afterwards to upbraid Him for His delay, that does not dry up His tears. He understands the broken heart before Him, and sympathises even with the sorrow caused by a misapprehension of His own action.

Verse 26.—"Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." The believer will never see or taste death. Death is as far off as the Cross. He cannot comprehend it; he finds it a parted river.

Verse 32.—"Lord, if Thou hadst been here!" Do we ever go and talk with Jesus, and tell Him all the details of our trouble, just as we would to an earthly friend whose sympathy we were sure of? There is just a tinge of upbraiding in these words of Mary,

* E. H. B.—A young man of rare ability, spirituality, and promise, who departed to be with Christ after a very brief illness, 3rd February, 1892, aged 27.

yet she does not keep them back. As much as to say, "Lord, it was unkind of Thee not to come sooner; it was unkind of Thee to stay so long on the way." In the agony of her love, in the blank, despairing feeling of her bereavement she cries out, "Oh, Lord, if only Thou hadst been here!" And in prayer sometimes do not we feel a want of faith and a sort of feeling that God has been hard upon us. Let us not keep it back; let us tell Him all. These very feelings are part of our trouble.

Chap. xii. 2.—"They made Him a supper"—six days before the Passover, a type of the future Supper. Martha, the Church serving; Mary, the Church worshipping; Lazarus, the Church in resurrection. Mary, giving of the most costly, "wiped His feet with her hair," this putting all her *glory*, as it were, beneath His feet, for "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her."

Verse 9.—"Then came the Jews [after the Church is gone] that they might see Lazarus also." The risen Church will be an object of wonder and marvel, and bring great glory to God.

Chap. xii. 35.—"Walk while ye have the light." "Wherever I have seen His steps, there I have coveted to put my feet." Note David Livingstone's long struggle to *form in himself* the life of Christ before he could be accepted by God. Do the snowdrops bring the spring? or does the spring bring the snowdrops? As ye have received, so by faith walk ye in Him. Do you feel the beating of your heart painful to you? the breathing of your lungs a laborious effort? the circulation of your blood a wearisome task? The little plant takes up from the world around it all that it needs to build up its life. As you take your sheet of music, take the precepts of God's Word, and make the music of heaven out of them. The vulnerable thing in Christianity is not its records but its professors. They judge of Christ through you.

Chap. xiii. 23.—"Whom Jesus loved." John uses the name himself. With finest lowliness of mind he utters no disclaimer of merit. Like a child unconscious of the grace of its own movements, all he thought of was the blissfulness of being loved with a

love so pure and wonderful. The love of Jesus was not a kind of vague benevolence, smiling alike on all; it had discrimination, and His heart went out specially to John. The others were no losers by this. By ardently loving one friend, I have the more love for others. His childlike simplicity, and the grand sea-like largeness of his nature, drew out the Lord's love. These were of divine creation in him, but as a painter enjoys what he expresses on canvas and the musician his composition, apart from any thought that it is their own creation, so the Lord loved John.

Chap. xiv. 6.—"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." It is in the Cross of Christ, in the mission of the Son of God, that the Divine Fatherhood displays itself in full revelation. If you shut your eyes or withhold your heart from that which is the supreme discovery to us of the Fatherhood, then all your conceptions of the Fatherhood will not merely be inadequate and imperfect, but they will be mutilated, as it were, in the very centre. On the other hand, when the mediation of Jesus, his Cross and passion, are disconnected from the Divine Fatherhood, the source of the Redeemer's mission becomes altogether obscured. The mediation of Jesus Christ is a means to an end, and if that end be hidden from sight the great transaction refuses to interpret itself to our hearts. Christ died not to save us from God, but to bring us to God. What may be involved in truly remedying sin, and putting the sinner right with eternal righteousness, the angels of God cannot tell; how much less can we. Our forgiveness of our children affords us no sufficient sense of the height and depth, and length and breadth of God's forgiveness, and by no means enables us to say how God can and ought to pardon sin. In the revelation which God has given us, it is ever and always asserted that the sacrifice of Christ solves the mystery. Whatever Christ did for the benefit of sinners He did by the will of God; whatever He was for us, He was from God. "I have come from heaven to do the will of Him that sent Me." But who and what was this Saviour? "*I and My Father are one.*" Here we touch the mystery of the matter.

Correspondence.

TRAGIC SUFFERINGS IN CHINA.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

IF one may judge by the terrible accounts of suffering in China that are now reaching this country, it seems as if it were the purpose of God to burn these into the hearts of Christians at home, so that it may result in leading to a spirit of consecration and surrender on the part of all who have at heart the work for which Christ died, viz., making known the Gospel to the "utmost parts of the earth." A few extracts from recent letters will doubtless be valued by your readers.

Dr. Parrott, Shanghai, 4th December, says: "Our worst fears about the safety of scores of labourers in Shansi are confirmed again and again. All, with a few exceptions, were brutally murdered by Government official orders, their bodies being put to the most revolting indignities in many cases before death."

Two most touching letters have come from an American lady, Mrs. Atwater, written to friends, before death, and conveyed by a faithful servant. They are an evidence of the power of grace to keep from fainting in the hour of the most painful position the human mind can conceive. They are as follows:—

FEN-CHOU-FU, 2nd August, 1900.

Our plans are upset; we do not think we can escape from the city. Several of the church members are planning to conceal us if we divide up. It is hard to do that. Mr. Lei wishes to conceal me in his home right here in the city, but I want to stay with my dear husband while life is given to us. Heaven seems very near these last hours, and I feel quite calm.

There will be a joyful welcome for us all above. I am fixing my thoughts more and more on the glorious hereafter, and it gives me wonderful peace. God bless you all.—Yours in blessed hope, L. A.

Note on the envelope.—The foreigners at Taku, six in number, were beheaded yesterday (1st August).

FEN-CHOU-FU, 3rd August, 1900.

My Dear, Dear Ones,—I have tried to gather courage to write to you once more. How am I to write all the horrible details of these days? I would rather spare you. The dear ones at Shou-yang, seven in all, including our lovely girls, were taken prisoners and brought to T'ai-yuan in irons, and there, by the Governor's orders, beheaded, together with the T'ai-yuan friends—thirty-three souls. The following day the Roman Catholic priests and nuns from T'ai-yuan, were also beheaded—ten souls yesterday. Three weeks after these had perished, our Mission at Taku was attacked, and our six friends there and several brave Christians who stood by them were beheaded. We are now waiting our call home. We have tried to get away to the hills, but the plans do not work. Our things are being stolen right and left, for the people know that we are condemned. Why our lives

have been spared we cannot tell. The proclamation says that whoever kills us will be doing the Governor a great service. Our magistrate has kept peace so far, but if these men come from Taku there is not much hope, and there seems none anyway we turn. The Governor seems to be in haste to finish his bloody work, for which there is little doubt he was sent to Shan-si. Dear ones, I long for a sight of your dear faces, but I fear we shall not meet on earth. I have loved you all so much, and know you will not forget the one who lies in China. There never were sisters and brothers like mine. I am preparing for the end very quietly and calmly. The Lord is wonderfully near, and He will not fail me. I was very restless and excited while there seemed a chance of life, but God has taken away that feeling, and now I just pray for grace to meet the terrible end bravely. The pain will soon be over, and, oh, the sweetness of the welcome above.

My little baby will go with me. I think God will give it to me in heaven, and my dear mother will be so glad to see us. I cannot imagine the Saviour's welcome. Oh, that will compensate for all these days of suspense. Dear ones, live near to God, and cling less closely to earth. I do not regret coming to China, but I am sorry I have done so little.

I used to dread separation. If we escape now it will be a miracle. I send my love to you all, and the dear friends who remember me.—Your loving sister,
LIZZIE.

Dr. Parrot continues: "There is no doubt whatever that the daughter of Mr. Alex. Grant (Mrs. Lovitt), was killed along with her husband and all the others in Tai-yuan-fu. About 300 European missionaries, wives, and children have been massacred since May. This includes some Roman Catholic priests. Many thousands of professing Christians have been killed rather than deny the Lord. No one can now say that the converts are or were "rice Christians." Their behaviour in the Peking siege excited the admiration of men who previously had looked upon them as a whole as mere shams. The new Governor of Shansi was asked to telegraph if any missionaries were still alive in his province. His reply is that only five can be found."

But the most tragic accounts are from a 31-page pamphlet published by the *Shanghai Mercury*. It is entitled "Thrilling Experiences of C.I.M. Missionaries in Chi-li. Wandering and Marvellous Escape of Mr. and Mrs. Green, their Two Children, and Miss Gregg." For nearly five months they were in terrible peril (April to September) driven from their home at midnight to a refuge in a mountain temple, hunted out by Boxers, they fled to a damp cave with a secret entrance; obliged to leave, they were hidden in a lonely farm-house; but then found out and wounded by their enemies, tied foot and hand they were slung on poles and carried to the city in the midst of men with huge knives ready to behead them. Again and again death was before them, but in a marvellous way God seven times over held back these fiends so that they were not able to strike.

This went on for weary months, and with loss of blood through wounds, sometimes exposed on a rough cart in the burning sun with little or no food and almost naked, this family were held up by God. Sometimes cast into a filthy prison, at another time sent off in a boat and landed in a fierce Boxer locality so that they might be murdered, at last, on the 19th October, they reached Paoting-fu, where General Gaselee and troops from Peking received and rescued them. The details in the pamphlet are heart-rendering, and the marvel is that they lived through the barbarities and cruelty to which they were subjected, two of them being children and two ladies.

May God sanctify these accounts and recitals to all your readers, and when we reflect that the blood-bought salvation provided at such a cost is thus borne along through tears and blood, may the power of God wake us up out of our criminal indifference and easy-going to whole-hearted presentening of ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service (Rom. xii. 1).

Yours, in our Lord Jesus,
THOS. M'LAREN.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting Answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

"MINISTER" AND "DEACON"—WHAT DIFFERENCE?—Are not the words "minister" and "deacon" synonymous—minister from the *Latin*, deacon from the *Greek*? If so, how is it that the word deacon came to have as its meaning a subordinate office-bearer in the Church, associating it with Stephen and his fellows, where it is never used, the words ministration and ministry being used (see Acts vi. 1-4)?

HOW DOES LOVE COVER SIN?—What is the meaning of the latter part of 1 Peter iv. 8, "For charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins"?

"FOREVER" IN HEBREWS x.—Does the term "forever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the

duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

THE BODIES OF BELIEVERS—HOW AND WHEN REDEEMED?—We would like to know your thoughts as to what the Scriptures say of the bodies of God's people—whether they are presently redeemed by the death of the Lord Jesus, or if they are sinful bodies? And if they are not presently redeemed, how and when they will be redeemed. Is the flesh spoken of in Romans vii. 18 the same thing as the outward man spoken of in 2 Corinthians iv. 16, and in Romans xii. 1? If the body is sinful, how can God accept of it offered up a living sacrifice? A few of God's children are anxious to know the mind of God from the Scriptures on this subject.

JESUS IN THE MIDST.

QUESTION 430.—Please explain Matt. xviii. 20. Is Jesus in each assembly now, as in John xx. 19, or in the midst of all gathered ones as one body?

Answer A.—Jesus in Person is at the right hand of God. Jesus by His Spirit is in the midst of all gatherings that are in His Name, whether small or great. W. A.

Answer B.—When the Lord Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after His resurrection, He was clothed in His resurrection body—the same that was laid in the tomb, and which was visible or invisible at His pleasure. He had not yet ascended into heaven. He was not yet glorified. We never read of Him manifesting Himself in two places at the same time, and when "He was seen of more than five hundred brethren," it was "at once," not in different places. When the Lord Jesus returned to heaven, from whence He came, then that glorious anthem in Psalm xxiv. 7-10 was said by the heavenly hosts. The Lord entered in and sat down on the right hand of God the Father. There He will *personally* remain till He arises to "shake terribly the earth" (Isa. ii. 19, 21); but, as promised to His disciples when He was with them, He sent the Comforter, the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, to take His place, and to guide them into all truth, and we must remember that the Holy Spirit is the third *Person* in the Holy Trinity—three Persons, but one God; trinity acting in unity. Consequently, when the Lord Jesus said, "There am I in the midst of Them," He referred to God the Holy Spirit, and God the Holy Spirit is *omnipresent*. He dwells in the heart of every true child of God; but where *two or three* of His children are gathered together in, or into, His Name, the Name of Jesus, acknowledging Him as Lord—where unity of spirit, love for, and adoration of His Person call forth sincere heart-worship—there His presence *in their midst* will

be very signally manifest, though unseen. It may be in the midst of a gathering of two or three, or in larger numbers, or in many different places at the same time.

W. D. B.

Editor's Note.—Matt. xviii. 20 begins with "for." This necessarily connects it with the foregoing verse. Its primary application, therefore, is to the coming together of believers for united and definite prayer. When even two are thus gathered the Lord Jesus vouchsafes His presence in their midst by His Spirit; and He being thus, in fact, present, puts His high priestly imprimatur upon the prayer presented in His Name, it being indited by His Spirit, and according to the will of God. An illustration of it is found in 1 Sam. i. 17, where Israel's high priest endorsed the prayer of Hannah, and the answer followed. Other assemblings of the Lord's people, few or many, may equally claim the fulfilment of this precious word, as for example the assembly for observing the Lord's Supper, or for edification.

But to connect it with a certain ecclesiastical position or Church order is to miss entirely the spiritual instruction of the passage.

It is one thing in faith to claim its fulfilment; it is quite another thing to deny that the Lord is present by His Spirit in the midst of believers who do not see with us as to Church order.

And we may add that the attempt to import into the passage what is not obviously in it, by rendering it "where two or three are, they having been gathered together unto My Name," will not bear investigation. The Authorised Version, the Revised, Young's Literal Translation, Bagster's Interlinear Literal Translation, Alford, Newberry, and Darby all agree, no such rendering being suggested by any of them. To our mind it appears safer to abide by the rendering of such undoubted authorities.

PHILANTHROPY.

QUESTION 431.—Does the example of Christ warrant believers to engage in philanthropic work?

Answer A.—In every Scripture where Christ is shown as an example for us to follow, it is as an example of humility, lowly mind, or suffering, even when we have no right to suffer. Such are "His steps" in 1 Peter ii. But never as an example of doing good works. This should be noticed, particularly as Christ is so preached now as our model to follow in good works.

The miracles Christ wrought were not primarily for philanthropic objects. When He supplied good wine He "manifested forth His glory" (John ii. 11). His miracles were His credentials. He said, "I must work the works

of Him that sent Me." "The works that I do, they bear witness of Me." "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not."

In Acts ii. 22, Peter's testimony is the same of "Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs," &c. Yet we read of Christ being "moved with compassion, and He healed their sick" (Matt. xiv. 14).

A believer need be at no loss as regards philanthropy or good works. Galatians vi. 10 embraces much when it says, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Hence the response to the Indian famine and other objects that call forth the compassion of believers. There is a danger of doing too little, and also of doing wrong things. Some Christians rush into things where they cannot act as Christians, and where the Lord's Name is dishonoured. Others keep aloof from all good works if not directly for the salvation of souls. That is also wrong. It is a good thing to be well balanced, and to engage in works however humble as the servant of the Lord. "Do good unto all men" can include good both for body and soul. But the salvation of men is the work that has the first claim on the believer.

C. S.

Answer B.—The Lord Jesus Christ was the greatest philanthropist that ever dwelt on this earth, and He bade His disciples follow His example: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13); but the Lord Jesus laid down His life for His enemies. "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). He commanded His disciples to love one another, *even as He had loved them*. Christ was therefore, so to speak, the founder of the greatest philanthropic movement that ever came into existence.

The word philanthropy, which is derived from two Greek words, *φίλειω* (*phileo*, I love) and *ἄνθρωπος* (*anthropos*, a man) means love for mankind; and love for mankind may be of two kinds (1), that which has for its object the salvation and eternal welfare of souls, and (2) that which has for its aim the moral and physical amelioration of the condition of mankind. The first is divine, and the latter largely human.

Every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is by virtue of his union with Christ constituted a member of the philanthropic movement instituted by Him; and His command to His disciples (not to the twelve apostles only, but to all who should become His disciples through hearing and believing the Gospel preached by them) was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the

Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi. 19, 20; see also Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). This is the philanthropy of Christ, and it behoves every believer to obey His command and to follow His example. There are also many mandates given in the gospels and epistles relative to our behaviour towards our fellow-men.

Human philanthropy, which has for its sole aim the amelioration of the moral and physical welfare of mankind, should be upheld and supported by believers only as far as it consists with Holy Scripture; so also in philanthropic movements where worldly attractions and amusements are introduced as a means to attain to spiritual ends, it behoves true believers to engage in such philanthropy cautiously, and to avoid everything that is not in accordance with the Word of God.

Much more may be said on this subject, but space does not admit of it here; the above suggestions, it is thought, are sufficient to answer the question.

If the question, "Is it of the Father?" be asked by those engaging in philanthropic or other work, there should not be much difficulty in coming to a decision.

W. D. B.

Answer C.—In Matt. ix. 36 we have a most pathetic picture which should guide us in seeking a true answer to above. We read, "But when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted [or were tired, and lay down], and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." True philanthropy seeks the welfare of men, not only in this life, but also in that which is to come, and therefore, while men of the world seek the present well-being of their fellows as an end, the Christian philanthropist makes it a means toward an end, viz., their eternal salvation. Witness the large hearts and philanthropic efforts of Dr. Barnardo, C. H. Spurgeon, William Quarrier, and George Muller in the orphanages, clothing and caring for the outcasts, and seeking to lead them to Christ; or those who conduct and keep open "Homes of Refuge" for the fallen, whose tears have often bathed the Saviour's feet since they first fell in the house of Simon (Luke vii. 38). We might also turn to India in her recent deep need, and see how Christian workers have faced the awful famine by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and preaching the Word of Life to the dying. No specific course can be laid down for the child of God in this matter but a full recognition of the principles laid down in the Scriptures (see Gal. vi. 10). "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto *all men*,

especially unto them who are of the household of faith, seeking to be "made all things to all men, that we might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22).

R. D.

Editor's Note.—Much depends on the meaning attached to the word "philanthropy." It is as nearly as possible a Greek word untranslated which has become incorporated in the English language. It occurs in two places in the New Testament. The first is in Acts xxviii. 2, "The barbarous people showed us no little *kindness*," and the second is in Titus iii. 4, "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared"; or literally, "But when the kindness and *love to man* of our Saviour God appeared." God's love to the world as in John iii. 16 is philanthropy in the highest sense.

God's love to man, however, includes more than what is generally understood by salvation. It is the same love that bestows temporal gifts, "sunshine" and "rain" (Matt. v. 45), "for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke vi. 35). See also Acts xiv.: "Rain, fruitful seasons, food, gladness." These are His kind gifts to man. The kindness of the barbarous people in Acts xxviii. was kindness shown to men as such by fellow-men, and was akin to "natural affection," one of the good things that remain in the world, notwithstanding the desolating and disintegrating influence of sin.

To be like God, our highest and most costly efforts should be in the direction of the saving of the souls of men through God's one appointed means, the Gospel.

If human kindness in temporal things can be used to gain the ear of men and women for the glad tidings, such is a legitimate form of philanthropy.

We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephes. ii. 10). It is with "*well-doing*," not by argument, that we are to "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter ii. 15). In Luke vi. 9 the good work in question was a temporal blessing, and in the same chapter, verses 33-35, we have the distinct command to do good to those who are enemies. The only question, then, is, What limitations are there to our efforts to do good? Let us beware of becoming yoked with unbelievers in philanthropic work. It is what Scripture calls an unequal yoke. It is not possible, if yoked in service with unbelievers, to give the Gospel its place of supremacy. It invariably results in compromise and entanglement.

The miraculous works of the Lord Jesus, and their bearing upon modern philanthropic movements, such as medical missions, &c., is a subject that demands careful consideration.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PAPER III.

WHAT has been said may serve to show that when the apostle said, "He died for our sins according to the Scriptures," he was referring to the whole burden of Old Testament prophecy, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Now, I would like to look a little at another aspect of this truth. Turn with me to Col. 1st chapter, 19th verse:

"For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death."

I want you to notice here that God (to whom it was pleasing that in Christ all fulness should dwell) accomplished a work in that death upon the Cross, on your behalf and mine, which we could never have known anything about unless He had told us. In connection with this read Hebrews ix. 13, 14:

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Notice in the 14th verse that we have the blood of CHRIST, we have the eternal SPIRIT, and we have GOD THE FATHER. We have here what is commonly known as the Trinity. We have a work accomplished by God Himself. Darkness has settled down upon nature—darkness such as never fell upon the earth before. Man has no part in this work; man is excluded. The holy, eternal, beloved Son offers Himself:

"I lay down My life of Myself; no man taketh it from Me."

He is led up to the Cross by the Spirit, just as one might lead a lamb to the slaughter, an unresisting Lamb.

The Holy Spirit led Him into the desert to be tempted; led Him every step of the way; led Him out that night to Gethsemane;

led Him right up to Calvary, and there through the Eternal Spirit He offered His spotless life to God. What was the result? Colossians i. 20:

"Having made peace through the blood of His Cross."

It was God making peace for you and for me. Many years ago now, I sat in the area of a church and heard one in the pulpit say, "There are two words in this Book, and if you only believe those two words you will be saved." And I thought, "Well, surely I will believe if it is in the Book;" and he read that verse, "Having made peace"—made it; not *to be* made.. No effort of man was needed. It is a work accomplished amidst the darkness of Calvary, effected by the blood of His Cross. Have you got peace with God? Do you believe it is made for you by the blood of the Cross? Can there be any peace with God for a guilty sinner upon any other ground? Can my tears or reformation ever bring me peace? Did you ever know a dying soul at peace upon the ground of having done the best he could? I never did; but I have known many a one pass sweetly into the presence of the Lord, resting on the word which testifies of "peace made by the blood of the Cross."

See how the Apostle John bears testimony to the fact. John xix. 35:

"He that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

Blood may have flowed under the stripes of the Roman lash and from His thorn-crowned brow, as we sing,

"See! from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!"

but all that would never have procured our pardon. It is the blood of His Cross; it is the blood that gushed at the point of the Roman spear from His very heart; it is the blood that bore testimony that He had poured out his soul UNTO DEATH; it is *that* which gives peace.

We know thus, certainly, that He died; that He was not in a swoon, from which He afterwards awoke and His disciples took Him

away. No; "He died for our sins according to the Scriptures," and we therefore know that He is now raised from the dead and seated at God's right hand.

Let us now glance at the 27th of Matthew, 50th verse:

"Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the Ghost."

When the centurion heard that strong cry from the dying Man he said, "Truly this was the Son of God." Even Pilate marvelled that He was so soon dead. This was not exhausted nature uttering a feeble wail or moan. Oh, no! it was the strong cry of One whom man could not put to death, but who laid down His life of Himself, as He said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." You and I have not power to lay down our lives. Suicide is a crime. But the Son of God had the power, and so He says, "This commandment have I received of My Father" (John x. 18).

There was no need, I say it reverently, that wicked hands should murder Him. God could have found a way without His being murdered. He offered Himself. The Son of God laying down His life in atonement for sin was an unique act.

Notice here that when "He yielded up the Ghost," or breathed out His Spirit,

"The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

Now, see what took place immediately upon His death. It is God's instant testimony to the efficacy of that finished work. The rocks are rent; the graves are opened; the veil is rent from the top to the bottom—not from the bottom to the top; it was the hand of God that rent it. Thus the whole way is clear, from the depths of the grave to the very throne of God. At one sweep God opens the way from the depths of hades to His own throne for every poor, guilty, helpless sinner that trusts in Him who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Now is salvation presented to you. Are you going to let the opportunity pass? There never

was a madder thing done on earth than to treat with indifference this wondrous finished work!

What were the thoughts of God as that Holy and Beloved One cried, "It is finished," and bowed His head in death; when the whole earth quaked; when the rocks were rent; when the graves were opened? Did that earthquake mean death? Oh, no! it meant life from the dead: and that rent veil was in order that there might be nothing standing as a barrier between the guilty sinner and the throne of God.

"Just as I am; Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come."

There were other aspects of the Cross of Christ I intended to look at, but I must leave them.

There is that in Romans vi. 6, in which the believer is identified with Christ:

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ."

God reckons that the very nails that went through the hands of Christ went through my hands. I am crucified with Christ. The death penalty passed upon me has been borne by me in the Person of my Substitute, so that not one sin that ever these guilty hands committed can be brought up again.

And that other passage in Galatians vi. 14:

"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."

This world, this guilty world, is lying under the dark shadow of that Cross, and if you are not trusting in the work accomplished on it, then its shadow is lying upon you for eternal judgment. Oh! I beseech you, accept the finished, atoning death that was presented to God upon the Cross. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and then you are saved and delivered from this present evil world and its doom for ever. You no longer belong to it. Wrath must come upon it, but you will be sheltered from it.

God grant that not one may treat with indifference or unbelief God's testimony to the finished work of His own beloved Son.

To be followed by papers on "Christ Risen"—"Glorified"—"Coming"—and "Reigning."

RECOGNITION OF OVERSEERS.

MAKING a passing remark on the subject of overseers, a brother once said: "You ask me to chalk-mark the overseers in the Assembly here; I may not be able to do that, but I can chalk-mark those who have been overseers *to me*; I know those who have warned and exhorted *me*, and have watched for *my* soul." This is a very practical method of "testing the oversight." It is true that a man may be an overseer—doing real oversight work—although he may not happen to have manifested much shepherd care over *me*. At the same time it will be found that *our* recognition of overseers depends largely on *our own* experience of their fitness as overseeing men. This seems clear from the testimony of Scripture concerning those who are over us in the Lord. We have the exhortation, "Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thess. v. 12). It is also written, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever . . . Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief" (Heb. xiii. 7, 17).

To our mind these are very plain Scriptures on the question of "recognising overseers." We are entreated to *know* them that are over us in the Lord. And no sooner are we told to know them than we are told the marks by which we shall know them. They are those who "labour among you," who "admonish you," who "have spoken unto you the Word of God," who "watch for your souls."

There is not a word about *office*. In the domain of popular religion the office—the official position—is coveted. And the flock are expected to recognise the office. But, if we take Scripture as our guide, officialism has no place whatever; and we are not called upon to acknowledge it. Wherever the scriptural order of things prevails, it is

work, not *office*, that is to be recognised. It is *worth* we are to esteem. It is real, spiritual authority that is to be acknowledged. Those who are over us in the Lord are to be esteemed "very highly in love for their *work's sake*."

We have heard it said that if a man professes to be an overseer the flock have no right to judge him in the matter—that is, they have no right to question the reality of that profession. But such an idea finds no countenance in the Scriptures. The passages we have already quoted bear directly on this point, and are addressed to God's people. If they are not to "judge," how are they to "know" them that are, the guides. Truly, in that case, the flock would be at the mercy of every one and any one who claimed to be a ruler in God's house. But things have not been left to drift in such haphazard fashion. Marks have been given whereby the saints may distinguish the manner of men they are to acknowledge and esteem as over them in the Lord. When the men who bear these marks are found standing forth as "the guides," let them be acknowledged and esteemed—yea, let them be esteemed "highly in love." God-given overseers are not so plentiful that we can afford to belittle their work, and affect to bring them down to the level of the saints in general. We cannot afford to despise our own mercies. On the other hand, when men who do not correspond to the scriptural character of rulers are found taking the position of rulers, we will do them a grave injustice if we acknowledge them as over us in the Lord. Great injury is often inflicted upon collective testimony by thus acknowledging men in a position to which they are not divinely called, and for which they are manifestly unfitted.

It is noteworthy that Israel, notwithstanding their departure from God, had sufficient discernment to perceive that Samuel's sons bore not the marks of heaven-sent judges. The people refused to acknowledge these would-be rulers. They acknowledged Samuel, whom God had sent; but they refused to acknowledge Samuel's sons, whom God had not sent. This refusal is never

included in the list of Israel's iniquities. Clearly they did right in rejecting as judges those whom the Lord had not made judges (1 Sam. viii. 5).

When we turn to the New Testament we find no countenance to the idea that you must take a man on his profession, and acknowledge him in whatever position he may assume among the people of God. In Rev. ii. 2 we find the Church of Ephesus commended in these words: "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." The believers at Ephesus "judged" to such purpose that they refused to acknowledge the claims of certain men who professed to be apostles, and they were commended for so doing.

We do not think we need refer to any other Scriptures to show that saints are not bound to accept every one who claims to be a ruler among the people of God. It is admitted that Scripture enumerates certain qualifications so that one exercised as to oversight work may *measure himself*, so to speak, and thus discover his own fitness as a guide (see 1 Tim. iii.). But he is not the only one entitled to apply the "measuring line." If we do not measure ourselves, others will do the measuring for us.

It scarcely needs to be pointed out that by attending an oversight meeting, and sitting on an overseer's seat, a man is not made an overseer. In this matter every man has his "measure"; and if God does not give a man a place in the hearts of the saints, it is hopeless for him to attempt to force things by assuming an official position. If he does assume such a position it lies with those who are really "the guides" to tell him courteously but firmly that he has taken up a false position. At a spot some forty miles off this was done, and with the most happy results. The intruder was told in a kindly way that he was the wrong person for such a meeting. He "suffered the word," and the peaceable fruits of righteousness followed. In the case referred to the overseers were not afraid to speak plainly to a would-be ruler. If they had failed to do so—if the faithful word had not been spoken—the peaceable fruits of righteousness could

not have followed. Peace of a kind there might have been. But it would have been a delusive peace; for the "pitchforking" of men into a position in the Church for which they are not fitted of God has ever been a fruitful cause of trouble. Who shall tell how much the pushing of Samuel's sons into the position of judges had to do with Israel's demand for a king! w. s.

MEDITATIONS ON THE EIGHTH OF ROMANS—III.

DEATH AND LIFE.

By W. H. BENNETT.

IN every one whom the Holy Spirit regenerates He dwells as "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. viii. 9), to reveal in ever-increasing measure the fulness and preciousness of Christ, and to lead the willing disciple in the pathway of obedience which is well-pleasing to God. The body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit and the habitation of Christ.

If it were not for the strange things so often taught and received, through lack of attention to the Scriptures, it would not be necessary to point out that the body (verse 10) is not said to be dead because *Christ* is in us, but "because of sin," and this is a proof that it is not "the flesh" or "*sin*" that is meant, but our natural body. The meaning of the verse is, "If Christ be in you . . . the spirit is life because of righteousness," though it is indeed true that "the body is dead because of sin." By nature we were altogether "dead in trespasses and sins"; we have now been "quickened together with Christ," but His life which animates our spirits has not yet asserted its power over our bodies. By reason of the presence of sin the body is dead, but by reason of the possession of righteousness—first as imputed, and then as the very characteristic of the life that has been imparted—"the spirit is life." How full are the expressions of Scripture! As elsewhere it is said, not simply, *Ye have* light, but, "*Ye are* light in the Lord," so here it is not only that we *have* life, but, "the Spirit *is* life." This, of course, is the believer's spirit, as distinct from the Holy Spirit, who is again named in verse 11, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead

dwelt in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by* His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The change from "Jesus" to "Christ" here is full of significance. That God "raised up Jesus" was the earliest testimony of the Gospel, and is part of its fundamental truth. But God raised Him as "*the Christ*," "the Head of the Body, the Church," and this is the pledge that the "mortal bodies" of all His members shall be quickened. The word "quicken" takes in those who will be still waiting when the Lord comes, as well as those who shall have fallen asleep, and, indeed, seems designed to keep our thoughts upon His coming. "The Spirit is life" *now*; the body will be quickened when He comes, and then we shall indeed know the fulness and power of life, for "there shall be no more death."

"Therefore, brethren"—because we have been freed from condemnation, and freed from "the law of sin and death," and are no longer "in the flesh," but "in the Spirit"—"we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh" (verse 12). Our debt to the flesh has been annulled; it has no claim upon us; it may *make* a claim, but it cannot *enforce* it, and we cannot allow its claim without practically ignoring for the time the great deliverance wrought for us at such a cost (verse 3). "We *are* debtors" indeed, but it is to Him who has loosed our bonds and made us "the servants of righteousness"; who has "freed us from our sins by His own blood," that we, as delivered ones, "might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days."

Solemn is the word of warning that follows: "For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die." The Spirit of God often led the apostles to write such testing words to those who took the place of disciples of Christ. Doubtless they were needed then, but He also foresaw that in the course of centuries many would name the Name of the Lord without departing from iniquity, and under the "*form of godliness*" still live "*after the flesh*." He foresaw, too, how many would be induced to seek the mortification of the flesh in ways that only pamper it and minister to pride,

hence the word, "But if ye, *through the Spirit*, do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live" (verse 13). This is the pathway of faith, and there are no other means of truly mortifying the flesh. Men and women may shut themselves up in monasteries and convents, but they carry "the flesh" with them, and cannot overcome it so. As it is only by the death of Christ that we are redeemed from sin, so it is only by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit that sin can be overcome.

The mortifying of the deeds of the body is the life-long business of the believer. The delusion that sin may be expelled from the mortal body while we are here below is not a harmless one. Sin is *present* to the end of our pilgrimage, and ever calls for determined resistance, and of all the sins through which the heart may be hardened and the conscience deadened perhaps the most delusive is the sin of pride and self-complacency, springing from fancied attainment in the way of getting rid of sin, for "if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Conflict to the end will be the portion of those whose aim is to "please God" in all things, and who seek nothing less than full and unreserved obedience to all His holy will as declared in His Word.

There are, indeed, no limits to the victory over sin which the Spirit of God can give us. As a departed brother used to say, "There is no sin which the blood of Christ cannot cleanse, and there is no sin which the Spirit of God cannot conquer." But if we desire this victory we must not be careless about what would hinder it. We cannot get beyond the tempter's reach, therefore we must "watch and pray" that we "*enter not into temptation*." If we would overcome temptation there must be the abstaining from "fleshly desires," and a closing of the eyes and ears to much that would attract our attention, especially in the literature and teaching of the day. It is by means of these things that Satan often reaches some whom temptation to grosser evils would not affect. He well knows the tendency and the weakness of each one of us, and can adapt his temptations to each. Hence the need of *watchfulness* that we may discern the snare, as well as *prayer* that we may have grace and wisdom to avoid it.

* Or, *because of*; it is doubtful which is the correct reading.

There are no short cuts to holiness, and it becomes us to be continually exercised before God as to our *growth* in spirituality of mind, and to consider carefully what may foster and what may hinder this. The secret of growth in spirituality is the diligent use of the Word of God, worship, and prayer, and specially meditation on the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which will lead to lowliness of spirit and exercise of conscience touching what is acceptable to God and what is not. Let us not evade the fact that the *cultivation* of "the mind of the Spirit" rests with ourselves, though it is only by His own grace that progress is made. The haste of the present time, which affects us even in the service of God as well as in all other ways, is not conducive to that quiet communion with God which is the secret of growth. But in spite of all difficulties we may, if we will, prove the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit to enable us to "mortify the deeds of the body" and so "bring forth fruit unto God."

THE LIFE OF DWIGHT L. MOODY.*

By W. R. MOODY.

MR. W. R. MOODY has succeeded in giving us an intensely interesting biography of his gifted father. There can be no doubt that Dwight Lyman Moody was one of the most successful evangelists of the 19th century. Since Whitfield and Wesley's days no one has been privileged to preach the Gospel to so many people. Dr. A. T. Pierson calculates that in his lifetime he addressed a hundred millions of persons. Several "Lives" of Mr. Moody have been issued, but this "official" one seems to us to be the best of them all.

The perusal of the book by gossellers, Sunday-school teachers, Christian workers, &c., is eminently calculated to cheer and stir them up to works of faith and labours of love. Through it we see what can be accomplished by a wholly consecrated Christian, even though he may have had but few educational advantages.

Mr. Moody's father was a stonemason, and died at the age of forty-one, leaving a widow and nine children totally unprovided

for. Mr. Moody's mother was a remarkable woman. Though often hard pressed to provide for her young family, she struggled bravely against great difficulties. It was one of her rules never to turn away from her door any who were in want. On one occasion, when the provision for the ensuing meal was exceedingly meagre, "it was put to the vote of the little ones whether they would give of their small supply to a poor beggar who appealed for aid. The children begged that he should be aided, and offered to have their slices cut thinner." Among the principles inculcated by this Puritan mother was the "inviolable sanctity of a promise." If a promise was made by any of the children, it had to be kept.

As a boy at school Dwight was better known for his love of fun than for attainments in scholarship. Many a whipping he got from his mother and school teacher for practical jokes which he was constantly making at the expense of others. A new teacher was appointed to the village school who determined to rule the children by kindness and not by the rod. Moody broke one of the rules and was asked to stay behind. When the teacher and he were alone to his astonishment she spoke kindly to him, and expressed her sorrow at his disobedience, and added: "I have made up my mind that if I cannot rule the school by love I will give it up. I will have no punishment. If you love me, try to keep the rules and help me in the school." "You will never have any more trouble with me," he answered, capitulating, "and I will *whack* the first boy who gives you any trouble." His biographer adds: "And *whack* him he did the very next day, to the surprise of his companions and the consternation of the teacher."

At an early age he left school and obtained employment on a farm. Farm life being too slow for a youth like him, at the age of seventeen he went to the city of Boston, where he found a situation in his uncle's boot and shoe store. There he remained two years, giving satisfaction to his employer. He was in the habit of attending the ministry of Dr. Kirk, and was a member of Mr. E. Kimball's Bible class.

HIS CONVERSION.

Mr. Kimball took a deep personal interest

* To be had at *Witness Office*, price 5/-, post free.

in the country lad, and was the means of his conversion. After being two years in his uncle's store he decided to remove to Chicago, then the rising city of the Western prairies. On arriving there he obtained a situation which afforded him ample scope for the exercise of his irrepressible energies. A blessed work of grace was going on in the city at this time, and he threw himself heart and soul into the movement. He hired four pews in the church of which he was a member, and on Sunday mornings filled them with young men whom he gathered from boarding-houses, "saloons," and street corners. Not contented with his Sunday morning labours, he applied for a class in a mission Sunday school. He was told that the school consisted of twelve teachers and sixteen scholars, and that he would be welcome to a class if he gathered it. This suited him exactly, and on the following Sunday he appeared with a procession of eighteen "hoodlums" that he had collected! Through his exertions the school was crowded with scholars. In the autumn of 1858 he commenced another school in a different part of the city. In a short time a large number of scholars were collected. A more commodious building became a necessity, and North Market Street Hall was secured. Sunday by Sunday fresh scholars were received until there were 1500 on the roll.

Mr. Moody by this time was a commercial traveller, and though absent from Chicago during the week he contrived to be at home on Saturday nights for his Sunday's work. From all accounts he must have had a wonderful influence with the Sunday-school scholars. When he met them he shook hands with them, and had a cheery word for each. One of the lads, who lived a considerable distance away, when asked why he travelled so far when there were other schools nearer his home, replied, "They loves a feller over there." The children knew that they had a friend in Mr. Moody, and greatly appreciated his little acts of kindness. He cared little for traditional methods of work if they were not as effective as original ones. One of the rules of his school was that scholars could be transferred to any class they liked on notifying the

superintendent. This usually resulted in "the survival of the fittest," and weeded out those who were unqualified, or negligent in their duties. Although the work commenced with the children, it gradually extended to the parents, and gospel meetings were carried on with blessed results. The interest increased so much that he became exercised about devoting his whole time and energies to it. Mr. Moody at this time was succeeding in business in a remarkable way. During the last year of his engagement with the firm he represented he earned 5000 dollars (£1000), in addition to his salary. And he was then but twenty-four years of age. His temporal prospects were exceedingly bright. After much prayer he resolved on giving up business, living on his savings, and when they were exhausted go on trusting the Lord to supply his needs.

As an encouragement to young Christians who seek to witness for Christ in public, it may be well to mention that when Mr. Moody began to take part in meetings he was far from being a ready speaker. When he first attempted to speak at a prayer meeting one of the deacons told him that he would best serve God by keeping quiet. Another critic, whilst appreciating his gift in filling the pews with hearers, advised him to stick to that and allow others to preach. "You make too many mistakes in grammar," said the critic. "I know I make mistakes," was the reply, "and I lack a great many things, but I'm doing the best I can with what I've got." Then glancing at his critic sharply he added, "Look here, friend, you've got grammar enough. What are you doing with it for the Master?" The critics could not, and did not, however, silence the earnest soul-winner. Filled with a burning, yearning desire for the salvation of the lost, he continued witnessing for Christ in public and private. As he used his gift it steadily increased. One night, on his way home from a meeting, he asked a man who was leaning against a lamp-post if he were a Christian. The man became exceedingly angry, doubled up his fists, and it seemed uncertain what the issue would be. "I'm very sorry if I have offended you," said Moody. "Mind your own business," said the irate stranger.

"THAT IS MY BUSINESS," the other replied, and departed. On a cold, biting, wintry morning some months afterwards, Mr. Moody was awakened from his sleep by a loud knock at his bedroom door. "Who are you? What do you want?" A strange voice replied, "I want to become a Christian." On opening the door Mr. Moody was surprised to see the man who had cursed him. "I'm very sorry," said he. "I have not had any peace since that night. Your words have haunted and troubled me. I couldn't sleep last night, and I thought I would come and get you to pray for me." The result was, the man found peace and became a decided Christian.

In 1862 Mr. Moody married Miss Emma Revell, who was his faithful companion and helpmeet for thirty-seven years. A remark of Mr. H. Varley that "the world has yet to see what God will do with, and for, and through, and in, and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him," was a great help to him. During the first few years of his evangelistic career he had hazy views of the gospel. Through a memorable visit paid to Chicago by Henry Moorhouse, Moody got clearer perceptions of the soul-saving truth. Though the story has often been told, it will bear repetition. While attending the Dublin believers' meetings Mr. Moody became acquainted with the "Boy Preacher." In the course of their conversation Moorhouse told Moody that he purposed visiting America, and if Mr. Moody liked would have some meetings in his church. On returning to his home Mr. Moody received a communication from Moorhouse stating that he purposed being in Chicago on a certain Thursday, and would be glad to preach for him. Moody was rather prejudiced against the Englishman, and as he was to be away from home on the Thursday and Friday he said to one of the office-bearers: "There is an Englishman coming here on Thursday who wants to preach. I don't know whether he can or not." It was agreed that Moorhouse was to preach on Thursday night, and if they liked him he was to be asked to take the Friday evening service. Mr. Moody's version of the story is as follows: "I said, 'If he speaks well both nights you will know

whether to announce him or me for the Sunday meetings. I will be back on Saturday.' When I got back on Saturday morning I was anxious to know how he got on. The first thing I said to my wife on my getting into the house was, 'How is the young Englishman coming along? How do the people like him?' 'They like him very much.' 'Did you hear him?' 'Yes.' 'Well, did you like him?' 'Yes, I liked him very much. He has preached two sermons from that verse of John, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," and I think you will like him, although he preaches a little differently from you.' 'How is that?' 'Well, he tells the worst sinners that God loves them.' 'Then,' said I, 'he is wrong.' 'I think you will agree with him when you hear him,' said she, 'because he backs up everything he says with the Bible.' Sunday came, and I noticed that everyone who came to the church brought his Bible. The morning address was to Christians. I had never heard anything quite like it. He gave chapter and verse to prove every statement he made. When night came the church was packed. 'Now, beloved friends,' said the preacher, 'if you will turn to the third chapter of John, 16th verse, you will find my text.' He preached the most extraordinary sermon from that verse. He did not divide the sermon into secondly, thirdly, and fourthly; he just took the whole verse and went through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation to prove that in all ages God loved the world. God had sent prophets, and patriarchs, and holy men to warn us, and then He sent His Son, and after they killed Him He sent the Holy Ghost.' I never knew up to that time that God loved us so much. This heart of mine began to thaw out—I could not keep back the tears. It was like news from a far country. I just drank it in; so did the crowded congregation. I tell you there is one thing that draws above everything else in the world, and that is *love*. A man that has no one to love him—no mother, no wife, no children, no brother, no sister—belongs to the class that commits suicide. It's pretty hard to get a crowd out in Chicago on a

Monday night, but the people came. They brought their Bibles, and Moorhouse began: 'Beloved friends, if you will turn to the third chapter of John, 16th verse, you will find my text,' and again he showed on another line from Genesis to Revelation that God loved us. He could turn to almost any part of the Bible and prove it. Well, I thought that was better than the other one. He struck a higher note than ever, and it was sweet to my soul to hear it. He just beat that truth into my heart, and I have never doubted it since. I used to preach that God was behind the sinner with a double-edged sword ready to hew him down. I have got done with that. I preach now that God is behind him with love, and he is running away from the God of love. Tuesday came, and we thought that he had surely exhausted that text, and that he would take another, but he said, 'If you will turn to the third chapter of John, and the 16th verse, you will find my text,' and he preached again from that wonderful text, and he seemed to strike a higher chord still. '*God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have*'—not going to have—'*everlasting life.*' By that time we began to believe it, and we have never doubted it since. For six nights he had preached on this one text. The seventh night came, and he went into the pulpit. Every eye was upon him. He said, 'Beloved friends, I have been hunting all day for a new text, but I cannot find anything so good as the old one, so we will go back to the third chapter of John, 16th verse,' and he preached the seventh sermon from those wonderful words, '*God so loved the world.*' I remember the end of that sermon: 'My friends,' he said, 'for a whole week I have been trying to tell you how much God loves you, but I cannot do it with this poor, stammering tongue. If I could borrow Jacob's ladder and climb into heaven and ask Gabriel, who stands in the presence of the Almighty, to tell me how much love the Father has for the world, all he could say would be, *God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*'

A. M.

To be concluded in next number.)

In Memoriam

MR. THOMAS NEWBERRY,

CALLED TO REST ABOVE, 16TH JAN., 1901, AGED 90 YEARS.

O "valiant for the truth upon the earth,"
Wielding the Spirit's sword—"the Word of God"— [lie,
Long hast thou warfare waged 'gainst Satan's
Re-echoed e'en from Eden—"Hath God said?"
Thy Master's words, "'Tis written," were enough [more.

For Thee, His servant; thou didst ask no
"His words were found" (how diligently sought!),

And, Jeremiah-like, "they were *the joy*
And *the rejoicing*" daily of thine "heart."
Oh! since so sweet on earth it was to learn
JEHOVAH's message, what must be thy bliss
Of listening to His voice beside the throne—
Not missing one sweet word, as thou dost gaze
With *perfect vision* on His glory now!

[faint,
The warrior ranks are thinning! Lest we
Let every soldier firmly grasp "*the sword*,"
And, while "the cloud of witnesses" surround,
Fight with our eyes fixed only on the LORD.

Leominster.

M. M. D.

AT HOME WITH THE LORD.

MR. THOS. NEWBERRY'S last Bible Reading.*

2 Corinthians v. 1-10.

PETER said, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle" (2 Peter i. 13, 14).

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved"—this present mortal body—we shall have "our house, which is from heaven," our resurrection body at the coming of the Lord. During the interval between our departure to be with the Lord, and His coming for His saints, we are "found naked," disembodied spirits. The apostle speaks with assurance, "We know," not a thing to be hoped for, but a fact settled.

The stakes drawn up, cords loosed, curtains folded up, that is what dying is—a packing up of the tent, not with the prospect of pitching it again, but of exchanging it for a

* Given on 18th December, at the house of Mr. Newberry. The subject was suggested at the time by one present. The "Notes" have been published in booklet form, at 6d. per dozen, and copies may be had from Miss Cook, Alexandra Villa, Weston-super-Mare.

permanent dwelling, the Tabernacle for the Temple, the tent in the wilderness for a settled habitation in the land.

"Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (verse 5). "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11). As to being left behind, to the regenerated child of God that is an impossibility: whether *watching* or *sleeping* we shall live together with Him (1 Thess. v. 10). That body must go; it is sealed for the purpose till that day of redemption: "Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest [pledge] of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. i. 14). What God has given to Christ, what Christ has purchased, sealed with such a sure seal, must go. "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21, 22), we have the earnest, the foretaste.

If He comes as a thief, He will have what He comes for (Rev. iii. 3).

"If our earthly house were dissolved;" but "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. xv. 51-53). We shall not all sleep, but be clothed upon with our house from heaven. If we are called upon to sleep, "we have a building of God," a resurrection body. He formed these mortal bodies of the dust of the earth, earthly material; the resurrection body will be heavenly (1 Cor. xv.). Take a grain of corn reared on English soil, that soil supplied the material for the corn, its substance was English soil; take this to America, put it there, it is not quickened except it die, it is clothed upon, and what furnishes the material of its growth is American soil. So with the resurrection body. God is the Builder, God gives it a

body as it pleases Him—heavenly, enduring, immortal. If these mortal bodies become corrupt in the tombs, "we have a building of God," a dwelling-house composed of heavenly soil, whose Builder and Maker is God.

The "children of the resurrection" neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God (Luke xx. 34-36).

"Unclothed," whilst we are turned out of this tabernacle, and have not yet come to take possession of our new habitation, away from home as to the body, we are "AT HOME WITH THE LORD." We pass the interval in the Lord's home; as He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare for you a place, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 2, 3—"Englishman's Bible," *margin*); as Solomon prepared a house for his bride, Pharaoh's daughter.

The New Jerusalem is a city composed of redeemed, resurrection bodies, the bride, dwelt in by one Spirit.

It is natural not to wish to lay down the body, but it is spiritual to desire the resurrection body at the coming of the Lord to receive us to Himself. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality," then death shall be "swallowed up in victory." "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The hope of His return takes away the sting of death; when the Lord returns, He will not suffer the living and remaining ones to see corruption.

Eden was a shadow of the Paradise of God with its tree of life (Rev. ii. 7). "In Thy presence is fulness of joy," His presence God's Paradise (2 Cor. xii 2-4).

"Wherefore also we labour [are ambitious] that, whether present [being at home] or absent [away from home], we may be accepted of Him (well pleasing to Him)—verse 9, *margin*, "Englishman's Bible"). So that when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, He may be able to say, "Well done."

A friend who speaks of "five-and-twenty years' fellowship and close association with this remarkable man," is compiling a short record of his life for a future number of "The Witness."

CHURCHES OF GOD:

AND THE DIVINE PURPOSES IN THEIR
FORMATION.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

PART II.

3. **T**HE Church was instituted to be the *Depository and Defender of Divine revelation*. And, in this respect, what is true of the Church as a whole should be also true of each local assembly.

The expression "my deposit" in 2 Timothy i. 12 (Greek) clearly refers to that which the believer commits to Christ's safe keeping—his eternal interests; but in 2 Timothy i. 14 and 1 Timothy vi. 20 "the deposit" tells of that which has been entrusted to the servant of Christ—the revealed mind of God. An examination of 1 Timothy iii. 15 shows that the words apply to a local assembly, for such was intended to be "A house of God, which is a Church of the Living God, a pillar and stay (or support) of the truth." The absence of the definite article in these clauses points to its local application, and other considerations confirm this conclusion. Some would punctuate the passage differently. They would read the last clause of verse 15 in connection with the following verse, thus interpreting the words "pillar and stay of the truth" as referring to Christ. We do not know of any evidence for so reading the passage, neither do we see any reason why the words should not apply to a scripturally-gathered and spiritual assembly of the saints.

The image is a striking one. In all ancient nations notable sayings and important commands were often inscribed on stone. What more likely way could there be of perpetuating such? God Himself adopted that plan with the ten commandments. And after Israel had obtained possession of Canaan, in obedience to the word of Jehovah, upon the stones of an altar they inscribed a copy of the law (Deut. xxvii. 2, 3, 8; Josh. viii. 32). This, however, is a purely spiritual dispensation. So instead of writing His mind on tables of stone, or causing it to be inscribed on an altar, God writes on tables which are hearts of flesh; He perpetuates vital truths by the lives and lips of His children.

All revealed truth has been committed to the saints. But the truths especially in view

in 1 Timothy iii. 15 are those which centre around the Person, earthly mission, and session in glory of the God-Man, our Redeemer and Lord. And these are best defended, not by a war of words, but by a loving and holy life. Since we believe that the Word, which was with God and is God, was manifested in the flesh and tabernacled among men, let us make it clear that out of His fulness have we received, and grace for grace. Believing that Emmanuel has lived and walked on this earth, let us day by day follow in His footsteps. Trusting, as we do, in a Christ who has died to sin as well as for the sinner, let us show in our lives that we have died to sin's dominion as well as to sin's penalty. Looking on Him as the One who is risen from among the dead and seated at the right hand of God, it becomes us to manifest by our heavenly mind and ways that we too have been spiritually raised and are seated with Him in heavenly places.

An assembly in which every person was so living would be a mighty power for God and a great blessing to men; without controversy it would be a Church of the Living God, a pillar and support of the truth. A few such assemblies in the land would prove bulwarks of defence against attacks on the truth, whether from professed friends or confessed foes.

To hold and defend, as well as to prove and show, are important duties of a Church of God. It is a shallow dictum that it does not matter what a man believes if his life is right, for all history proves that belief soon affects conduct. It is profoundly true of man that "as he thinketh in his heart so is he" (Prov. xxiii. 7). To be *sound* doctrinally is far from everything, yet it is a most important matter. In the later epistles of the apostle we meet with such expressions as *sound* words, *sound* doctrine, and *sound* in the faith. The word is literally *healthful*, for Divine truth is life-giving and life-preserving, while error is soul-destroying or morally enervating. Not a few have made shipwreck of their morals because they first made shipwreck of their faith. And *vice versa*. The legitimate outcome of error is moral decadence. The proper fruit of being

held by the truth is spiritual vigour. As long as we are down here there will be a danger of exalting one line of truth to the nullifying of another, of practically taking from or adding to the oracles of God, and even of corrupting or apostatising from the inspired doctrines. Therefore the exhortation still comes to the individual and to the assembly, "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

4. An assembly is a sphere in which *the will of Christ should be owned*. Three times our Lord spoke of Satan as the prince or ruler of this world. And after His death, resurrection, and ascension, the Holy Spirit speaks of the same awful being as retaining authority and dominion over men (Acts xxvi. 18; Col. i. 13). Yea, a deeper depth is discovered to us in his designation as "the god of this age" (2 Cor. iv. 4).

While boasting of liberty, unsaved men are the dupes and slaves of the devil. While thinking they are having their own way they are walking according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. ii. 1-3).

It is an element in a true conversion that the individual is led to acknowledge the lordship of Christ, to acknowledge His right to the soul's unconditional surrender and fullest obedience. He now sanctifies Christ as Lord in the heart and in all things desires to do His will (Acts ix. 6; 1 Peter iii. 15, R.V.). A scriptural Church is composed of individuals, few or many, who profess to have been led to own Christ's absolute authority in all things. Hence that which characterises the individuals will characterise the whole body. But it is only by the Holy Spirit that a person or a company can truly own Jesus as Lord (1 Cor. xii. 3). And the ungrieved and unquenched presence and action of the Spirit of God are necessary for an assembly to truly answer the purposes of its formation.

In Hebrews iii. 1-6 a comparison is made between the faithfulness of Moses and the faithfulness of Christ. But while one was faithful as a *servant in* God's house, the other was faithful as a *Son over* the same. The interpolation of *own* in verse 6 leads one astray. It is the same phrase as in verse 2, and in

both instances *God's house* is intended. Thus by the Father Christ has been appointed Ruler over the house (see John viii. 35).

In all things a Church acts as under authority. Some look upon it as an independent, self-governing body. It is far from this. True, it is free from all outside legislation or dictation, but it is under the government of Christ by His Spirit, according to the written Word. A Church has no authority to institute ordinances, decree doctrines, or enact laws. These have all been done for it by Christ. The faithful are responsible to search and find out from the Scriptures the Lord's will on any matter and then to carry it out. None should be kept from its fellowship whom the Lord would have received, and none should be retained whom He would have put away.

In the two simple, yet strikingly significant Church ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Lordship of Christ is shown forth. Normally, baptism would be the first important act of a new convert in confessing that the One who died to save him from his sins is now his Lord. This aspect of Christian baptism is set before us in 1 Corinthians x. 1, 2, and other scriptures. With the past there is a definite break; no longer is the believer in the service of self, or of sin, or of Satan—He is *under law to Christ*.

In 1 Corinthians xi. 21-32, where we have teaching for the Church in connection with the Supper, we notice the frequent occurrence of the title LORD. It is the Lord's Supper, to be observed on the Lord's Day, by the Lord's disciples. Surely, then, among other things the feast of remembrance should be the frequent, public, and united acknowledgment that Jesus Christ is the Saviour and Lord of each one observing it.

Therefore, in every true Church of God these two ordinances will occupy an important and honoured position. But we must pass on.

5. An assembly is intended as a *dwelling-place for God*. In Ephesians ii., after speaking of the Church, as a whole, being built upon Christ as the chief corner-stone, and growing into a holy temple, the word is added, "In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit." What humility! what holiness! what purity and

truth should mark those who take the place of being, in a special way, a dwelling-place for the Most High!

A home is a place of refuge and rest, of communion and complacency. An assembly should be not only "a home from home" for the saints, it should also be a home for God—a place in which He finds rest and delight, in which He reveals Himself to His children. Oh, that we may reverently, humbly, heartily, and completely allow Him to take His own blessed way in His own house! For these spiritual houses are the only "houses of God" on earth at the present time. Brick and stone, plaster and wood now count for nothing. But by His Spirit He dwells in and with His people. May every local assembly be the Zion of His choice, the place which He desires for His habitation! May it be that concerning which He says, "This is My rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it" (Psa. cxxiii. 13, 14). For the word runs, "YE ALSO ARE BUILT TOGETHER FOR AN HABITATION OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT."

BIBLE STUDIES.

THINGS ETERNAL.

Saints are called to	
Eternal Glory	- 1 Peter v. 10
Saved with an	
Eternal Salvation	- Hebrews v. 9
According to an	
Eternal Purpose	- Eph. iii. 11
Based upon an	
Eternal Redemption	- Heb. ix. 12
Sealed with an	
Eternal Spirit	- Heb. ix. 14
Possessing	
Eternal Life	- John x. 28
Having for a refuge the	
Eternal God	- Deut. xxxiii. 27
They press toward an	
Eternal Inheritance	- Heb. ix. 15
Where they will inhabit an	
Eternal House	- 2 Cor. v. 1
On each will rest an	
Eternal Weight of Glory	2 Cor. iv. 17
And over all will reign an	
Eternal King	- 1 Tim. i. 17 T.B.

WHAT A CONTRAST (2 Cor. iv. 17).

Light affliction	- For a moment
Weight of glory	- For eternity

J. M. H.

MAN'S WHITSUNTIDE AND GOD'S WHITSUNTIDE.

Notes of an Address at Leominster Conference
by the late H. DYER.

"WHITSUNTIDE" means "white raiment." Man, in his self-will, has substituted outward form for inward reality—substituting a religion of his own, thus setting aside that ordained by God, like Cain. True, there was an altar, but that which he offered thereon was his own from first to last, in contrast to Abel, who brought that which God had appointed.

White raiment was substituted by man as a figure of the Holy Spirit who was given at Pentecost. So the observance of Whitsuntide now in the putting on of white raiment by those who know nothing of the purity and power or the indwelling Spirit of God is a solemn mockery, a religion hateful in God's sight. This is man's Whitsuntide—an empty form.

God's Whitsuntide is the spotless purity of immortality, beginning with eternal life. There is no cleanness in death—no purity there! A corpse dressed in white raiment soon goes to corruption.

Those who have entered into God's Whitsuntide should have their garments always white (Eccles. ix. 8)—a Whitsuntide all the year round. We shall be clothed in the white raiment of immortality by-and-by, but now we are exhorted to "walk in white" with Christ. See Rev. iii. 4, 5. The one verse refers to present walking in white in the midst of this Sardis life around us; the other verse refers to future walking in white raiment, whose whiteness shall nevermore be spotted by sin. Let us seek to keep our garments undefiled now. Garments, *i.e.*, our character which clothes us, our thoughts, our words, our actions of everyday, go to make up our character, which clothes our lives as truly as our earthly garments cover our bodies.

Entrance into God's Whitsuntide. Read Isa. i. 16-18. Our natural dress as sinners, scarlet and crimson, two glaring colours; our glaring sins of scarlet; and our crimson sin of unbelief. The soldier put on Christ the scarlet robe, mocking the Son of God. This was the scarlet sin of their foolish merry-

making and mockery of the Son of God, whom they did not know, neither desired to know; this was their crimson sin of unbelief, which led on to their glaring sin of scarlet—the hatred and enmity which led to the soldier piercing His side by the sword which was covered with the crimson blood of Christ.

There were two sides to that spear—the enmity of man and the love and forgiveness of Christ. If we take our place at the wounded side of Christ, owning our hatred and unbelief in piercing His side, He then makes us white as snow in the crimson blood that He shed for us, and we thus enter into God's Whitsuntide.

Turn now to Rev. i. 14: "His head and His hair were white like wool, white as snow"—perfect spotlessness and purity. Christ is the first one mentioned in this book (of Revelation) as being *white*; afterward come the saints "clothed in white," like unto their Lord. This is the eternal Whitsuntide of the children of God, a multitude no man can number. No end to our companionship there, and—glorious thought!—no stain on our robes to mar our fellowship. Perfect delight in pure companionship and love. No companionship in hell, because no love no purity.

In Rev. xiv. 14 we get a "*white cloud*"—the perfect power of resurrection. In chapter i. we see Christ as the *white* One—"white as snow." With the white cloud of resurrection power He raises us and changes us into His own glorious image. A white cloud to receive us, then we must be stainless, or we should stain the white cloud!

In Rev. xix. 7, 8 we get "Fine linen, *clean and white*." The Bride, the Lamb's wife, is made meet for her husband in the white raiment of immortality.

Just as when God led up Eve to Adam's side and their eyes met they became one, so will the Lamb and His Bride be married with a glance, and the "honeymoon" will be all eternity!

Rev. xix. 11-14: A white horse for Christ, and also white horses for the saints. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" We shall be one with Christ when He comes to set up His kingdom on earth. But no sin will stain that conquest. There will be no

act of injustice or unrighteousness. The kingdoms of this world have been built up on bloodshed and injustice. But the white horses of heaven tell of the holiness and justice of that war, and the subsequent reign will be a righteous one.

A TEXT FOR THE NEW CENTURY.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

"Things which are appointed for thee to do"
(Acts xxii. 10).

IT is very, very blessed to remember there is One

Who is evermore appointing all the things that shall be done;

To remember that each footstep is ordained before I go—

Oh! it sweetens every journey as I travel to and fro.

It is very, very gracious of the God who guides the stars

To appoint the road I follow, with its bridges, gates, and bars;

All its obstacles and pleasures; all its meetings and farewells;

All the dirges of its sorrows, all the ringing of its bells.

It is very, very wondrous that the future, all unknown,

Has its beautiful appointments by a mandate from the Throne.

No, I cannot understand it, but I know it must be so,

And it gives to me such resting in the ways I may not know.

It is blessed, it is wondrous, it is gracious, but I think

That the sweetness of the story, when unknown I would shrink,

Is to know, amid the thousands that I daily have to see,

I am not once forgotten—*there are things ordained for me.*

And the things that are appointed shall be told me as I near;

He will guide me at my coming to each deed, I need not fear.

Not an act shall be omitted, not a turning shall be passed—

All the things that are appointed shall be told me, till the last.

GLADNESS AND THANKFULNESS.

In a note to his youngest daughter, Dr. A. Bonar says: "Are you very thankful? You know the difference between gladness and thankfulness? Gladness looks at the kindness, and takes it all; but thankfulness looks at the Giver, and loves Him for it all."

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting Answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

HOW DOES LOVE COVER SIN?—What is the meaning of the latter part of 1 Peter iv. 8, "For charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins"?

"FOREVER" IN HEBREWS x.—Does the term "forever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

THE GREAT SINNER AND THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.—Please explain how Mark iii. 29 and John iii. 16 can be reconciled. See also the 15th Paraphrase, the last two lines of the first verse:

"For while the lamp holds on to burn
The greatest sinner may return."

Can the greatest sinner and the whosoever of John iii. 16 not include also the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost? If so, how is it stated in Mark iii. 29 that he that blasphemers against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness*?

CAN THE SOUL DIE?—Please explain Isaiah liii. 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death." Again, verse 10: "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." Is it possible for the soul to die? What is the difference between soul and spirit?

HOW MANY OF ISRAEL SAVED?—In Romans ix. 27 it is said that "a remnant will be saved," and in Romans xi. 26, "all Israel will be saved." How can we account for the apparent contradiction?

THE SON OF MAN OF HEBREWS II. 6.—Please explain Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8. It has often been said that "Man" and "the Son of Man" in

these verses is in reference to Christ, but if this is the correct view, then I fail to see the sense of the words "but we see Jesus" in verse 9. Was not Adam "crowned with glory and honour?" And was not "all things put in subjection under him?" (see Gen. ii. 15, 19, 20).

"MINISTER" AND "DEACON"—
WHAT DIFFERENCE?

QUESTION 432.—Are not the words "minister" and "deacon" synonymous—minister from the Latin, deacon from the Greek? If so, how is it that the word deacon came to have as its meaning a subordinate office-bearer in the Church, associating it with Stephen and his fellows, where it is never used, the words ministration and ministry being used (see Acts vi. 1-4)?

Answer A.—It is not strictly accurate to say that the words "minister" and "deacon" (*diakonos*) are synonymous, though *diakonos*—from a Greek root to hasten after, hence to pursue a line of action—is usually translated "minister" in the New Testament, and it might be impossible to find a better word. "Minister" is the more general word of the two, being used as the equivalent of other words besides *diakonos*—e.g. in Heb. i. 7.

Trench in his "Synonyms of the New Testament" says that the word *diakonos*, as contrasted with other Greek words, translated "minister" or "servant," "represents the servant more in his activity for the work than in his relation to a person." Thus a man might be called a bond-servant (*doulos*) and be doing nothing. The term would represent his relation to his master, but it is only in relation to actual service that a man can be said to be a *diakonos*.

It is difficult, perhaps, to say how "*diakonos*" came to mean "a subordinate office-bearer in the Church," but it is easy to see how this idea has been perpetuated. The word and its cognates occur a hundred and one times in the New Testament. In only five of these places is the word translated, or rather left untranslated, "deacon," and it is hard to understand why these five occurrences are thus dealt with, if it is not to give colour and support to the ecclesiastical theory referred to in the question.

The seven in Acts vi. 4 are called "deacons" in an exclusive sense, from a superficial reading of the passage. Certain widows had been neglected in the daily ministration (*diakonia*). The twelve apostles having called together the believers, pointed out that "it was not meet that they should leave the Word of God and serve (*diakonon*) tables." They would entrust this business to others. Hence the latter have been called "the seven deacons;" but the next verse

shows that they had no better claim to the exclusive title than the twelve apostles themselves, who added immediately, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry (*diakonia*) of the Word." If, then, those called in this case to the ministry of tables are rightly called "the seven deacons," the apostles should be called "the twelve deacons" by the same showing. If some maintain the theory that it was only later in New Testament history that deacons became "subordinate office-bearers in the Church," it is sufficient to point out such passages as Romans xv. 8, where the Lord Himself is called "the deacon of the circumcision;" 1 Cor. iii. 5, where Paul calls himself and Apollos "deacons" by whom the Corinthians had believed; and 1 Tim. iv. 6, where Timothy is exhorted to be a good "deacon" of Jesus Christ, and many similar passages in the epistles.

If it be asked what the scriptural meaning of *diakonos* is, the answer suggested would be, "One who carries out a special ministry, for which his gifts or graces confessedly fit him." This ministry may be in connection with the money of the assembly, with visiting the sick, preaching the gospel, or with many other forms of service (Romans xiii. 7, 8). Hence the exhortation in 1 Tim. iii. 10: "Let these also first be proved;" that is, let not "ministries" be entrusted to the first comer—to anyone or everyone in turn—but to the ones who are manifesting their fitness for the special service required. W. H.

THE BODIES OF BELIEVERS— HOW AND WHEN REDEEMED?

QUESTION 433.—We would like to know your thoughts as to what the Scriptures say of the bodies of God's people—whether they are presently redeemed by the death of the Lord Jesus, or if they are sinful bodies? And if they are not presently redeemed, how and when they will be redeemed? Is the flesh spoken of in Romans vii. 18 the same thing as the outward man spoken of in 2 Corinthians iv. 16, and in Romans xii. 1? If the body is sinful, how can God accept of it offered up a living sacrifice? A few of God's children are anxious to know the mind of God from the Scriptures on this subject.

Answer A.—Redemption has two meanings in the New Testament. First, The paying of a price for captives or criminals. Second, The delivering out of trying circumstances.

We see this second meaning in Luke xxi. 26-28. The Lord is there telling them of the terrible times of the Great Tribulation. When they see certain signs begin to take place, He says: "Then look up, and lift up your heads, for your

redemption draweth nigh." That is, they would be delivered from the clutches of the antichrist. So also Eph. i. 13, 14: "That holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Also in Eph. iv. 30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." That is the day of complete deliverance from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It is just the same in our Scripture alluded to in the question, Rom. viii. 23: "Ourselves also which have the first fruit of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the son-placing—the redemption—of our body." That is, the complete deliverance out of the trying circumstances which cause such groaning. This is the time when, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be transformed into His likeness and translated into His presence. Our bodies are already His by purchase, as much as they ever will be. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

The flesh spoken of in Rom. vii. 18 is not the same as the outward man spoken of in 2 Cor. iv. 16. The flesh in Rom. vii. and in Rom. viii. is equivalent to the "old man" which is corrupt. The "outward man" of 2 Cor. iv. is the physical system—the body—which severe persecution was bringing face to face with death. J. S.

Editor's Note.—The two aspects of redemption spoken of in Scripture, and alluded to in above reply, have been aptly defined as "redemption by purchase" and "redemption by power." In the first sense Israel was a redeemed people by the blood of the Passover Lamb. In the second sense they were redeemed by power when on the farther bank of the Red Sea they sang their song of victory over Pharaoh's hosts.

God's salvation brings to us redemption in both senses. We are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and therefore "not our own," being "bought with a price." We await redemption by power, when "the purchased possession" will be claimed in its entirety by the purchaser in His glorious power, and spirit, soul, and body perfected for ever shall be presented to God.

It is very important to distinguish between the two uses of the word "flesh," *i.e.*, when it is used in a moral sense and therefore implies evil, and when it is used in a physical or corporeal sense, and therefore does not necessarily imply moral evil. The context must determine. As an illustration, it is used in both senses in 2 Cor. x. 3.

DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

PASSAGE READ—LUKE XI. 1-4.

PART I.—The complete revolt of man against God.

PART II.—The Perfect One who delighted to do the will of God.

PART III.—Following the path of obedience to the will of God.

PART I.

THE words I specially ask your attention to are in verse 2: "THY WILL BE DONE, AS IN HEAVEN, SO IN EARTH."

God, who is the Creator of all things, God, who has given us our being, He has the right to order all things according to His own will. Sin is a disturbing element that has come into God's universe, an element that is contrary to the will of God. It is a great mystery that we cannot comprehend: How sin should have entered? why sin should have entered? But the great fact is before us that an element has entered God's universe in opposition to His will. Blessing can only be in the line of the will of God. There cannot be blessing where there are two opposite wills at work; there can only be conflict and confusion until one will is absolute.

I do not presume to dogmatise, but I believe one reason why this disturbing element has been allowed in God's creation is that God might be manifested in a character in which He could never have been manifested without it. He could never have been known as the "God of all grace" had there not been rebel sinners to bestow His grace upon. The glory of God in the manifestation of His own character is the end of all God's ways. The works of creation are for the purpose of declaring the glory of God.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork" (Psalm xix. 1).

"His power and His wisdom are seen in the things that are made."

And so, in the permission of sin and the introduction of God's great redemption, there is a display of the character of God that could never have been without these conditions. But although this has been permitted, it has been permitted in order that there might be displayed to the universe, once for all, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the exceeding havoc and ruin that dis-

obedience to the will of God must necessarily produce.

As far as the human race is concerned, sin entered by our first parents taking of the forbidden fruit. It was one of what we might call the most trifling acts; the mere taking of fruit from a tree and eating it. But I believe it was chosen by God purposely to show that it is not the thing itself but the *principle* of antagonism to the will of God that is the root of all mischief and ruin. It was simply the doing of what God had told them not to do. God's will had been expressed; God's will was contravened by them. Hence the whole six thousand years of misery and ruin that have been manifested in this world of ours; hence the enormous, the eternal issues, the miseries of those who have rejected the Gospel. It all comes in in the wake of that one act, "By one man sin entered, and death by sin."

Hence it must be perfectly clear that the only way of blessing is by the restoration of the authority of God; there can be no other way of blessing. The end of God's redemption work is not to suffer His authority to be trifled with, but to assert His authority completely and absolutely. We are apt to forget this. It is too often thought that the end of redemption is just to save sinners from hell, and to bring them into God's favour that they might be blessed and happy, and to deliver them from the consequences of their sin and guilt. Well, God's redemption certainly accomplishes that; but the end of it is not so much our happiness as God being glorified in a people that once were rebels being brought into perfect harmony with His own will; and I desire that you and I may get this thought into our hearts. My one object is to seek to set before you the importance of this, God's counsel concerning us, that we should be conformed to His own holy, blessed will.

You notice that the Lord Jesus in these simple words of the prayer He taught His disciples refers to the will of God being done in heaven. This disturbing element of sin has not entered into the regions that are referred to by the Lord as heaven; the prayer is that the will of God might be done on earth *as it is done in heaven.*

There is reference in the Scripture to a time when angels sinned, when angels fell, and when they were "cast down to hell." Sin apparently did at one time enter the heavenly courts, but was dealt with in judgment, and cast out; so that the Lord refers to the will of God as being a thing that is done in heaven. Look at Psalm ciii. 20:

"Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word."

The angels of God in heaven do the will of God. There is no conflicting element there; all is harmony and peace. The veil is drawn back for us in the Book of Revelation, and we see the Throne and the Lamb in the midst of it, and hosts upon hosts circling round that Throne, and all in perfect unison with the will of God. The will of God is done in heaven, and therefore heaven is blessed; the will of God is not done on earth, and therefore earth is full of misery, confusion, ruin, disaster. It must be so; it cannot be otherwise.

Turn to Genesis vi. 5:

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Mark every word of that verse. It is by noting the words of a verse such as this that you see how divine it is. What could be stronger? Could man have put together such a combination of words as this?

There is not a word said there about his *acts*, not a word about his *doings*; it is the *thoughts* of his heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is the heart that is the man; it is not the outward look, the outward behaviour. They may be all fair and in order, but look at the heart. "Out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23). Life springs from the heart, issues out of the heart. Matthew xv. 19, 20:

"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man." The fountain of defilement, therefore, is the heart.

Genesis vi. 5: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

O the revolt of man against God! The will of God completely set aside before the flood; not one thought of any single heart but was only evil, and always evil. That was what God saw; so that in the human race, in the Adam race, we have complete revolt against the will of God.

Look at Psalm xiv. 1-3:

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

There is God's view of the world—a revolted world, a world in red-handed rebellion against God. That is what the world is.

Turn to Romans viii. 7, 8:

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

There you have the whole principle expounded by the apostle that the nature of man is so utterly corrupt that it is not possible for it to be subject to the will of God. Hence the necessity for a "new birth." And that new birth must come about by the will of God; it is not of the flesh or the will of man; man never would will to be born again. "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth" (James i. 18).

The fact that we are here, a people created anew in Christ Jesus, is according to the sovereign will of God, and it is a blessed thing our salvation is based on the eternal counsels of God.

Another passage on this point—1 Cor. ii. 14:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

From Romans viii. we learn that this nature of man cannot be subject to the will of God, and from 1 Cor. ii. we learn that the nature of man cannot understand the things of God.

How hopelessly and utterly lost man is by nature; how evident it is that nothing but the power of God can save a soul. Oh! we want to know more of the power of God.

You know God chooses the weak things of the world as His instruments, just that it may be manifest that it is the power of God at work. In these last days our eyes are too much directed to man, to machinery, to man's power, and the consequence is that God just takes up some feeble instruments, and uses them for a while in His service, and gives great blessing. Why? Just because it is some poor, feeble instrument, that will not get the glory. But whenever the glory begins to be given to the instrument, it is laid aside; God must be glorified; it is the end of all His workings.

These Scriptures show the complete revolt of man against God; that it is world-wide, universal. It is the whole world that is in rebellion against God; and it is in rebellion against God because it hates God. And when God came down into the world in the Person of His Son, manifest in the flesh, so that He could be seen and handled, so that the thoughts and the will of God could be manifested and asserted, and claim laid upon man to do God's will, man hated that blessed One. Man hated that blessed One in spite of His gracious works, in spite of His going from south to north spreading blessing wherever He went, in spite of the track of persons that were delivered from all manners of evil in His wake wherever He went. In spite of all that, the hate of man asserts itself, and man murders "God manifest in the flesh."

Surely this shows that sin is aimed at the throne of God. This rebellion—rebellion started in the garden of Eden at Satan's instigation—has for its object the hurling of God from the throne of the universe, and the setting of an antagonistic element on the throne. Oh, sin is a terrible thing! And remember it is not simply sin in the outward act; "the thought of foolishness is sin." There are shallow views about sin in these days. A man that has been given to swearing and drinking gives both up, and then thinks he has no sin. Why, that is not the teaching of God about sin. Unless every thought of the heart beats in harmony with the thoughts of God, then that thought is sin.

You see from these scriptures how complete is the revolt of man against God.

MATTERS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE.—III.

OUR SERVICE.

Matthew vii. 3-5.

By EPHRAIM VENN, Author of "The First Division in the Church," &c.

WE have looked at the matter of *first importance* in relation to our worship and walk. We come now to that which must be *first* in our service one to another. In each of the three great spheres of our life as Christians—toward God, before men, and among brethren—we are reminded of what must ever be the primary necessity.

There are three things noticeable in this passage. First, the discovery of a mote in a brother's eye (verse 3); next, the offer of a voluntary service to remove it (verse 4); and then the only way in which this can be effectually done, and what it involves (ver. 5).

1. Beholding the mote in our brother's eye is intended to illustrate a very common tendency amongst us of turning our eyes toward our brethren for the discovery of their faults instead of using them to search out our own; it also intimates that this is done, not occasionally through the attraction of some glaring mishap, but habitually. "*Beholdest*" means that it is a continuous thing. It further points out a most lamentable *weakness* in us, that proneness to overlook all the general features of a brother's character, however praiseworthy, and fasten the gaze upon the smallest spot and the least speck that is wrong with him, though it can hardly be discerned. But it does more, it proves that this is hypocrisy, for those who are quick-sighted and fore-sighted to spy out the mote in their brother's eye, do not, for lack of ability or inclination, or perhaps honesty, consider the *beam* that is in their own eye.

It is easy and natural to point out a small sin in my brother, while allowing a very great one in myself, whereas my own faults should appear greater and graver to me than the same faults in a brother. If I cultivated the habit of self-judgment instead of being severe with the sins of others and indulgent with my own, I should then "*consider the beam*" in my own eye, that is, I should first deal with my own faults with unsparing judgment, and then with my brother's, if necessary, in the spirit of meekness.

How unconscious are we naturally of our personal failings. As with a mote or a beam in the eye, we are powerless to discover that which is lodged in our own flesh, and the greater the evil the less able are we to perceive it in ourselves. Those who are the most faulty are too often the least conscious of it, and usually the first to find out the faults of others, and the most unsparing to condemn them. It was not the brother with a mote in his eye that discovered the beam in his brother's, but he with the *beam*, although, undoubtedly, the former could see more clearly of the two. May we have grace to examine ourselves and to mortify our own members, for if we would judge ourselves, who should not be judged?

2. Then "how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a *beam* is in thine own eye?" There is nothing wrong in offering to remove the mote surely, for if it is offensive to us, how much more is it painful to the brother himself! In itself it is a brotherly action. We are not to be blind or indifferent to each other's welfare, but it must be by love that we serve one another and wash one another's feet.

If a brother be overtaken in a fault, to neglect him, or leave him alone to drift, would be most blameworthy, much less should we lend our tongues to retail the wrong; by all means seek to restore such, but the spiritual only are able, for this must be done in the spirit of meekness, by those who have learned to consider themselves, lest they also be tempted.

It is not every one who is skilful enough to perform this difficult operation, for it requires a delicate touch. At the same time let no one excuse himself from the responsibility. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him," was God's express command to the Israelite; so may we never forget that it is not the will of our Father that one of these little ones should perish.

But from the extreme difficulty of doing this in a manner not to be a further cause of stumbling to an erring brother or sister, no service calls for more prayer, delicacy of feeling, and meekness of wisdom. It must

not be done just to "relieve my own mind," and to have "a clear conscience." The motive must be nothing less than love, the manner nothing else than showing "the kindness of God."

Even a well-meaning word may be entirely out of place, and produce contempt rather than conviction. It must be a word in season, and "a word fitly spoken" from lips that know what is acceptable, if it is to be a blessing, for "as an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear" (Pro. xxv. 12).

3. "Thou hypocrite, *first* cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

He who would point to a brother's wrong and seek to set him right, must *first* consider his own weakness, so as to be free in himself of that which he seeks to remove from another, or endless sorrow may result from an ungracious attempt to deal with another's faults by one who has worse forms of evil in himself neither "considered" or "cast out." Zeal for judging evil without honesty and impartiality enough to detect and judge personal errors, is indeed grievous hypocrisy, for to deal with another's fault supposes that I am free from (that) wrong myself, and an enemy to the evil in question.

Let us therefore have grace to diligently "consider" and "cast out" *first* our own beam, that we may "see clearly" to cast out the mote from our brother's eye, or our best attempts will be nothing better than an ungracious judgment of the sin in another, which has grown to more terrible proportions in ourselves.

Nothing God is so tender of as His glory, and therefore He will visit His suffering people in a prison, and feast them in a dungeon, and walk with them in a fiery furnace, and show kindness unto them in a lion's den, that every one may shout and cry, "Grace, grace."

It is not always high-water mark with the saints. Sometimes they are reduced to a very low ebb. The best of saints are like the ark tossed up and down with waves, with tears, and doubts, and fears, and it will be so till they are safe in the bosom of Christ.

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—IV.

CHILDREN AND HEIRS.

By W. H. BENNET.

HAVING strongly brought out the contrast between those who "are after the flesh," and those who "are after the Spirit," the apostle introduces a new aspect of the subject by the statement, "For as many as are *led* by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). The word "they" is emphatic, and still keeps up the contrast, while it forcibly asserts the high dignity of those whom it includes.

This great truth of God as to the sonship of believers is opposed by two systems of false teaching. There are those who assert that all men *are* sons of God by creation, while others as confidently affirm that, whereas by nature we are children of wrath, we may be *made* "children of God" by baptism. The upholders of either of these doctrines would deny that any can only become God's children by the regenerating grace and power of the Holy Spirit, while the adherents of both entirely fail to understand the true dignity of that heavenly relationship.

Being "led by the Spirit" does not *make* us sons, but it is the evidence that we *are* sons. It is by receiving Christ that we become God's children, for from such a reception of Him, by believing on His name, new birth is inseparable (John i. 12, 13). This blessed relationship originated in the sovereign will and grace of God, who "predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself" (Eph. i. 5), and its basis is redemption, as is clearly set forth in Galatians iv. 4, 5: "When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." So in this Epistle to the Romans the apostle first deals with man's condition as a sinner and his need of righteousness; he then shows how righteousness reaches us through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is only when he expatiates on the glorious results of justification that we find the blessed truth: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption [or sonship],

whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (verse 15). It is through the atoning death of "His own Son" that God brings "many sons" to glory.

Our relationship to God is expressed by two words, *son* and *child*—the first indicating its dignity, and the second its reality. What can more fully declare the dignity of our position than the statement that Christ, the glorious Son of God, is not ashamed to call us brethren (Heb. ii. 11)? His words to Mary teach us that we stand in the same relationship as Himself to the Father: "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." Yet we would never forget the fact that He was, from eternity the Son of God (and that in a sense in which no creature can be), while with us sonship begins in time, and is of grace alone.

In verse 16 the apostle uses the word "*children* of God" to express the reality of a birth relationship. This is most fully brought out in the writings of the Apostle John. The Lord's words to Nicodemus, declaring the absolute necessity of regeneration for entrance into God's kingdom, carry in them the proof that every one who finds a place in that glorious kingdom is "born from above," and thus made God's child. It is upon this truth that the beloved disciple dwells so forcibly in his first epistle, when he declares that it is a *present* as well as a *real* relationship—"Beloved, now are we children of God"—and those who are brought into it are distinguished from the rest of the world in that their course is one of righteousness and not of lawlessness.

It is a wonderful thing for a child of Adam, once a sinner by nature and practice, to be able in calmness and peace to look up to God, and in sincerity and truth utter the holy word "FATHER." Many repeat the words "Our Father" in a formal way, but He who could distinguish the needy woman's touch of faith from the jostling of the multitude discerns the true utterance that comes from any heart.

Of this relationship the Holy Spirit is the great Witness: "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with [or to] our spirit that we are the children of God" (verse 16). By revealing Christ to our hearts; by strengthening our

desires towards Him; by giving us delight in the Holy Scriptures, which testify of Him; by leading out our hearts to God in prayer and worship; by enabling us to trust in God in times of trial and difficulty, and to find our rest in Him in seasons of sorrow and affliction; by leading us in the way of truth and in the path of obedience, with the desire to glorify God in all we do—in these and other ways the Spirit of God witnesses to us of our new birth. To be able to address God as our Father, with the knowledge that all that hindered access to Himself has been removed by the Cross of Christ, is itself an evidence of being "led by the Spirit of God."

God's *children* are also God's *heirs*: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." The first and chief inheritance of Christ is God Himself—"Jehovah is the portion of Mine inheritance and of My cup," and in this it is our privilege to find fellowship with Him. We are "heirs of God," for He himself is our everlasting portion, and this is the guarantee of our eternal bliss. We are "joint-heirs with Christ," for we share with Him that wealth of the Father's love of which He is the supreme object, and He will share with us all those things which, in token of His love, the Father hath given "into His hand" (John iii. 35); yea, He will give a seat on His own throne to those who by faith overcome the world which He himself overcame.

But to this glory the appointed pathway is that of suffering: "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (verse 17). The character of this suffering is that it is "*with Him*," therefore we find it in resisting what is contrary to Him, whether around us or within us, and in the endurance called for in the path of service to Him. Outward persecution is not everywhere violent, though they that "are after the Spirit" are ever opposed by those who "are after the flesh"; but full obedience and true service will call for self-denial in many ways.

The apostle knew much of suffering for Christ (Acts ix. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 23-33), but God was pleased to give him a glimpse of much of the glory awaiting him (2 Cor. xii. 14), and thus he was able to compare one

with the other. Yet in another sense he was *not* able to do this; for as he sought to measure the one by the other, he felt that, in the light of the coming glory, his sufferings, real as they were, sank into insignificance. That glory is set before us, and if only we accustom ourselves to look at the things which are unseen and eternal, we too shall be able to endorse his conclusion—"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us," or *unto* us—the glory that shall soon break upon our vision, not only that of our state, but of all our surroundings.

LIFE OF DWIGHT L. MOODY.*

By W. R. MOODY—(Concluded).

POWER FOR SERVICE.

I N the year 1871 two Christian women who used to attend Mr. Moody's meetings told him that they had been praying for him. "Why don't you pray for the people?" he would ask. "Because you need the power of the Spirit," they would say. "Why," said he, in speaking of it afterwards, "I thought I had power. I had the largest congregation in Chicago, and there were many conversions. I was in a sense satisfied, but right along these godly women kept praying for me, and their earnest talk about anointing for special service set me thinking. I asked them to come and talk with me, and they poured out their hearts in prayer that I might receive the filling of the Holy Spirit. There came a great hunger into my soul. I did not know what it was. I began to cry out as I never did before. I really felt that I did not want to live if I could not have this power for service. Well, one day in the city of New York—oh, what a day! I cannot describe it; I seldom refer to it—it is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fourteen years. I can only say God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different; I did not present any new truths,

* To be had at Witness Office, price 5/ (post free 5/3)

and yet hundreds were converted. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world; it would be as the small dust of the balance."

Mr. Moody was a diligent Bible student. He dug deeply into the mines of Scripture, and sought help from those who were similarly employed. Whenever he came in contact with those who were well taught in the Word, he immediately took out his notebook and "pumped" them, to use one of his own expressive phrases. He declared that it was a great privilege to possess the thoughts of those who had been digging all their lives. One of his sayings was that it was worth going a thousand miles to get a good thought. He continually encouraged Christians to read, meditate upon, and study the Scriptures. Some of his suggestions as to reading the Word are exceedingly helpful. We would mention a few: (1) Always carry a Bible or New Testament in your pocket, and do not be ashamed of people seeing you reading it in trains, &c.; (2) Do not be afraid of marking it or making marginal notes. Mark texts that contain promises, exhortations, warnings to sinners and to Christians, gospel invitations to the unconverted, and so on; (3) Set apart at least fifteen minutes a day for study and meditation. This little time will have great results, and will never be regretted; (4) Prepare your heart "to seek the law of the Lord and to do it" (Ezra vii. 10); (5) Always ask God to open the eyes of your understanding, that you may see the truth, and expect that He will answer your prayer; (6) Believe in the Bible as God's revelation to you, and act accordingly. Do not reject any portion because it contains the supernatural, or because you cannot understand it. Reverence all Scripture. Remember God's own estimate of it: "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name;" (7) Learn at least one verse of Scripture each day. Verses committed to memory will be wonderfully useful in your daily life and walk. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Some Christians can quote Shakespeare and Longfellow better than the Bible; (8) If you are a preacher or a Sunday-school

teacher, try at any cost to master the Bible; (9) Strive to be exact in quoting Scripture; (10) Study how to use the Bible so as to walk with God in closer communion; also so as to gain a working knowledge of Scripture for leading others to Christ.

BELIEVING WHAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND.

He often related the following incident: A man went to him with a difficult passage of Scripture and said: "Mr. Moody, what do you do with that?" "I don't do anything with it." "How do you understand it?" "I don't understand it." "How do you explain it?" "I don't explain it." "What do you do with it?" "I don't do anything with it." "You do not believe it, do you?" "Oh, yes, I believe it." "Well, you don't accept anything you don't understand, do you?" "Yes, I certainly do. There are lots of things I don't understand, but I believe them. I don't know anything of higher mathematics, but I believe in them. I don't understand astronomy, but I believe in astronomy. Can you tell me why the same kind of food turns into flesh, fish, hair, feathers, or hoofs, according as it is eaten by one animal or another? A man told me a while ago he would not believe anything he had not seen, and I asked him if he had ever seen his own brain." When a popular preacher declared that the story of Jonah and the whale was a myth, he was asked his opinion by a reporter. His reply was, "I stand by Jonah."

MOODY AND SANKEY'S FIRST VISIT TO GREAT BRITAIN.

Messrs. Moody and Sankey began their first extended evangelistic tour in Great Britain in June, 1873. They laboured for over two years in England, Scotland, and Ireland with remarkable success. Immense numbers of persons of all social grades and classes attended the services, and thousands professed conversion to God. No evangelists in the 19th century ever had such congregations. Mr. Sankey's singing was, doubtless, helpful in drawing the crowds, but Mr. Moody's preaching was the attraction. At first some of the leading newspapers spoke disparagingly of the preachers and the work. As, however, the interest in-

creased and deepened, and such eminent men as Mr. Gladstone, Earl Cairns, the Lord Chancellor of England, Lord Shaftesbury, and others attended, their tone was changed. The Earl of Shaftesbury publicly acknowledged that Mr. Moody had not been educated at Oxford, for he had a "wonderful power of getting at the hearts of men; and while the common people heard him gladly, many persons of high station have been greatly struck with the marvellous simplicity and power of his preaching." The Lord Chancellor said to Lord Shaftesbury: "The simplicity of that man's preaching, the clear manner in which he sets forth salvation by Christ, is to me the most striking and the most delightful thing I ever knew in my life."

The four months' campaign in London was a wondrous success both in attendance and results. In Camberwell Hall sixty meetings were attended by 480,000 people; in Victoria Hall, forty-five meetings, attended by 400,000; in the Royal Haymarket Opera House, sixty meetings, attended by 330,000; in Bow Road Hall, sixty meetings, attended by 720,000—in all, 285 meetings, attended by 2,530,000 people. No preacher since Whitfield's days ever addressed such congregations. Mr. Moody did not count his converts. When a minister asked him how many souls had been saved under his preaching, he answered: "I don't know anything about that, doctor. Thank God, I don't have to. I don't keep the Lamb's Book of Life." This was indeed a wise reply.

It was charged against Messrs. Moody and Sankey that they were becoming rich through the royalties on their hymn-book. This was absolutely false. More than £225,000 have been received as royalties, but neither of them applied a cent of the amount for personal purposes. The amount has been spent in religious, benevolent, and charitable objects.

On Mr. Moody's return to America, in some places he had even larger meetings than in Great Britain. "Instant in season out of season" describes the man. A Bible Institute was built through his exertions in the city of Chicago. "Students have come to the Institute from all quarters, till to-day

there is not a race and but few nations which are not represented on its register. The system embraces a thorough analytical, doctrinal, and book study of the Bible under the tuition of resident instructors." Two years of twelve months each is the course.

But Mr. W. R. Moody's book has to be read in order to form a proper estimate of the character and work of the American gospeller. After over forty years' labour in the harvest-field, he received his home call. In November, 1899, he broke down whilst at work in Kansas City, and departed to be with the Lord at his home in Northfield, Mass., on 22nd December.

When preaching he had said: "Some day you will read in the papers that D. L. Moody, of East Northfield, is dead. Don't you believe a word of it. At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now. I shall have gone up higher, that is all—out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal; a body that death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint, a body fashioned like unto His glorious body."

HOME CALL.

Shortly before his departure he was heard saying: "Earth recedes; heaven opens before me." The friends thinking he was dreaming, tried to rouse him. "No, this is no dream," he replied. "It is beautiful. It is like a trance. If this is death, it is sweet. There is no valley here. God is calling on me, and I must go." Soon after this he passed into the presence of the Lord.

Christian workers will be greatly stirred and helped by reading this biography of Dwight Lyman Moody. A. M.

BIBLE STUDIES.

THE BELOVED.

- 1 Accepted in the Beloved - Eph. i. 6
- 2 Opening to the Beloved Song of Sol. v. 6
- 3 Leaning on the Beloved Song of Sol. viii. 5
- 4 Listening to the Beloved Song of Sol. ii. 8
- 5 Speaking well of the Beloved
Song of Sol. v. 10-16
- 6 Fruit-bearing for the Beloved
Song of Sol. iv. 16
- 7 Longing after the Beloved
Song of Sol. viii. 14

A THREEFOLD BLESSING.

"IN THE MIDST."

1. Matthew xviii. 20—"For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I *in the midst*."

THOU hast said it, Lord and Master,
Sweetest promise to Thine own!
Sanctifying, blessing, guiding
Gatherings in Thy Name alone.
O what cordial love should bind us,
All who meet in His dear Name!
But, alas! how oft He'll find us
Disunited, loveless, lame.

2. John xix. 18—"On either side one, and Jesus *in the midst*."

"*In the midst*" for sinners dying!
Life poured out that they might live!
Now behold Him! crowned with thorns,
Nailed and pierced, that life to give.
And still He comes with earnest pleading,
Seeking sinners for His Home;
Will you yet resist, unheeding?
Wandering sinner, come, O come!

3. Rev. vii. 17—"For the Lamb which is *in the midst* of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters."

"*In the midst*," now crowned with glory!
Throned in splendour, yet the same—
Lamb and Leader, Shepherd, Feeder,
Centre point, His glorious Name.
Even there they cannot spare Him,
Lord of all that countless throng;
"*In the midst*," 'tis "*Jesus only*,"
Theme of Heaven's eternal song!

ROSE BENN.

"FEAR, NOT."—III.

WHO among us has not had to grieve over the diminution, if not the entire loss, of the love of some who, we thought, would never change towards us? We have found love that we thought to be deep and sincere only a passing fancy, and quickly transferred to a new acquaintance. That perhaps has caused more irritation and wounded pride than grief, for our love has been for the individuals as we thought them to be, rather than as they really were.

In the lives of some of us has come a time when from an ease-loving existence the Lord has called us to make a decided stand on His

side. Indeed, has He not so called all? But some have not heard, or, having heard, have not responded to the call. All who have done so know the pain of the drifting apart of themselves and some dearly-loved ones who were content to be worldly Christians. In some cases we have had to sever ourselves from them. We have found it impossible to keep true to our loving, heavenly Father, and keep close intercourse with them. That has caused heartache; but worse has been the sorrow when some we have fondly hoped understood us have withdrawn from our friendship, slighting and despising what we esteem most precious and sacred.

But we have been more than recompensed in the love of Christian friends. Who has words to describe the sweet rest, the deep joy of true Christian fellowship? How it has cheered and strengthened us when downcast and weak! How it has soothed us in sorrow, helped us in perplexity, nerved us to face difficulties, and brightened our solitude! And have not all our joys been heightened by our loved ones rejoicing with us?

But, alas! even Christian love is not perfect here. To our shame we know that misunderstandings, and even jealousies, creep in when and where least expected. Surely this is the very hardest thing we have to bear. We expect so much from those who love our Lord, so much tenderness, so much forbearance, such clear insight and correct judgment, and sometimes we receive instead undeserved blame, hasty censure, or worse still, indifference.

Let me hasten to say here that we would do well to examine ourselves lest we have made others suffer from like faults in ourselves.

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31. 3). "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1). "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1). "I am persuaded that neither death nor life . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

Is there not consolation, nay more, is there not abundant cause for rejoicing, in such assertions from God's own Word? Should not our hearts overflow with thankfulness? Ought not we, who are the objects of such marvellous love, to be loving and gentle and forbearing towards all, even those who err against us.

"I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6). "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).

CHURCHES OF GOD:

AND THE DIVINE PURPOSES IN THEIR FORMATION.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

PART III.

IN two previous papers we have sought to consider some of the chief purposes Godward of an assembly of saints. We now come to the next step:

II. PURPOSES SELF-WARD.

Speaking broadly, the great end of an assembly is that the new life in individuals may be nourished and developed; that the graces and gifts of the Spirit may grow and find room for exercise. These things can be best brought about by close association with others of like origin, like aims, like needs and passions as ourselves. We need one another, for, as a rule, only by close, mutual intercourse do we make true progress in divine things, or "increase with the increase of God."

A correct translation of Eph. iv. 11, 12 shows that the gifts bestowed by the ascended Christ were "*for the perfecting of the saints UNTO the work of ministering*" (see R.V.). True it is that all are not evangelists, or pastors and teachers, or overseers; yet each one has some function to fulfil in the general up-building of the assembly. Undoubtedly, love is the secret of usefulness among the saints. A loving heart and consistent life tell far more than great knowledge or gift, and these may be cultivated by the humblest member of the body.

In Eph. iv. 7-16 a double truth is revealed:

- (1) Gifts by Christ are bestowed upon men;
 - (2) And these men are given to the Church.
- The risen and glorified Lord is the true and only *Source* of gift in the assembly, and, as

we have seen, the *object* of these gifts is "for the perfecting of the saints UNTO the work of ministering"; while for our comfort in these days, we may well remind each other that they are to continue among us, "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The One who bestows the gift continues to minister both grace and faith according to its measure (Eph. iv. 7; Rom. xii. 3). These are great and important principles for both individuals and assemblies to understand and act upon.

Let us now briefly notice a few specific directions as to our mutual obligations as Christians.

1. The great, all-embracing, oft-repeated New Testament command is to *love one another*. Such is the command. The *measure* of the love is to be as Christ has loved us, and the general result will be that even unbelievers will recognise us as Christ's disciples (John xiii. 34, 35). In the Bible sense of the word, "every one that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God." Whatever else a man may possess, if he has not this divine principle animating him he is nothing. Love will manifest itself in a variety of acts. Looking it up for the first time one will be surprised at the many different exhortations connected with the words "one another" and like expressions; but they all assume the possession of this greatest of all Christian graces—*love*. We will further briefly examine several of the more important of these obligations.

2. Our association with each other at the first follows from the mutual love of Christians. Since we are seeking to walk in love to our brethren, even the youngest and weakest, as Christ received us we receive them, for God's glory and their good (Rom. xiv. 15; xv. 7). There are occasions when we must refuse to receive, or even put away, one who is called a brother; but the usual procedure should be to *receive* one another as lovingly, definitely, and fully as Christ received us. Love will ever be more eager to find reasons for receiving a brother than reasons for refusing him. Were we more constrained by the love of Christ, we should

be less taken up with finely-spun theories as to reception. Love will lead us to seek to have all the fellowship we can with every believer who is in fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

3. *Praying one for another.* This, perhaps, is the most valuable service we can render each other, and it is a service in which all can have a part—the poor for the rich, as well as the rich for the poor; the young and inexperienced, as well as the aged and mature; sisters for brethren, as well as brethren for sisters. It is to be feared that God's children generally do not pray for each other as much as they might. To fulfil the Scripture precepts, such prayers must be definite, frequent, expectant, and fervent; individual and united, at home and in the assembly. There is a necessity for getting to know one another and the varying circumstances of our lives, if we are so to pray. Like all true service, it will involve self-denial, time, and spiritual and mental energy. But it is still written: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. vi. 18). The "and for me" of the following verse surely lays down the principle that the saints or servants of God personally known to us have special claims upon us in the matter of prayer. But we must pass on.

4. *Exhorting one another.* This ever has been, and ever will be a needed service among Christ's disciples, for it is easier to have a grasp of twenty doctrines in the head than it is to carry out one of them in the life. In order to the proper, healthy growth of an assembly, the gift of exhortation is second to none in importance. Teaching without exhortation will produce unpractical and unworking Christians; exhortation without teaching will lead to untaught and unreliable workers. The one class will be all head and no heart, the other all heart and no head. Hence the necessity in a Church of God of both teaching and exhortation. Notice the beautiful balance in the great Pauline epistles. The word of teaching is always applied to conscience, heart, and life by the word of exhortation. Let, then, him that exhorteth wait on his exhortation.

Some who cannot do it by words can yet do it effectively by their lives. For a general responsibility rests upon us, by example and precept, to provoke one another to love and good works, and so much the more as we see the day approaching (Heb. x. 24). And the nearer we can come to exhorting one another daily, the nearer we shall attain to the scriptural ideal (Heb. iv. 13).

5. *Forbearing and forgiving one another.* It has been said that every family should keep two bears—Bear and forbear. Certainly every Christian assembly should be well endowed with these two things; for the very closeness of the association will give frequent opportunity for the flesh to manifest itself in self-will, pride, impatience, and a whole host of like evils. Unless there are great spirituality and watchfulness, a knowledge of the workings of Satan and the natural heart, misunderstandings, bickerings, backbitings, and quarrels will be common. It was so in apostolic Churches, and the tendencies, if not the actual evils, will remain to the end. Hence the continued need of such exhortations as Col. iii. 12-14, &c.

6. *Doing good to each other, and bearing one another's burdens.* Children of God have the first claim upon us in the matter of doing good; according to the word: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, *especially* unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. vi. 10).

We often have on our lips the words, "Fellowship with the Lord's people," and by the expression we mean happy and healthful intercourse with each other in things spiritual; but in the New Testament a common use of the word is in connection with communicating to one another in matters temporal. (Among other passages see Rom. xii. 13, 2 Cor. viii. 4, Gal. vi. 6, Phil. iv. 14, Heb. xiii. 16.) This is a most important and practical aspect of "fellowship," yet one that is seldom spoken of.

A very wide application has that other injunction: "*Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ*" (Gal. vi. 2). There are burdens of sorrow, suffering, and bereavement, of temptation and poverty, of prosperity, position, and wealth. In all these saints should be watching for opportunities

to comfort, help, and pray for each other. The one who by grace seeks to fulfil these various obligations will truly be a well-employed man. He will have neither time nor heart for self-pleasing, murmuring, unkind words, or gossip. Let us be imitators of Christ, for in this, as in other matters, He is the great example of how we should love and serve one another. In view of these Scriptures, the language of an old hymn will not appear as mere sentimental exaggeration:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

"We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
The sympathising tear."

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.—III.

THE SITES OF ABRAHAM'S THREE ALTARS.

By F. S. ARNOT, Author of "Garenganze."

GENESIS xii. 6, 7.

"And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him."

GENESIS xii. 8.

"And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord."

GENESIS xiii. 18.

"Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and builded there an altar unto the Lord."

THE three altars here mentioned take in the whole of Abraham's life as a typical man, for Sarah died at Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron. They suggest progress in the divine life, and may be seen to correspond to the three stages spoken of in John's first epistle under the headings of "children," "young men," and "fathers."

Abram at Sichem, or Shechem (between the shoulders) reminds us of Deut. xxxiii. 12: "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; . . . he shall dwell between His shoulders." This is

the young convert's first experience—a sense of safety, a place on the Shepherd's strong shoulders. But Shechem is connected with the plains of Moreh (teaching). New-born babes in Christ are exhorted to desire the sincere milk of the Word (1 Peter ii. 2). And the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy to "give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. iv. 13). The Lord appeared to Abram at Shechem, and promised that the "*land*" should be given to his seed; so that although there is here the mere mention of the "seed," yet the land, and not so much the seed, is promised. (It is well to connect the "*land*" with the *place* of blessing, and of the fulfilment of all covenant promises. "That thy days may be long upon the *land*" does not merely mean a long life on earth. Cain's life was prolonged on the earth, but that was no blessing or joy to him.)

Without any intervening history Abram moves on to the site of his *second altar*. "A mountain between Bethel and Hai." It seems strange at first reading to find that no mention is made of the name of this mountain. But surely the significance of the two places, Bethel (house of God) and Hai (ruin), is thereby emphasised? Are we not taught on the one hand that "our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit," and on the other that within us there is a nature wholly bad and ruined, and that there is no middle state between these two extremes? Abram was tried by God at this his second altar by famine, and he failed, and failed again, losing the company of Sarah (grace) for a time, and depending on Egypt and Egypt's ways.

But he returns again to the altar "between Bethel and Hai" (Gen. xiii. 3). We all perhaps, like Abram, have fallen into mistakes, and sad backsliding, and sin, through not receiving what God here teaches us as to the two natures. God appeared to Abram at his second altar, and promised that his *seed* should be "as the dust of the earth." Now he has not only the assurance that the *land* should be his, but that power will be given to possess it, and to occupy every part of it, and to overflow to all other lands and to all the world, for one little "*land*" could never contain a seed so numerous!

Travelling south, Abram came to Mamre

(fatness), which is Hebron (fellowship), and there he builds his *third* altar. What growth in grace and in the knowledge of God these two names signify! Bethel, that seemed so dreadful to Jacob some time afterwards, is exchanged for Hebron, the place of intimate communion and friendship. Here at Abraham's *third altar* the Lord not only confirms the promises of "the land" and earthly seed already given, but adds the promise of a seed "innumerable as the stars of the heavens," compassing thus the whole world round as with a great enveloping firmament of blessing; and all is brought down to Abraham and made possible to him by the promise that Sarah should have a son, and that his name should be called Isaac (laughter); and surely Abraham laughed for joy, and well might we laugh too when we remember that where Abraham leaves off we begin. His pyramid stood on its apex, all being dependent on the coming one; ours stands on its base, for Christ *has come*, and in and through *Him* every promise given by God, and all heavenly and earthly blessings, are secured to us.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE FEAST OF REMEMBRANCE.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole.

THE advocates of a three-monthly or a six-monthly observance of the Memorial Feast find it hard to support that idea from Scripture. Indeed, they do not make the attempt. Nevertheless, in support of their practice they bring forward certain "reasonings," foremost among which is the argument that a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper must tend to make us *too familiar* with the ordinance, and thus lessen our sense of reverence on the solemn occasion. They accordingly try to persuade themselves that an interval of several months is desirable if those who communicate are to be duly impressed by the sacred ordinance. This may sound plausible enough; but if there is any special blessedness in keeping the feast with large intervals of time between, how does it come that the great Head of the Church, who foresaw everything, should have said unto His people, "As often as ye

eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come"?

We are told that a serious responsibility rests upon those who sit at the Communion Table, and that it involves a searching of themselves for which due time should be given. We are familiar with the argument; but it seems to us that if it were merely a matter of argument the weight of reasoning must be *against* those who contend for an observance of the Supper at rare intervals. We can easily understand how it comes that in the domain of popular religion there is a strong objection to "searching ourselves" in the presence of God. It is serious enough when this searching comes once in several months. To propose to have such a season of searching *every week* would be simply intolerable. To the carnal Christian and the unconverted communicant the Memorial Feast is not a privilege; it is an ordeal—something they would rather shun, if that could be accomplished without affecting their reputation as "members of the Church." Such communicants will have no desire to undergo the ordeal any oftener than is absolutely necessary to maintaining a decent Church connection. But with the children of God who truly long for the courts of the Lord's house it is a different matter. They have no desire to run a three-monthly or a six-monthly "searching" account with God. They value the Memorial Feast as a blessed privilege; and who is it that desires "blessed privileges" to be few and far between? We have surely reason to be thankful for the words which have been left on record: "And *upon the first day of the week*, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20. 7).

If a weekly observance of the Feast requires a frequent searching of ourselves, is it not well that it should be so? If the result is that we keep short accounts with God, have we not here occasion for praise? Is it not the case that in the experience of many believers the coming round of the weekly "breaking of the bread" has been the signal to them that their matters were not right with God? They were brought to a stand-still. Then followed humiliation, confession, restoration; and they sat down to show forth the great Death, thankful that

the swift return of the sacred ordinance had been the silent messenger from on high to their souls. But the prospect of "sitting down at the Table with Him" is not only restorative—it is *preventative*; and we may surely hope that the preventative covers a much larger field than the restorative. When a man of the world is on the eve of sitting down with one of the earth's notables, a certain fear is upon him. He is careful to avoid defilement, and tries to make himself as presentable as possible. In a far higher sense there is a fear and a carefulness with those who know that in a few short days they will be sitting down with the Lord of lords at His own Table. The occasion is blessed, they know; but they also know it to be solemn and searching; for they who will not judge themselves shall be judged by the Lord Himself!

As the result of experience and observation, we cannot say that the weekly observance of the Memorial Feast is calculated to foster indifference or undue familiarity. No one contends that such observance will be an absolute preventative against departure from God. The mere keeping of an external ordinance will not relieve us of the obligation to deal with God as to the condition of our own hearts. Israel may shout, "The ark of God," until the earth rings with the sound (1 Sam. 4. 5), but if they have not *the God of the ark* they shall find, and that right early, that it is perilous work to handle the holy things of God. And it is with God's ordinances as with God's ark. They who tread with unhallowed foot the sacred courts, or handle with careless hand the symbol bread and wine, shall find, perhaps right early, that such is perilous work.

Indifference and familiarity cannot long abide where the power of God is known. And the constant recurrence of the sacred Feast will be a repeated testimony against the carnal and indifferent, bearing witness that they are only playing with the edged tools of the sanctuary; while to the sincere and devoted worshipper the ordinance is a feast of fat things—"of wines on the lees well refined."

- In the case of children of God who profess to believe in coming together on the

first day of the week to break bread, it is to be feared that a weekly observance of the Feast is in some cases found to be too often. Those who watch for souls may be heard remarking, "What a host of absentees! The meeting was very thin to-day." When enquiry is made it is found that, with the exception of those detained by unavoidable circumstances, there are not a few who can give no proper account of themselves. They miscalculated the time, or they thought they would stay in, or they would rather not be pressed for reasons. In short, the merest trifle is sometimes sufficient as an excuse for being absent from the Feast. This reveals something seriously wrong, at least in individual cases. It declares one of two things—(1) that those believers have no scriptural understanding of the true nature of the Feast, or (2) that they are conscious they are not in a proper condition to be present at the ordinance. If it is only a matter of ignorance, *that* may be rectified by instruction; but if it is a matter of departure from God, this can only be rectified by restoration to Him.

The Master's words are clear and definite: "This do in remembrance of Me." Now, if I profess to hold the weekly breaking of bread, and am absent from the Feast when I could easily be present, how can I square my absence with my rejected Lord's command? If in fellowship with Him, shall I not be found saying, "I must keep this Feast"? Is this not the meeting which, as distinguished from all other meetings, is designed to manifest the oneness of all believers in their crucified and risen Lord? At certain other meetings we may be asked to hear a teacher or an evangelist; and we may go, or we may feel we are called to serve the Lord in some other way; but in the Feast of Remembrance we are invited by *the Lord of the Feast*. We go up to meet with *Him*, and to sit with *Him* at His own table. If the Lord interposes some call of duty, or some positive hindrance, to prevent us being there, we shall be in fellowship with Him in not being at the Feast; but if the way is open, we do well, like Abraham of old, to say to all would-be excuses, "Abide ye here, while I go yonder and worship." We must

beware of acting on the principle that if we examine ourselves, and come to the conclusion that we are not in a fit state to sit at the Table, we are quite justified in staying away. The *searching* of ourselves is designed to lead to the *judging* of ourselves. Searching utterly fails of its purpose if it only issues in our settling down in departure from God. It is not defeat but victory that is contemplated in the exhortation, "Let a man examine himself." Hence the word that follows, "And so *let him eat*."

REJOICING.

Rom. v. 1-12.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

AFTER the knowledge of complete justification before God—justice satisfied, and the One who undertook to satisfy it by His own death raised again—"we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Not the fearful looking for of judgment, but joyfully expecting the outbursting and outshining of the glory secured for us by the blood of Christ.

In the meantime we "rejoice" in the very things that used to make miserable—"tribulations"—we positively "glory" or "rejoice" (same word) in them. Why? Because the grace that has dealt so lavishly with us orders our path through the wilderness to our Canaan rest. But above all, God Himself is our Joy. "We joy in God." He has reconciled us to HIMSELF. He has been made real to our hearts, and satisfies to the full the deepest longings of our souls—not only the glory of God, but the *God* of the glory; not only the circumstances of the path, but the *God* of the circumstances.

Correspondence.

"ABILITY TO LEARN A LANGUAGE."

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

AN experienced servant of the Lord in China writes home as to the importance of any who go there as missionaries being able to learn the language, and the necessity of seeking resolutely to acquire it. As this is a matter which may well engage the attention of those at home who take a special interest in intending foreign workers, perhaps you will kindly give it a place

in your paper, as it affects other countries as well as China. The letter is as follows:

"Without a good knowledge of the language a missionary is useless in China. I wish there were a little more conscience in this matter of studying the language properly. If one does not get a *good hold* of the language during the first few years of his life out here by hard work, he is a cripple for all the rest of his life. Please urge upon the leading brethren at home the importance of only encouraging to come to China such men and women as are capable of persevering in the study of a difficult language."

Does this question not show the necessity of some home test as to ability to learn a language without waiting to find it out after a long, expensive journey such as to China? What is true of China is equally true of India or Africa, or any other country where a foreign language is used, and where one's usefulness or readiness in Gospel work so much depends on their ability to use a foreign tongue.

May we add that other questions even more important than the learning of a language should not be lost sight of—physical as well as spiritual.—Yours, in our Lord,

T. M'LAREN.

Glasgow, March 17, 1901.

BRISTOL MISSIONARY CONFERENCE.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

THE Missionary Conference arranged by Messrs. Wright, Bergin, Arnot, and others at Bristol, in conjunction with Editors of *Echoes of Service*, has come and gone. The object aimed at was that *believers in the West of England might be further stirred up to deeper interest in and prayer for the Gospel in other lands*. We trust this object has been attained.

The meetings commenced on 11th March with a prayer meeting, which was one in reality as well as in name. The next morning Dr. Neabey opened with one of his inimitable addresses on the missionary's great business—to preach CHRIST. Interesting accounts of Gospel labours were then given by Dr. Baedeker, Mr. Lamb (of North Africa), and Mr. Ashdown (of the Straits). In the afternoon Dr. Maclean gave a practical word on the building of the Tabernacle. (1) Every one in Israel could have a part therein; (2) The service was very varied; (3) But it must be "according to the pattern." These, and other points, were applied to God's present work in building the house for His eternal habitation. After this short accounts were given of work in China, Africa, and Australia by Messrs. Kingham, Schindler, and Brewster respectively. At the opening of the evening meeting Mr. A. Stewart (of Glasgow) gave a stimulating address

on Matthew xxviii. 16-20. He was followed by Mr. Hamer Broadbent on openings in Eastern Europe. Dr. Case then spoke of work in China, and the meeting was closed by Mr. Maynard giving some items of interest in regard to work in India.

The second day was opened with a searching and practical address on the call and qualifications for Gospel service by Mr. W. H. Bennet. Then brief accounts of Gospel labours were given by Mr. H. Pice (China), Mr. C. Hill (India), and Mr. F. Lane (Africa). The afternoon was occupied by brethren in considering matters likely to be helpful in the further labours of gospellers in other lands. At the same time ladies gathered in large numbers to hear accounts of labours from different missionary sisters, seven of whom spoke. Those present seem to have greatly enjoyed this meeting.

And then came the last and crowning meeting. The opening address was given by Mr. James Wright, the honoured director of the Ashley Down Orphanages. It was a most weighty and solemn utterance, which would require more space than can be here given to do it justice. Mr. Glenn (of the North African Mission) then gave a clear and interesting account of Mohammedanism, showing that it was a caricature and perversion of the Divine revelation. Then Mr. Rudland gave a short but most encouraging story of work for Christ in China, and stirred our hearts by telling us that during all their troubles the work had been carried on at the many stations opened in his "parish" by native labourers. The Conference was closed with an address by Mr. Stewart. It was a fitting close to the meetings, and fairly bristled with striking and inspiring thoughts and illustrations.

The Conference was held in Bethesda Chapel, that historic building where Mr. George Müller for so many years sought to minister needed truth, and truth in love, surely a very natural and proper centre for such a series of meetings. This is the first of such Conferences held there, but we judge it will not be the last. Throughout the meetings there was not a hitch or jar. From the first the attendances were large, and God was felt to be present, and the meetings grew in interest and power. Why should not similar series of meetings be arranged at other important centres in the British Isles? They would undoubtedly help in stirring us up to carry out the last command of our risen Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Mr. J. R. Caldwell was announced to address the Conference, but, to the regret of not a few, he was prevented from being present. J. N. C.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting Answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

HOW DOES LOVE COVER SIN?—What is the meaning of the latter part of 1 Peter iv. 8, "For charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins"?

"FOREVER" IN HEBREWS x.—Does the term "forever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

THE GREAT SINNER AND THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.—Please explain how Mark iii. 29 and John iii. 16 can be reconciled. See also the 15th Paraphrase, the last two lines of the first verse:

"For while the lamp holds on to burn
The greatest sinner may return."

Can the *greatest sinner* and the *whosoever* of John iii. 16 not include also the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost? If so, how is it stated in Mark iii. 29 that he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness*?

CAN THE SOUL DIE?—Please explain Isaiah liii. 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death." Again, verse 10: "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." Is it possible for the soul to die? What is the difference between soul and spirit?

HOW MANY OF ISRAEL SAVED?—In Romans ix. 27 it is said that "a remnant will be saved," and in Romans xi. 26, "all Israel will be saved." How can we account for the apparent contradiction?

THE SON OF MAN OF HEBREWS II. 6.—Please explain Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8. It has often been said that "Man" and "the Son of Man" in these verses is in reference to Christ, but if this is the correct view, then I fail to see the sense of the words "but we see Jesus" in verse 9. Was not Adam "crowned with glory and honour?" And was not "all things put in subjection under him?" (see Gen. ii. 15, 19, 20).

Owing to an attack of influenza, the Editor has been unable to prepare Answers for this Number.

CHRIST RISEN.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART I.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4).

I DESIRE first to note that the truth of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is an essential part of the Gospel. The Gospel is not merely concerning One who died, but concerning One who rose again, and who lives at the right hand of God.

I expect from this to find that in the Old Testament Scriptures His resurrection as well as His death is spoken of. The Jews did not understand that He would rise again from the dead. Even the disciples, apparently, did not take it in; it was a truth that they could not lay hold of. And their eyes, veiled by unbelief, or only partially opened, failed to see in the Old Testament Scriptures how the resurrection was the key that unlocked so many of its mysteries; but we have it here emphasised that His resurrection was "*according to the Scriptures.*"

When we were looking at the subject of the Crucifixion of the Lord Jesus we saw how abundantly the Old Testament Scriptures bore testimony beforehand to the facts connected with His death, and I would like now to look at some scriptures which in the Old Testament show us that it was God's purpose that He whom He had sent should rise from the dead.

But before doing so turn to one or two scriptures showing that the resurrection of Christ is an essential part of the Gospel.

Acts iv. 1, 2:

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead."

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, *i.e.*, a literal resurrection of the body. When the apostles preached concerning Jesus—when they preached the Gospel—they could not help preaching that God had raised Him from the dead, and so we read in verses 10 to 12:

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole."

"This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

So we see that this truth formed an essential part of the Gospel as preached by Peter.

Then look at Acts xxvi. 22, 23:

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

Then, if you look at the Gospel of John, xx. 30, 31:

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His Name."

We saw, when looking at the subject of the Crucifixion, that John called special attention to the fact of His death. He says in the 19th chapter, verse 35:

"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

Now, there are the two great facts of the Gospel—two facts that have to be believed—first, that He really, actually, literally died; and, secondly, that He was raised again from the dead. The death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we thus see, are the great fundamental truths of the Gospel. It is but a poor, weak Gospel that stops at the death and does not bring in the resurrection of the Lord; for, after all, what we need is not only salvation but a Saviour, and if He is not risen, then where is my living Saviour to save me every day? He is the Risen Son of God. And you notice that it is not "that ye might believe that Jesus *was* the Christ." Oh, no; it is not a mere historical fact—not as we would believe that Julius Cæsar was Emperor of Rome, or that Napoleon was a great conqueror in his day—not that Jesus *was* the Christ, and that He was crucified, and that He died; no; but

that "ye might believe that Jesus IS the Christ *now*; that though He was crucified, yet He rose again, and is exalted to the right hand of God. He is there, the Son of David, the promised Messiah, the One that all the Old Testament Scriptures predicted and foreshadowed, the One who is yet to reign in the very world that rejected Him. Jesus *is* the Christ: let us be clear about this.

Now look at some Old Testament Scriptures. Take first the 16th Psalm, verses 8 to the end:

"I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;

[*"Sheol"; that does not necessarily mean the place of torment, but the place of the departed Spirit, "Sheol" answering to the Greek word Hades.*]

neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.

We have here the two parts, the soul and the body—the soul, not left in Hades; the body, not suffered to see corruption.

"Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Here we have death, sheol, the grave, life, the presence of God, the right hand of God. What a little compendium of the great, fundamental truths of the New Testament and of the Gospel!

Next look with me at the 22nd Psalm. You know that the 22nd Psalm, up to a certain point, is the Psalm of the Cross. We were looking at the words, "They pierced my hands and my feet." Up to the middle of the 21st verse it is the Cross. In the middle of the 21st verse the change comes: "Thou hast heard me." Then in the 22nd verse:

"I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

There we see the *Resurrection*. We have the Cross in the first part of the psalm; we have the Resurrection in the second part of the psalm.

"Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel."

You can see clearly, in the light of the New

Testament, that what explains the change in the 22nd Psalm is the fact of His resurrection.

Then look at the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. Up to the 9th verse we have the Cross, or the grave. In the 10th verse:

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin."

Antitype of all the sin offering, Antitype of all the blood shedding of the Old Testament; and if that blood shedding was not a prefiguring of the death of Christ, then it was nothing—it had no meaning. But here is the Antitype of all the sin offering:

"When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin."

What is then to happen?

"He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

There is the Resurrection. First, the soul made an offering for sin. He is "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Then comes the Resurrection. He prolongs His days for ever and ever, the pleasure of Jehovah prospers in His hands, and He sees the results of the travail of His soul; and as He looks on that wondrous, redeemed, quickened, blood-bought company surrounding Him in the Eternal Glory, "He is satisfied." Yes, He will indeed be *satisfied*, on account of all that He suffered, in the glorious results of His redemption work. O may each one of us make it our business to see that our lives are such that He who loved us and bought us by His blood may find satisfaction in us!

Now look at Acts xiii. 32, 33:

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again."

Not simply that He sent Jesus, but that "He hath raised up Jesus again."

"As it is also written in the Second Psalm, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee."

What day was that? Without doubt that was the Resurrection morning, the day He raised up Jesus again: "As it is written, 'Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee.'"

And now look at the Book of Revelation, 1st chapter, 5th verse :

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth."

The "faithful witness," as He trod this earth, sent by God the Father; the "first begotten" from among the dead in resurrection; and the "Prince of the kings of the earth" when He comes as Son of man in His glory.

Meantime, He is the "first begotten." That was Paul's testimony—that He should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, for in all things He must have the pre-eminence. And when we read of the graves being opened, and the rocks rent, and the veil of the temple rent in twain; when we read that many bodies of the saints which slept arose, it was not until "after His resurrection." They were not raised before Him—He was the first that should rise.

Then look at Matthew xii. 40 :

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

There we have the Spirit's own witness that Jonah in the belly of the fish, underneath the billows and the waves of judgment, was a foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ, even as to the very duration of time that he was there, being a foreshadowing of the three days and three nights that the Son of man was in the heart of the earth.

Then one other passage in Hosea vi. 2 :

"After two days will He revive us, in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight."

A remarkable prophecy, in which the Spirit of God is looking at all God's redeemed people as quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with Christ; for, you see, with God there is no past, present, and future. With God all is present, and when God raised up the Lord Jesus Christ He quickened together with Him every believing soul. A wondrous truth more fully expanded in the New Testament.

Then glance a moment at the Book of Genesis, 8th chapter, 4th verse :

"And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat."

We know that the ark was a remarkable type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those that were in the ark were saved; all outside of the ark perished. Those that are in Christ are saved; all that are not in Christ shall assuredly eternally perish. O what a position for anyone to be in!

We find that the ark rested on the top of Ararat on the very same day that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. The Passover was eaten and He was slain on the 14th of the month, and three days after brings the seventeenth day. And the month is most probably the same, because at the time of the appointment of the Passover in the 12th chapter of Exodus,

[*"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."*]

what had been the seventh month became the first month.

The Jews have two calendars—the political and the ecclesiastical calendar, so to speak. In the one Abib is the first month, and in the other it is the seventh month, so that in all likelihood it was exactly on the same day and the same month that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, showing how God had foreseen and appointed all these wonderful details.

"HE IS RISEN."

"COME, see the place where Jesus lay!"

The Lord arose ere dawn of morn;
Life ushered in the Gospel day,
Death's bands are snapt and fetters torn.

"Come, see the place where Jesus lay!"

'Twas but a little while the grave
Could hold the Lord of Life a prey.
The Son of God: He rose to save.

"Come, see the place where Jesus lay!"

Nor weep like Mary sad and lone.
No friend hath borne Him hence away,
Or soldier dared to move the stone.

"Come, see the place where Jesus lay!"

From cruel hands and torture free'd;
The death-robcs lie and moulder may,
The Lord's not here—He's risen indeed. F.

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.—IV.

SODOM AND BABYLON.

By F. S. ARNOT, Author of "Garenganze."

GENESIS xiv. 1-12.

"And it came to pass Anraphel, King of Shinar made war with Bera, King of Sodom and took Lot, who dwelt in Sodom, and all his goods, and departed."

LET us try and learn a lesson from the way in which *Shinar*, the country of which Babylon was the capital, and *Sodom* are brought together here.

Babylon lay far from the borders of the Promised Land; Sodom stood close in near to its very vitals. Babylon seems always to have been strong in government, a conquering and enslaving power. Sodom, on the other hand, seems to have been weak and defenceless—an ensnaring and seductive city rather than a conquering one.

Babylon stands for opposition to God, in the Old Testament, much in the same way as antichrist stands for opposition to Christ in the New—the city was built of "bricks for stones, and slime for mortar:" a counterfeit city, that city, perhaps, to which the patriarchs might have returned had they had a mind to; but they sought a better city, "that had foundations whose maker and builder was God."

Lot had no idea of going to Babylon, but he could not resist the plains of Jordan, and afterwards Sodom; so he forsook the hills around Mamre (fatness) and Hebron (fellowship) without taking the King of Shinar and his allies into account, for the level plains offered a poor defence, and the slime pits of the vale of Siddim barred all escape from an active foe.

The New Testament passage that suggests an application of all this is found in 1 Tim. i. 19: "Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." Satan cannot attack us so long as we keep to our mountain fastnesses, but he allures us down to the plains. Conscience is trifled with and fellowship broken. We cease to feed daily on the fat pastures of the Word, and before we know we are carried off into the far country of open apostasy, making thus "shipwreck of faith." A book appeared some short time

ago entitled "The Secret History of the Oxford Movement"; but who could write the secret history of the soul's departure from the Lord? How subtle and seductive the beginnings are! how dreadful and sad the endings! But there was one left on the mountain top who remembered Lot and ran to his rescue. It was well for Lot. Abraham is here a type of our Advocate with the Father, our *Living Redeemer*. His conduct also towards Lot reminds us that we have to thank God for men of communion and prayer still left amongst us who "naturally care for our souls."

THE CORNER-STONE DISALLOWED

By FRANKLIN FERGUSON, Napier, N.Z.

"Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe He is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Peter ii. 6-8).

RIGHT glad should we be to think that the Scripture quoted had only an application to the unsaved sinners of the world. But we are forced to the saddening conclusion, however, that God's children, in general, are vastly in need of a plain, straightforward exhortation on the subject. For is it not a fact that the "disallowal" of Christ by Christians is becoming prevalent even in quarters where least suspected? And shall we not cry against this sin? Because some have separated from the world's religious systems, judging them to be Babylon, and are "gathered out" (as we say) to the Name of Jesus alone, yet they are not on that account past all possibility of a "disallowal" of that blessed One. A right *position* is of indisputable importance; still, a right *condition* of heart is essential to the last degree.

Wordly friendships are fast crushing the bone and muscle of Christian testimony. When Balak could not induce Balaam to curse Israel, then he and his people showed themselves agreeable, and, with pretended friendliness, called the Hebrews to their

sacrifices. Moreover, unholy alliances were contracted with the daughters of Moab, so that the fierce anger of the Lord was kindled against His people whom He had redeemed and separated from the nations, and whom He meant to keep *always* and *altogether* separate, that they might be a special people unto Himself. "Our God is a jealous God." His anger burns when our affections are after others. Solemn was the chastisement that fell on Israel for "disallowing" Him—a plague swept off twenty-four thousand of them. In the Epistle of James we read: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be [is determined to be] a friend of the world is [is constituted] the enemy of God" (James iv. 4). The language is awfully severe, for the words are addressed to *saved souls*.

There is not seen, as a general rule, that holy zeal for families which characterised Moses' demand to Pharaoh: "There shall not a hoof be left behind." Noble declaration! Blessed sentiment! It is painful in our day to find parents, well versed in truth, bringing up their families in such manner that they acquire a greedy liking for worldliness in its attractively varying forms. Eli restrained not his sons; neither do they. Youthful wishes are gratified; for what others have, they must, of course, have also. Can it in anywise be questioned that there will be numbers of fathers and mothers who shall see their children "go away into everlasting punishment," all because of the worldly bringing-up they gave them, and for not checking them when young? To "disallow" Christ in the training and education of families shall yet be proven a fearful thing. The history of Lot's household is no isolated instance. So far as we may learn from Scripture, his entire family are with the wailing multitude of the damned, and the father responsible for it all too—himself a saved man. What an appalling wreck of a home! Part of his children perished in the fire that fell on Sodom; his wife was judged almost as soon as she left the doomed city; whilst his two daughters who escaped with him to the mountains shortly afterwards proved themselves to be two of the most

morally depraved women that ever lived. Compare Genesis xix. 12-38 and 2 Peter ii. 6-9. What a different home was Abraham's. Why should Lot ever have left his uncle's company and a path of fellowship with God? In Nehemiah's day, so serious, indeed, had family matters become, that with many of the Jews their children "spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language." From such a distressing state of things one turns to 1 Chronicles xxv. 5, 6 with not a little pleasure: "And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. *All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord* with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman." This text deserves a handsome frame and hanging up in every "Christian" household. Think of it, you fathers and mothers—a family of seventeen children all serving in the house of the Lord! Heman must have been a very glad father and a thoroughly godly man.

Many parents who have professedly been separated unto God are nevertheless desirous that their children shall be introduced into what is called "good society." Friendships are sought after and encouraged with those who are strangers to the ways of God. They are invited out to things you once protested against; but having tasted "the pleasures of sin," you cannot restrain them. And now a rod is being formed to smite your own back. Perhaps your children do get on from a worldly view, but far, how very far, from God. With aching heart you notice their disinclination for spiritual things, and wish (oh, how you wish!) that you had never sought for them earthly position. The social evenings, the worldly company, the time spent in frivolities, the places of entertainment and amusement frequented, and "society" pleasure parties shall, all of it, have a remembrance, bitter as wormwood, in eternity. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." But you departed from the way of the Lord, and "disallowed" the Corner-stone in your family affairs. "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast

forsaken the Lord thy God when He led thee by the way? And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know, therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts" (Jer. ii. 17-19).

Just a word to young Christians. Beware of going to places where Christ is "disallowed." "Sacred" concerts, and entertainments got up for "good causes," are most unhealthy and soul-withering in their influence, if you frequent them. Usually in the performers you have people who are not only unsaved, but real enemies of the Cross of Christ. You may soon find out the truth of it by speaking to them about "eternal realities." Shall you sit down and hear the Lord's songs sung by such people? For though they take His Name on their lips they "disallow" Him in their company. And, pray, are you badly in need of being entertained by the like? Then as to amusements, don't you think it argues very badly for Christianity when a believer fancies it needful to go down to the world's level to get an hour or two's enjoyment? Let them see, rather, that our joy in Christ is so much superior to what they have, that we are spoiled for anything besides. Your time is coming—have patience. In the meantime, do not be where Christ would not be welcomed, and where it would seem out of place to speak of Jesus.

Sisters in the Lord are not beyond needing a wholesome word of exhortation on their "At homes," "Calls," and "Afternoon teas." What is the purpose these things usually serve? Do they tend to freshen up the soul? As you sip your tea out of elegant-looking china, and conversation is at a steady run, is it concerning "Him whom my soul loveth"? We would commend Christian women when paying calls to have their Bible in hand or in bag, and when sitting chatting open the inspired Word. It is not unlikely that you would

make the discovery that at some of the places it has been your habit to visit, the Corner-stone can be "disallowed" of women as well as men, and everybody feels "queer" when the name of Jesus is mentioned. Imagine what would happen at some of these "afternoon teas" if someone present started to tell her conversion, and to enquire of the others if they had one to tell.

Let us come now to the places of business and the work or trade by which a livelihood is gained. What of these? Honest dealing, clean and above-board transactions, commercial enterprise regulated by divine principles, heavenly guidance daily sought upon all affairs of trade—this, and *this only*, will pass with God. We know perfectly well it is said "Business is business," and that "if a man is to succeed he must not be continually having scruples of conscience as to this or that transaction." Well, earth's maxims are not current in the kingdom of God's dear Son, and if you fail to figure out well at the judgment-seat of Christ you will be a poor man, whatever else you may have been on earth. Allow the Corner-stone His place in your business. The bank balance might not be so large in some cases, but, what is far better, a substantial deposit has been placed to your credit above each time your will gave place to the Lord's will. There is an unholy keenness to get on that grieves the holy Spirit of God—a haste to get rich which does not scruple at what, forsooth, are termed "trifles." Come, let there be a determination to have your matters so regulated that Christ's presence would not prove an embarrassment if it could be that He visited you in person. If it were known for certain that the Master of the House would return in a week's time from now, it would not require a very wise man to conjecture what would take place. To go on in a careless manner, "disallowing" the Corner-stone, soothing the conscience with the lie, "My Lord delayeth His coming," and acting like the ungodly, is doing as the fool doeth.

Do not refuse the exhortation because of its plainness, like many in Israel in the days of their declension, but suffer it as a message from the Lord, "who trieth the hearts."

HABAKKUK'S EXPERIENCES.

By WILLIAM COLLINGWOOD.

THE outlook was very dark. He could see only iniquity and grievance, spoiling and violence, strife and contention. Judgment there was none. By far the worst was that the heaven over him seemed as brass. He cried to God the Righteous Judge, but He did not hear—"would not save." Rather than this, the Lord was about to send against His people the Chaldeans, who with unsparing cruelty would execute His judgments for their sins. His only relief is in the thought of God's righteousness in thus chastening His people, though He used as His rod some who were still worse than they.

The opening of the second chapter finds him watching to hear what the Lord will say to his enquiry (margin). An answer comes, but not in deliverance such as he sought. His cry had been "How long?" and he is told that he still must wait. God's appointed time has not yet come. Nor is he told how long it will be before it comes. The promise is there. He is to write it plainly, so that faith may run in the light of it. For surely "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." But nothing to say how long.

The Lord had His appointed time for Israel's deliverance from Egypt. He told Abraham it should be four hundred years, giving him His reasons for the delay. The iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. At the end of the appointed time, "even the self-same day, it came to pass."

And He had His appointed time for the promised coming of the woman's Seed. But of this He did not say how long. He came in the fulness of the time. It was four thousand years.

He told Jeremiah His appointed time for delivering His people from Babylon. Daniel read it, and could plead with Him not to defer it.

And He has an appointed time to give to the Son the heathen for His inheritance, to put His enemies under His feet. But this He has "kept in His own power." He has not bound Himself by any word as to how long. All attempts to calculate years from

any supposed data in Scripture are fallacious—are wrong.

But "the just shall live by faith." Faith sees the promises afar off, takes God's Word for things not seen as yet; and faith is not lifted up against God's judgments, but is humbled under them, and hopes in His righteous mercy.

By tracing from the beginning the experiences of this man of God, we may better understand and appreciate the conclusion to which he is brought—the joyful song with which they end.

The third chapter finds him still praying. He has heard what God said to him; and it made him afraid: "His belly trembled, his lips quivered at the Voice." The thought of deliverance only to come in the unknown future leaves him overwhelmed with the surrounding sorrows. Cannot the Lord give a reviving "in the midst of the years"? Will He not in wrath remember mercy, and even now make known His power in some present deliverance?

No such answer is given. The pall of dark cloud still hangs over the scene. But faith now pierces the gloom. He is learning for himself the great lesson which he was to teach to all succeeding ages, that "the just shall live by faith." From the things that are seen he turns away his eyes to the written Word, and gets a view of his God as He is revealed there. He remembers His wonders of old. He traces in their sublime majesty the footsteps of Jehovah in the day when He went forth for the salvation of His people; what He did in the land of Egypt and at the Red Sea, at Sinai and in the wilderness, to make Himself an everlasting Name. In the contemplation of this God as his God, so great, and good, and glorious, his depression disappears, he gets the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. A song of triumph takes the place of his cry. All that he was so earnestly asking for, may go: he is satisfied with God. "Although the figtree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in

the stall; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

He has found the possession of the Lord for his God a present satisfying portion. "The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments!"

Habakkuk was not alone in such experiences. Many a record of the like is found in the Word, down to John in Patmos. Lying as one dead at the feet of Jesus, he felt the Right Hand laid on him, with the "Fear not! I AM He that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I AM alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hades and of death."

Here, too, is our cure for discouragement. There is plenty to depress us if we look that way: the world full of sin and sorrow; in the Church, declension and failure; one's own service seeming perhaps fruitless; one's self so weak and ready to halt; trials within and without. The promise, sure as it is, is yet for an appointed time: we have still to wait for it; but by faith learning more of what we have in Him who in His death has triumphed over all our foes, who sits at the right hand of power, who, with us, waits till the appointed time when the Father shall make His enemies His footstool, who is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever, and whose ways are everlasting. It is thus we may find in Him a present satisfying portion. The rest will all come in God's appointed time.

"Though now for a season, if needs be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

THE EYES OF JESUS.

"His eyes are the eyes of doves" (Song of Sol. v. 12).

"His eyes are as a flame of fire" (Revelation i. 14).

"HIS eyes are as the eyes of doves"—
What soul need fear their gaze to
Within those homes of tenderness [meet?]

Divinest pleadings find retreat,
Pleadings which woo while they control
The wondering, willing, melting soul.

No wrath is there; unuttered Love

With silent eloquence demands
The yielding of the sinner's heart;

Love's sign—those wounded feet and hands,
That sign once fully seen and known,
And Jesus conquers—reigns alone.

Those dove-like eyes! Their tender gaze
Doth to the captive soul impart
(And then draw forth) sweet notes of praise,
Those sounds which charm Emmanuel's
As doth the Æolian harp respond [heart
To each light breath of zephyr fond.

He gazes on the soul He loves—

What untold rapture in His eyes!
The price is paid, the victory's won,
He triumphs o'er His blood-bought prize.
O Jesu's love! in sweet amaze
The power nigh fails to sing Thy praise!

But now another note must sound
To celebrate this perfect love,
A love which, while it doth caress,
All sin abhorrent must reprove;
Sin blackest seen by His keen sight
On those whom He hath clothed in white.

So pure the garment that they wear,
Each clad in God's own righteousness,
His searching eyes of fire discern
All stains that cloud that holiness:
Love cannot tolerate a thought
Which mars His work divinely wrought.

His eyes no longer melt in love,
But burn in judgment on the sin;
Like flames of fire they pierce the soul,
And make it mourn the guilt within.
The same deep love, in sterner guise,
"Scatters all evil with its eyes" (Pro. xx. 8).

O, perfect union! grace and truth
Combine to conquer, cleanse, and make
The Bride He won at such a cost
Spotless and fair for His dear sake,
That she may "walk with Him in white,"
The King's companion and delight.

Search me, O God, and know my heart,
With eyes of fire consume its dross,
Then win with melting tenderness
My soul to "count all things but loss"
For love of Thee—won to Thy breast,
The Bride's sweet home of perfect rest.

DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

PASSAGE READ—PSALM XL. 7.

PART I.—The complete revolt of man against God.

PART II.—The Perfect One who delighted to do the will of God.

PART III.—Following the path of obedience to the will of God.

PART II.

"Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the Book it is written of Me. I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within My heart."

MARK what this is. It is One who has been in intimate acquaintance with the whole transaction in the Garden of Eden; with the whole revolt of the world in the days of Noah; with the further revolt of the world after the flood. It is One who has watched the whole course of it, and knew what it would *tend to and end in*. And He says, "I will come into this world; I will come down into the midst of this utter revolt, and there in the midst of it *I will do the will of God*." What a stupendous undertaking!

One single Person comes down from the bosom of the Father; takes upon Himself human flesh; is contented to be born and grow up, to live simply as a poor man. And He comes forth at the age of thirty into His public service before the world. And from the time that He was born and laid in the manger till the time He said on the Cross, "It is finished," *He did nothing but the will of God*. Oh! how God looked down with infinite delight upon His Holy One, His obedient One, the One every thought of whose heart was in perfect harmony with His own, who never on one occasion in the smallest thing set up His will against God's will. He knew the will of God because He was always willing to do the will of God.

The reason of our ignorance of the will of God is because we are not willing to do it; we are afraid of what it will cost us. The Lord said:

"If any man will [be willing to] do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii. 17).

If we were willing to do His will we would soon get more knowledge of God's will.

The Lord Jesus knew He would meet with difficulties in coming into this revolted world to do the will of God, but it was His *delight*

to manifest and assert the blessedness of God's will in the midst of such misery; and we should delight to do God's will too.

Look now at John iv. 34:

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

Oh, mark these words! "We do the things we ought not to do"—we sometimes confess it—but we think very little about leaving "undone the things we ought to have done." What does the Lord Jesus say? Virtually, "My meat is to do what I ought to do, and to leave nothing undone." He *finished* His work; He did all that God willed Him to do; He left nothing undone that God willed Him to do. What a perfectly obedient One! And that is God's perfect standard. When anybody talks about perfection, that is the weight they have to weigh themselves against; it is that perfectly obedient One.

Look now at John v. 30:

"I can of Mine own Self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

You know how habitual it is with us to seek the gratification of our own will; that is just the very nature of the flesh. But the Lord Jesus never considered Himself; He sought not His own will; His one concern was to know and do the will of Him that sent Him. Our judgment, because of self-seeking, is biassed. His, never!

Turn now to John vi. 37-39:

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me."

You see there is the asserting of the will of God. Oh, if it were not for God's will no one would ever come; you and I would never have come to the Lord Jesus but for the will of God.

"And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Why?

"For I came down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

What sort are they that come to Him? There is a woman at His feet weeping bitter tears over them; and the Pharisee says in his heart, "If He had known what sort of a woman that was, He would never have let her touch Him." Was He going to cast

her out? No; she was one whom God had given Him, and He would not cast her out. We would not have chosen the ones God has chosen.

There is Saul of Tarsus breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Church; and for the glory of God, Jesus reveals Himself to that one, and saves him. He is doing the Father's will; He is saving the ones His Father has given Him.

And if we are saved to-day, it is the Lord Jesus working out the will of God in us. He has not chosen except in accordance with the eternal purpose of God.

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

He is keeping us, and He will raise us up and present us in His own glory before God, all in fulfilment of the will of God that He has undertaken to perform.

"Lo, I come. . . . I delight to do Thy will, O My God."

He is doing it still. He asked that He might be glorified by the Father just that He might glorify God again. And just when He has the kingdom ordered according to God's perfect will, He will deliver it up to the Father. There is God's will completed. He will thus show that God's will asserted and perfected means perfect blessedness.

Look at another passage or two on this point. Matthew xxvi. 37-39:

"And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with Me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Verse 42:

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done."

Verse 44:

"And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words."

In all the record of the life of the Lord Jesus there is nothing to compare with this. Up to this point it was the delight of the Lord Jesus to do His Father's will; there was no

conflicting will. How, then, could it be arranged, how could it be brought about, that the holy, spotless, obedient Son should have a will that has to bow down to the will of the Father? It is brought about in the process of redemption.

He is brought now face to face with being "made sin for us," face to face with bearing the "curse" of a holy God upon a rebel race. He is face to face with this great work He had undertaken to do: to stand as surety for the guilty, and there, in their place, to be forsaken of God, and to drink to the very dregs the cup of God's wrath. He could not desire that; His holy soul must shrink from that. He draws back, and in perfect submission prays, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." He prays three times the same words, but does not repeat it again. Three times, but no oftener, He prays that it may pass from Him, "but if not, then not My will but Thine be done." No matter what it may cost Him; no matter what the insufferable anguish; no matter though it be the hiding of the face of God from Him, the stroke of judgment coming down upon Him, all the powers of darkness being let loose upon Him, His going under the power of death, still let it come; one thing is dearer than all else to Him—THAT THE WILL OF GOD MIGHT BE DONE.

Some people when they get into trouble, and see no way out of it, say: "Well, we will just be resigned to the will of God." That is a very good conclusion; but here it was not only *resignation*, it was His *whole soul's desire* that the will of God might be done, no matter what it cost Him.

THREE DELIVERANCES.

2 Cor. i. 10.

- I. He hath delivered (2 Cor. i. 10) from guilt and death (Rom. v. 8, 9; Gal. i. 4; Heb. ii. 14, 15).
- II. Doth deliver (2 Cor. i. 10) from the power of Satan (Acts xxvi. 18); 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18; John xvii. 15; Dan. iii. 17, 25-28; vi. 16-23).
- III. Will yet deliver (2 Cor. i. 10). He shall confirm you to the end (1 Cor. i. 8; xv. 51-57).

E. A. H.

ABISHAI, ONE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole.

PAPER I.

A BISHAI, the son of Zeruiah and brother of Joab, occupied a prominent and honoured position in Israel in the days of David the king. No doubt, so far as official position was concerned, he was overshadowed by the mighty Joab, the general of the king's army. But when it came to making up the roll of David's mighty men, Joab's name was conspicuous by its absence; while that of Abishai is found in a foremost place among those who were great in the kingdom. Morally, there was no comparison between the two men. No one can fail to have his righteous indignation aroused in reading the history of the crafty, scheming, revengeful, and murderous Joab. He had by one dexterous exploit—the capture of the stronghold of Zion from the Jebusites—secured the position of captain of the host; and we know how he held that position with a grasp of iron, compassing in the most treacherous manner the death of Abner, and serving Amasa in a similar fashion, simply because they were possible rivals to himself in the leadership of the armies of Israel. The blood of the innocent and the excellent was of no account in the eyes of Joab, if they stood in the way of his ascendancy in Israel. His brother Abishai was a man of a different stamp. He had his failings, and Scripture does not excuse them; but he was devoted to the Lord's anointed, and it does not appear that he ever manifested the slightest anxiety as to his position in Israel. We do not find him thirsting for place or power; neither do we find him jealous of others who had risen high in the kingdom. He did not seek for fame, yet his name is on the roll of the mighty: Joab sought fame with all his heart, yet his name is not there.

The first mention of Abishai's name in the Scriptures is in connection with a striking and somewhat picturesque incident in the days when David, under the persecution of Saul, was being hunted like a partridge on the mountains. It was night, and the fugitive king, with his small band of faithful followers, had come to the borders of the

camp within which Saul and his men were sleeping. David resolved to go down to the spot where his enemy was lying, and wished someone to accompany him on this delicate, and perhaps dangerous, enterprise. Accordingly we hear him say, "Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?" And Abishai said, "I will go down with thee" (1 Sam. xxvi. 6). This answer, in the language of combined courage and devotion, gives us the keynote to Abishai's whole life. He was a lover of the Lord's anointed. His personal interests were not considered. He was prepared to face danger, even death itself, in allegiance to David. He was prepared to go forth, in the dark night, to that hostile camp, for he knew there was one with him on whose head the anointing oil had come, and whose right it was to reign, albeit he was despised and rejected by the many at that time.

This readiness to come to the help of the rejected David was characteristic of Abishai. At times, indeed, his zeal was prone to manifest itself in a way that savoured too much of "carnal weapons" to commend itself to the rejected king. But we must remember that he lived in an atmosphere of war, and if he was tempted to suggest summary measures, these were always directed against the *enemies* of the king. There was never any doubt of Abishai's fidelity. He comes before us with that soul-stirring declaration, "I will go down with thee." And from first to last this seems to have been his watchword.

"Who will go down with me?" Let us take these words from the domain of Old Testament history and apply them to our walk and testimony to-day. Can the anointed ear not hear the voice of David's Lord saying, "Who will go down with Me?" Is this not the secret of rest, of purity, of fruit-bearing—to *go down with Him*? There can be no true "promotion" if we are not prepared to go down with Him. The question is not, "Who will go up?" If it were a matter of chief seats and prominent positions, and honours and dignities, there would be no lack of volunteers; but it is a matter of abasing one's-self, and *going down*. There is nothing here for the flesh to glory in. There must be the counting of the cost—yea, the reckoning of death—in the case of

all who would go down at the call of Christ. Yet they shall not go down alone. They go down "*with Him*"—with Him who humbled Himself, and made Himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto death.

When David and Abishai came to the camp of Saul they found every one fast asleep. Their relentless enemy was now in their power. In the estimation of Abishai it seemed the right and proper thing to take advantage of their opportunity. "Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered up thine enemy into thy hand this day: now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear to the earth at one stroke, and I will not smite him the second time." This was not the only occasion on which the fleshly zeal of Abishai manifested itself, and had to be rebuked by the faithfulness of David. Judged according to the spirit of those times, it might not have appeared a very dastardly act to suddenly cut off a sleeping enemy (compare Judges iv. 21). But David, though he had served long in the school of war, was being taught in the school of God. He would not, by any act of his, hasten the day when he should stand forth acknowledged as the true king of Israel. Faith can ever bide its time. It is only unbelief and carnal wisdom that would "hasten the blessing" by some fleshly blow; yet the blessing is never hastened by such means. "Destroy him not," said David; and then he showed Abishai that one of three things would happen to their sleeping enemy—(1) "The Lord shall smite him; or (2) his day shall come to die; or (3) he shall go down into the battle and perish"—which last was the fate of the unhappy Saul. "But," said David, "take the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go." Abishai had thus to forego his purpose of vengeance. We are unable to determine to what extent he grasped the principles which guided David in those trying moments, but we never find that he manifested any resentment when David showed unto him "a more excellent way."

Before leaving the present episode in the career of Abishai it is instructive to observe that the ease with which he was able to remove the spear and the cruse of water from

the centre of that camp was due to the fact that a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon Saul and all his company. For the purposes of the kingdom it was needful that this should be so; and the deep sleep that night had come from God. But for that profound slumber David's purpose could not have been effected, nor the acknowledgment wrung from the anguished heart of Saul that he had "played the fool and erred exceedingly." David's righteousness was vindicated, and his persecutor was constrained to say, "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail." All this can be directly traced to that deep sleep from the Lord. But He who sends sleep for His own purposes may withhold it for the same reason. We read (Esth. vi. 1): "On that night could not the king sleep." There was a special reason why Ahasuerus could not sleep that night, however accidental the circumstance might appear in his own eyes. The destruction of God's people had been devised by the wicked Haman, and it was needful for the carrying out of the divine counsels that Mordecai should be promoted to power in those realms. But how was this to be brought about? In a very simple way, speaking after the manner of men. When the doom of the remnant of Israel seemed to be about sealed, "on that night" the king's sleep fled from him. To pass the weary hours the diary of the palace history was read before the king. Mordecai's name was there—honourably mentioned as having prevented the king's assassination. Ahasuerus at once determined upon appointing the aged Jew to a high position in the kingdom, and he was thus the means of delivering his brethren with a wonderful deliverance. Yet the "pivot event" in that deliverance was the seemingly simple circumstance that on a particular night could not the king sleep; but it was all deep-laid in the counsels of heaven. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

WHEN thou art afflicted God will allow thee to groan, but not to grumble.

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—V.

BONDAGE AND DELIVERANCE.

By W. H. BENNET.

HAVING spoken of the glory awaiting the children of God, whose proper pathway here below is one of suffering with Christ (Rom. viii. 17, 18), the apostle declares that "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (verse 19). The word rendered *creature* should throughout these verses be *creation*; it has reference to the whole terrestrial creation, and embraces all that was placed under the dominion of man at the beginning. The words "*in hope*" should be connected with verse 19, the rest of verse 20 being read as a parenthesis.

The solemn parenthetical statement reminds us that, though at the first "God saw everything He had made, and behold it was very good," it fell, through the sin of its head—Adam—into its present state of corruption and disorder. How beautiful must creation have been when God pronounced His "finished" work "very good"! As Dr. Winslow says: "We read of no blight resting on the material world, of no suffering in the brute creation, prior to the period of Adam's transgression. The winds blew not rudely then, the verdure withered and died not then, the flowers drooped and faded not then. There were no tornadoes, no earthquakes, no volcanoes, no electric clouds. Innocence and happiness reigned over the irrational creation. There was nothing to darken, to hurt, or destroy." Angels could delight in the work of God's hands (Job xxxviii. 7), and God Himself could take pleasure in visiting and speaking with the man whom He had formed in His own image and constituted the head of all things here below.

But that fair creation soon became "*subject to vanity*." How expressive is the word *vanity*! Look at a fruit tree in early spring, full of blossoms and the promise of fruit. Suddenly a biting frost cuts the blossoms; the tree for the season becomes barren, and *fails to answer the end for which it exists*. Such is the present condition of creation as a whole. The question, How came this to pass? is answered in the verse before us. It was

"not willingly"—not by its own will or choice, not through any inherent principle of decay—but "by reason of him who subjected it," that is, through the sin of him who was its head, and in whom, by the appointment of God, it stood or fell. In the words of Dr. Ellicott, "Man's sin, yea, one man's sin, cast all this shadow on creation"; "sin was such that it spread over a whole creation, marred the harmonies of a world, pervaded the substance and the produce of a fruitful earth, entered into all the varied realms of animal life"; and again, "I do not doubt that the counter-law, by which the whole creation has been made subject to vanity, is to be referred to no other epoch than the fall of man."* It is the effect of that fall that we see on every hand, and hear in the groaning of "the whole creation." "Cursed is the ground for thy sake" was the solemn sentence of the Creator, and under that curse "*the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*" (verse 22).

But there is a "*hope*," for the fulfilment of which "the *earnest expectation* of creation waiteth." The word rendered "earnest expectation" means a straining forward with outstretched neck, and expresses the attitude of one who is eagerly watching for something. Thus, by a bold and beautiful figure, creation is represented as looking for the revelation of the now hidden glory of "the sons of God," in eager expectation of its own deliverance from "the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (verse 21). That hope will be fulfilled, for creation "*shall be delivered*." It shall be freed from its bondage, delivered from its vanity, and its liberty will answer to that of God's children, being consequent upon their manifestation. Of this there will be a great foretaste in the millennial kingdom of our Lord, especially in the land of Israel—God's "holy mountain"—which "shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," and in which nothing "shall hurt nor destroy." Then shall the word be fulfilled: "Ye shall go out

* I purposely quote the words of some who can scarcely be charged with ignorance of scientific researches, &c., and am thankful to find the expression of such regard for the teaching of Scripture on this solemn subject.

with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fig tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isa. xi. 9; lv. 12, 13).

Yet for the *full* realisation of this hope we must look forward to the "*new earth*." Only when "there shall be *no more death*" and "*no more curse*" will all traces of *vanity* be for ever blotted out, and creation be worthy of its appointed Head. That Head is CHRIST. He is "the last Adam," of whom "the first man Adam" was a type. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and, when He had fashioned all things, He "formed *man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and constituted him the head and ruler of all things on earth. But instead of maintaining his place of dominion by continuing in subjection to God, he yielded to temptation, and by his *disobedience* brought in death and disorder.

In due time He who once "spake and it was done," will declare from His throne, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. xxi. 5). But this time the order is reversed, for He who is "the Beginning of the creation of God," as well as its Head, has given full evidence of His subjection to the will of God by *obedience* even unto death; He now lives in resurrection glory at God's fight hand, and will never fail to make His dominion over all things contribute to the glory of God (John xvii. 1). By unfallen hosts, as well as by all His redeemed, He is already owned as fully worthy of the high position He fills and of the glory that must ever be His. He who "endured the Cross" will "bear the glory," and the new creation, which will owe its stability to His Cross, will never cease to be worthy of the description that tells of unfailing blessedness—"the creation of GOD."

A GRACIOUS soul grieves more that God by his sin is grieved and dishonoured, than he himself is afflicted and chastened for it.

THOUGHTS FOR THE AFFLICTED.

GOD'S strokes and a Christian's strength are suited one to another. God's wounds cure; sin's kisses kill.

Let the load be ever so heavy that God lays on, if He put under His everlasting arms all will be well.

Affliction abuses the loveliness of the world without, that might entice us. It abates the lustfulness of the flesh within, which might else ensnare us.

The legacy Christ left is the Cross. While there is a devil and a wicked man in the world, never expect a charter of exemptions from trouble.

As our greatest blessings come through the sufferings of Christ, so God's greatest glory, that He hath from His saints, comes through their sufferings.

Correspondence.

PHILANTHROPY.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

DEAR SIR,—In addition to the answers already given to Question 431 may I refer to Matt. v. 16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The good works must be such as men of the world can see, *i.e.*, appreciate, otherwise they cannot be led through seeing them to glorify God. Thus there are many things which are good and well-pleasing to God which cannot be meant in this passage, because men are (so to speak) colour blind to them. For instance, devotion to God's work in preaching the Gospel, tract distribution, teaching in the Sunday school, attending Bible-reading and prayer meetings have no beauty or attraction to the natural man. But unselfishness, forgiveness, benevolence, care for the bodies of our fellow-creatures—these things do tell sooner or later, and men begin to see that Christianity is a reality. If a Christian was so exclusively impressed with the needs of the souls of those around him, or in other lands, that he gave all he could give to spiritual work, and nothing to temporal work, either in time or money, he would, it seems to me, be disobeying Matt. v. 16, and would also be "letting his good be evil spoken of," and would scarcely have a "good report of them that are without."

See also Matt. xxii. 37-40, especially verse 39,

in connection with Rom. viii. 4, and the parable of the good Samaritan. Christ cared for men—*body and soul*. Worldly philanthropists care for the *body only*. Are not Christians *sometimes* apt to care for the *soul only*? How can we ever expect to win our way into a man or woman's heart by caring *only* for that part of them as to which they themselves are utterly careless?

—Kendal.

T. CREWDSON WILSON.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting Answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

"FOREVER" IN HEBREWS x.—Does the term "forever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

THE GREAT SINNER AND THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.—Please explain how Mark iii. 29 and John iii. 16 can be reconciled. See also the 15th Paraphrase, the last two lines of the first verse:

"For while the lamp holds on to burn
The greatest sinner may return."

Can the *greatest sinner* and the *whosoever* of John iii. 16 not include also the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost? If so, how is it stated in Mark iii. 29 that he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness*?

CAN THE SOUL DIE?—Please explain Isaiah liii. 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death." Again, verse 10: "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." Is it possible for the soul to die? What is the difference between soul and spirit?

THE SON OF MAN OF HEBREWS II. 6.—Please explain Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8. It has often been said that "Man" and "the Son of Man" in these verses is in reference to Christ, but if this is the correct view, then I fail to see the sense of the words "but we see Jesus" in verse 9. Was not Adam "crowned with glory and honour?" And was not "all things put in subjection under him?" (see Gen. ii. 15, 19, 20).

HOW DOES LOVE COVER SIN?

QUESTION 434.—What is the meaning of the latter part of 1 Peter iv. 8, "For charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins"?

Answer A.—In the first half of the verse believers are exhorted: "Have fervent love among yourselves," and the latter part shows *why* they are thus exhorted, "For Love shall cover the multitude of sins." An illustration from life may simply explain the meaning. A godly and most consistent mother had a son who caused much sorrow in his home, coming home late at night the worse of drink, and other faults were also spoken of by the neighbours. But if they mentioned his failings in his mother's hearing she always silenced them and spoke of his good qualities, his affectionate nature, and how he would take her up an early cup of tea when not well, and would plant her favourite fruits and vegetables in the garden, and take much trouble in bringing them to perfection in their season for her, &c. Her Love covered his faults from the sight of others by speaking of his good parts and holding them up to view.

Shall we not seek to have more of this spirit in our assembly relationship? "Tell it not...publish it not...lest the daughter of the uncircumcised triumph." The marginal reading, "Love will cover," &c., makes it clearer. True love cannot help covering the faults of its loved one. Put to this test it is humbling to feel how little real love one toward another God sees exhibited by many of us.

M. M. D.

Answer B.—There is no thought of atonement (that is of covering from the sight of God) in 1 Peter iv. 8. It is a matter of our conduct one towards another. The teaching is well illustrated by the action of Shem and Japheth in Gen. ix. 23.

Similar words are found in Proverbs x. 12. *Hatred* will lead us to magnify and expose the faults of our brethren, while *love* will (whenever possible) conceal them, and in every case of personal injury forgive. Love will not lead us to gloat over wrong-doing, but to mourn over it; not to spread it abroad, but to carry it to God, to pray for and to seek the restoration of the wrong-doer. Other scriptures, such as 1 Cor. v., refer to sins that *must* be dealt with, but, even in such cases, love will not *unnecessarily* expose the sin of the offender.

W. H. S.

Answer C.—How does the fond love of a mother towards her own children prevent her from going out in the street to proclaim their naughtiness? How does it prevent her from telling to a neighbour their bad deeds? "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon,

lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." Thus will the mantle of love be spread over the delinquencies in the family, in the circle of friends, and in the Church, where fervent love abounds. Therefore, "have fervent love among yourselves." "Love is of God," and "he that covereth a transgression seeketh love, but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Prov. xvii. 9).

J. S.

Answer D.—"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." This is a quotation and an application from Proverbs x. 12, "Hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth all sins." The word "cover" means to "hide away out of sight." Here the sense is that just as God in grace forgives us our many transgressions, so should His love, working in us fervent love to one another, cause us to forgive one another's faults—to cover them up, and not expose or magnify them; and such love is the very bond of perfectness (Col. 3. 14).

A. O. M.

Answer E.—Peter quotes from Proverbs x. 12 (cf. also xvii. 9). How often do we find that if we would maintain the bond of affection with our brethren we must not stand on our rights too much, or on our dignity, which at any time exposes us to annoyance and provokes attacks (1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5); or be too quick to resent little slights? Have we not ourselves grieved others by unthinking word or hasty deed? Too often we have to ask the query of Matthew xviii. 21. Our passionate nature quickly notices these little wrongs, but then let us fill our spirit with love. This will soothe our irritated feelings, and flow over these transgressions, so that they cease to annoy us, because we cease to see them. Our love needs then to be "fervent." We must not harbour personal wrongs in our hearts, but be as blind as natural affection is to the imperfections of its object, but by no means condoning sin, as it often frailly does. The passage occurring among some miscellaneous directions as to Christian conduct, exercise of gift, &c., is wholly practical, not doctrinal, and must be distinguished from James v. 20, which means that by the conversion of another the sins of him who is converted shall be covered over.

J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—It might be mentioned in this connection that God, having once recorded certain of the faults of His saints under the Old Covenant, never again refers to them, nothing but good being mentioned in the New Testament of Old Testament believers.

HOW MANY OF ISRAEL SAVED?

QUESTION 435.—In Romans ix. 27 it is said that "a remnant will be saved," and in Romans

xi. 26, "all Israel will be saved." How can we account for the apparent contradiction?

Answer A.—The two texts cited apply to totally different times. The former text refers to Israel in its present state of rejection by God, and the other to the time when God will again take up Israel on the fulness of the Gentiles coming in.

J. H. H.

Answer B.—The explanation of Romans ix. 27 is given in chapter xi. 5: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Chapter xi. 26 is of the coming day when the branches now severed shall be grafted into their own olive tree, and all the nation shall be God's people.

W. C.

Answer C.—Two distinct periods or epochs of Scripture are alluded to. Romans ix. 27: Up to the present time Christ is rejected by Israel as a nation (see 2 Cor. iii. 13-16), and will be until He returns to the earth according to Acts i. 11 and Zech. xiv. 4. Until Christ returns, as promised in John xiv. 1, &c., there is no difference between Jew and Gentile (see Rom. i. 16 and ii. 10, 12); but *whosoever* (John iii. 16) is God's invitation to lost sinners. Romans ix. 27 proves that a remnant of Israel will have believed on Christ, and consequently be saved and incorporated with the Church to be caught up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 13-17).

Romans xi. 26: The time referred to here is when Christ shall stand on the Mount of Olives and Israel shall look upon Him whom they pierced (Psa. xxii.), shall repent as shown in Zech. xii. 9 to xiii. 1, and God in His mercy will restore Israel (see Isa. lx. and Zech. xii.); then shall all Israel be saved, as quoted in Rom. xi. 26, and the living nations judged (Matt. xxv. 31, 46, &c.), and the millennial kingdom set up.

Editor's Note.—At this present time, though there are nominally "Christian" nations, and though there are saved persons more or fewer in all such nations, there is not a saved nation upon earth. When this dispensation is closed, and God resumes His dealings with Israel according to prophecy, the saved remnant of Israel, preserved in the midst of unparalleled judgment and suffering, will form the nucleus of the future nation.

The spared remnant of the Jews in the land and the restored ten tribes will form one saved nation (see Ezek. xxxvii. 15-28).

"In that day they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34).

So, as it is written, "all Israel shall be saved."

GOD'S GLORIOUS HIGH THRONE.

Notes of an Address by JAMES WRIGHT, of New Orphan Houses, Bristol.

"A glorious High Throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary" (Jer. xvii. 12).

THERE are a variety of truths that circle round this word *sanctuary*.

I. The first great truth that God was pleased to associate with it we have in Exodus xxv., where He instructs His people to construct a sanctuary—"Let them make Me a sanctuary"—and then He states the object for which this sanctuary was to be made: "That I may *dwell* among them." So that the first thought of God revealed to us in connection with the sanctuary is that it is THE DWELLING-PLACE OF GOD, the place where He will dwell with His people. That itself, you see, gives us a wonderful glimpse into the character of our God. His heart's desire is fellowship with His people. We have it often in the Old Testament, and once or twice in the New, that "God hath *visited* His people." It was always in the heart of God to do more than this—"That I may *dwell* among them." Oh, how sweet is this! that the eternal thought in the heart of God is to make His people His very dwelling-place! How it shows utter departure of heart from God that it should ever be distasteful to us to think of being in God's presence!

II. Another thought very prominently connected with the word sanctuary is that of HOLINESS. In Psalm xlv. 4 we read, "The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Holiness is inseparable from the thought of the sanctuary. God is holy, and therefore His dwelling-place must be holy, and the construction of that tabernacle, the ordering of its various parts, was intended to deepen that thought, that conviction, in our hearts. There was the outer court, the court in which the altar was, and there was the first tabernacle, and then the innermost sanctuary, the holiest of all.

III. Then the third thought arising from this is that of SEPARATION FROM EVIL, from sin, and from man in his sins. In Psalm v. we read, "Neither shall evil dwell with Thee." The sanctuary is God's dwelling-place, and therefore it must be the place

where no evil is; and in the last view we have in the Bible of the dwelling-place of God, we are told that everything that defileth is outside; nothing that defileth can enter there (Rev. xxi. 27).

IV. In close connection with this thought there comes a fourth, and that is, the sanctuary is THE PLACE OF WORSHIP, and necessarily, therefore, the place in which we realise the need of God's provision for the putting away of sin—a sacrifice for sin. The blood of the sin-offering was carried to the innermost part of the sanctuary, the holiest of all, because only on the ground of blood-shedding can there be any remission of sins, and without the putting away of sin we dare not enter the presence of God, much less dwell there. Therefore Scripture always speaks to us of propitiation, of atonement, for sin.

V. Now, we have in this verse an additional thought in connection with this sanctuary. "A glorious high THRONE . . . is the place of our sanctuary." The sanctuary is a throne. We can never disassociate the throne from the One who occupies it. The throne is simply the symbol of the execution of the law righteously, and that must be by the One who sits on it. This holds good even in regard to earthly thrones, hence the axiom, "The King never dies;" and it is interesting to see that though this, in reference to man's throne, is but a fiction, yet it is a fiction based on eternal truth regarding the Eternal Throne that never fails.

When the President of the United States transmitted by the electric wire his message of condolence a few minutes after our beloved Queen had breathed her last, he addressed it to "His Majesty the King." He was King the moment the preceding sovereign breathed her last. He was King without waiting for coronation, and even without waiting for proclamation. He was King by inheritance. "The King never dies." The throne cannot be vacant! That is a theory, but it emphasises the thought that the Throne of God is never to be severed from the Occupant of the throne. Hence the word of the Lord Jesus: "He that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the Throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon" (Matt. xxiii. 22).

But who is the Occupant of this throne?

The One of whom we read in Hebrews i. He who is set at the right hand of the Majesty on High, on the Throne of God. But who is set there? The Sin-purger—the One who “by Himself purged our sins,” and “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High.” So this leads up, you see, to the glorious thought that *God in Christ is our sanctuary—God in Christ is the sanctuary of His people.*

And this sanctuary, this true sanctuary, embodies every one of the elements which we have been considering as constituting a sanctuary. It is as united to Christ by faith that we *dwell* in God, and He dwells in us according to the word of the Lord in John xiv. 20: “At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” In Him we have *deliverance from the power of sin.* We worship by Him, offering the sacrifice of praise (Heb. xiii. 15).

Now, the throne is spoken of here as “a glorious throne.” What a comment on this expression is that passage we read in Hebrews i., “Who, being the brightness of His glory”—the effulgence of the glory of God—the sunbeam, as it were—the revelation of the light of God. “God is light” (1 John i. 5), and “The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John i. 18), and therefore we have seen His glory in the face of Jesus. Now, it is His occupancy of the Throne of God, of the Majesty on High, that makes it such a glorious throne. And how wonderful it is, beloved fellow-believers, that we should be associated with that throne! “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. iii. 21). A glorious throne!

But here is another word, “A glorious high throne.” The Revised Version reads: “A glorious throne *set on high.*” How that reminds us of the testimony concerning the beloved Son of God, “Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name” (Phil. ii. 9). He is exalted to the highest place. Now, we know that He had a right to that place by inheritance, “As He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name” (Heb. i. 4), and by inheritance He

shares in the majesty of the eternal throne, one with the Father, Jehovah’s fellow (Zech. xii. 7). The throne belongs to Him in virtue of His Deity. The Deity of the Son is the foundation, the corner-stone of our most holy faith. We must honour the Son as we honour the Father, and as we honour the Father as the occupant of the eternal throne so we must honour the Son. But it is not in virtue of the right of inheritance that He becomes our Sanctuary. That is the great point. He has taken His place now at the right hand of the Father’s throne in resurrection, and it is in the economy of redemption that the Father bestows that place of infinite exaltation on Him; above all heavens, above the lower heavens, above all principalities and powers is the beloved Son of God raised—raised as the One who left that glory and returned to it! “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father” (John xvi. 28). But He did not leave the world until He had accomplished the work for which He came into the world, and so could say, ere He left it, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do” (John xvii. 4). Of course, He meant the work on earth. He has not finished the work in heaven, blessed be God! He has been working to-day on behalf of His people.

“Lord, in all Thy power and glory,
Still Thy thoughts and eyes are here;
Watching o’er Thy ransomed people,
To Thy gracious heart so dear.”

Grace from Him practically has upheld us through this day; every moment we depend on Christ at the right hand of God. “Because I live, ye shall live also” (John xiv. 19). And it is only in Him that we do anything for Him “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John xv. 5).

We are like branches cut off and dead if severed from Him. It is just union to the living Christ which is the secret of preservation, sustentation, and ultimate victory. And therefore it is the joy of our hearts to see that our sanctuary is in the eternal Son of God, who inherits the throne by right, but becomes our sanctuary. By leaving that glory and humbling Himself He became “the Word made flesh and dwelt among us”

(John i. 14). He took a body in order to die, and it is in the crucified Son of God, the One who died for our sins on the cross, and rose from the dead—it is in that cleft side of the Word made flesh that we find our sanctuary, and it is in that character that “He now sits on the throne, exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour (Acts. v. 31), on the ground of His finished work on the cross.

“*From the beginning*,” carries us back to the eternal past. This expression is another of the innumerable testimonies of Holy Scripture to the Deity of our Lord: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by Him” (John i. 1, 3). He was the eternal Son and the Creator of the universe. “A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.”

Now I want just to pause and ask whether He is the sanctuary of every one here? Have we all found a sanctuary in the wounded side of the Word made flesh? He, that poor sinners might find a sanctuary in Him, laid aside His glory, and suffered the nails to pierce His blessed hands and feet, and the soldier who with a spear pierced His side, expressed man’s hatred to God in that thrust, but the love of God flowed out through that pierced side and therefore salvation, the forgiveness of sins, the Gospel, the glad tidings, were preached to His very murderers.

Beloved fellow-believers, let us suck the sweetness of this text: “A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.” The One who sits on the throne is the true Joseph, into whose hand God has given everything because He loves Him. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand” (John iii. 35). And all things are *ours* because we are Christ’s and Christ is God’s (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23).

ALL THINGS ORDERED.

“The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power” (Heb. i. 3).

By Him are all things ordered,

His hand I ever bless;

His sympathy—how tender!

Through His own deep distress.

R. C. C.

CHRIST RISEN.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of “God’s Chosen People,” “Because ye Belong to Christ,” &c.

PART II.

LET us now see what evidence we have that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. 1 Corinthians xv. 5-8:

“He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.

“After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

“After that He was seen of James, then of all the apostles.

“And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.”

Here, then, is abundant evidence of the fact of His resurrection. There could be no mistake about it. Indeed, those competent to judge have been obliged to admit that very few facts of so remote a date are supported by anything like the same amount of evidence. There is no question about it as an historical fact that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by many witnesses.

Look also at Acts i. 3:

“To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

These forty days going in and out amongst the disciples, showing Himself to them in all kinds of circumstances, and eating and drinking in their presence, left no room for doubt.

Acts x. 40:

“Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly.

“Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.”

Then in Luke xxiv. 36-39:

“And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

“But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

“And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

“Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.”

Curious speculations about the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus are not for us at all; we can only abide by what is written. We read here that the Lord caused them to feel

His body in order to assure them that He was literally raised up from the dead. To prove that it was the very same body, He showed them the marks of the nails in His hands and His feet, and made Thomas thrust His hand into His side and feel the scar that was there. So we see that it was a literal resurrection body, with flesh and bone. Now, while it was a literal resurrection body it was a spiritual body. That is a thing we can neither define, nor understand, nor explain. But the fact is that the Lord, in that body, could be seen and handled, and yet in a moment He could be invisible. He could pass out from the sepulchre without the stone being rolled away, and He could pass into the room where the disciples were assembled, the door being shut.

These things we may not understand, but this we do know, and it is blessed to know it, that the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus is the pattern to which the bodies of all God's redeemed people are to be conformed. We are to be fashioned "like unto His glorious body." That resurrection body will be no clog to the Spirit, as the present one is. There will be no proclivities downwards to what is earthy and evil—all will be in perfect consonance with the heaven-born spirit, begotten of God.

Again, in 1 Corinthians xv. 17-20—this great resurrection chapter—we read:

"And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

Christ is risen from the dead. What then? My sins are put away; my faith is not vain; I am not believing in a myth; I am not believing in a person that once existed and is long passed away; I am believing in the One who died to put away my sins, in token of which—in proof of which—God raised Him from the dead.

Now, look at Romans iv. 23 to end:

"Now, it was not written for his [Abraham's] sake alone that it [righteousness] was imputed to him.

"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if

we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

Notice that in this, and other passages we have looked at, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is always attributed to God the Father. He was raised again from the dead "by the glory of the Father."

So that His resurrection is the testimony that God Himself has borne to His satisfaction with the finished, atoning work of His own dear Son. The fact that the Lord Jesus, who "was made sin for us" on the Cross, on whom God caused to meet the iniquity of us all, "who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"—the fact that He who became my Surety, who became responsible for the discharge of my criminal liability, has been raised from the dead by God, and set at His own right hand, is the proof that my sins have been put away for ever.

If Christ be not raised, then it means that my Surety has not discharged my debt. "But now *is* Christ risen;" my debt is therefore discharged. Oh, blessed release! blessed liberty! He was delivered—that is, delivered over into the hand of justice, bound and delivered up to the curse—on account of my offences. But He is raised from the dead on account of my justification. The justifying work has been completed, the precious blood that justifies has been shed, and God the Justifier has raised Him from the dead. What a Gospel is this! Who will tell me the resurrection is not an essential part of the Gospel? It is the very soul-satisfying climax of the Gospel.

In nearly every passage where the words "from the dead" are found it is literally "from *among* the dead." The Lord Jesus was raised up "from among the dead." And when the Lord comes and quickens those who have fallen asleep in Christ He will raise them also "from among the dead."

At the end of the thousand years, when those are raised who had not had part in the first resurrection, it is never said of them that they are raised "from among the dead"—it is "the resurrection of the dead ones" then. But the Lord Jesus, and the saints when He

comes, are raised up "from among the dead." Any who care to follow that out will find it very interesting and instructive.

Again, in 1 Corinthians xv. 20 we read:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead [or from among the dead], and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

Let me mention that this chapter has not in view the wicked dead at all, but only those that slept. The word "sleep" is never in any passage applied to one who dies out of Christ. That would be too gentle a word to apply to such. It is a blessed word reserved for those who are in Christ. "He became the first-fruits of them that slept." Now, you know the meaning of the first-fruits. I have said already that Christ's resurrection is the pattern to which at His coming His people will be conformed. The very idea of "the first-fruits" is that it is a sample of the whole. The sheaf taken from the field of wheat or oats, the first ripe fruit of the apple-tree, or the vine—"the first-fruits"—are just a specimen of what is to follow after. So Christ is the first-fruits from the dead, and those who follow will be like Him.

Turn to Leviticus xxiii. 9-11:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest.

"And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the Sabbath shall the priest wave it."

Now, what was the morrow after the Sabbath? Was it not the first day of the week? Here, then, we have a sheaf of first-fruits brought in on the first day of the week and waved before the Lord. There was no need of a sin-offering to go with that; it could come before the Lord, so to speak, in its own right. Christ the first-fruits could ascend to His Father in His own right. It was on our behalf that He was made sin; it is on our behalf that He must needs go in with the wounded hands and feet, and the pierced side, because He is there in the presence of God for us. He is there as the wave-sheaf for us. I have no reason to

doubt that on that first day of the week when the Lord Jesus stood in the midst of His disciples, the blinded priests—the sacerdotal order—were carrying out their exploded ritualism, and waving a sheaf of wheat before the riven veil. The great Anti-type that had been raised from the dead that very day now stood, in the upper room, in the midst of His own. Oh, what a mockery was the temple service then! Religion, formalism, ritualism, but no Christ! God save us from outward forms and ceremonies with no Christ!

CONFESSIO N.

Psalm xxxii.

By GEORGE W. NEATBY, London.

THERE is an ever-increasing need among the saints of God for confession. While we are eager (and rightly so) to learn and enter into the deep things of God, there is a terrible danger of neglecting to search the heart and try the conscience in the holy presence of Him who is of too pure eyes to behold iniquity. And I think that in a great measure this springs from the scant store we set by the unspeakable privilege of communion with God. For this can only be enjoyed in proportion as we confess and forsake everything in our walk and ways which cannot be tried by the standard of the Word of God.

Thus we find David rejoicing in His restored communion. He had sinned grievously; only a thrice-holy God can measure the iniquity of which he was guilty, and yet we find him rejoicing thus in restored communion. He gives us the secret in verse 5: "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid." There is, alas! much of what a dear saint of God (now in His presence) used to call "an unholy trafficking with unfelt truths," and this is one of those truths. How glibly do we speak of confession being necessary to communion, and yet how little we know of it either as individuals or as assemblies. And yet so it is. There is no such thing as the soul knowing real communion with God apart from the confession of anything and everything that dishonours Him.

And how formal is the confession apt to be. It is comparatively easy to say that we have sinned without realising what it means. That a soul that has known Christ, and has walked in His company, should sin is a terrible thing, and still more that he should treat it as a light matter. The reason that our confession is so shallow, is because we do not see sin as God sees it. David saw it thus, in a great measure at least; and the result was that, pending his confession, his "bones waxed old through (his) roaring all the day long." He felt the hand of Jehovah heavy upon him. Oh, to be more in the presence of God about this all-important matter.

After he has confessed and received forgiveness he tells us of his hiding-place in the time of temptation. "Thou art my hiding-place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."

What know we, beloved brethren, of these songs of deliverance? Is ours the happy portion of those who can say, "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us?" God would have it so: if it is not so, depend upon it the fault is with ourselves. Indeed, we have His own answer in verse 8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye." Oh, for subject, learning hearts, my brethren. What a refuge for our poor, tempted, and, alas! often self-satisfied hearts. "I will guide thee:" I who loved thee, bled and died for thee. Ah, Lord! guide us and give us grace to humbly follow Thee, and be guided in all things by Thee.

The psalm closes very aptly: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." Sin having been put away, every question settled, we are now set free in perfect liberty, and our hearts may now flow forth in praise and adoration. But let us ever remember that praise flowing from the lips of one who is cherishing known and unjudged sin is an abomination in the sight of Him with whom we have to do. Let us beware of honouring Him with our lips when our hearts are far from Him.

FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL.

By E. A. MARTIN, Michigan.

FELLOWSHIP in the Gospel is brought before us in the Epistle to the Philip-pians in many more ways than by simply ministering of one's substance to those who are out preaching Christ. Nevertheless this is one way of having fellowship in the Gospel. All cannot go forth preaching the glad tidings, but all can be united in heart with those who are thus "set for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel" (Phil. i. 7).

The Gospel must be *defended* against the many who are its opposers. It must also be *confirmed* among the feeble few who have received it unto the salvation of their souls. What need there is, then, for God's people to have those who are devoting themselves unto this work "in their hearts" (Phil. i. 7, mar.).

This union of heart is fellowship, and where this is, the outward manifestations—of which the giving of one's substance is one—will not be lacking.

The unsaved man may put his hand into his pocket and give of his substance, but in heart he is an enemy of the Gospel, and so in the light of the sanctuary his glittering gold is but base metal. Examine his motive and you will understand the worthlessness of the gift. It may be that he considers God a needy God, His cause in danger of bankruptcy, or His servants in danger of starvation, and so He must needs give alms—a kind of a compulsory charity; or he may think that by helping along the good cause, as people call it, he will thereby merit favour with God, and so escape the wrath to come; or what is, perhaps, the most common motive of all—give to be seen of men. Only such motives can actuate the unsaved to give. They are, in reality, enemies of the Gospel, and an enemy of the Gospel can have no fellowship in the Gospel. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8). "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord" (Prov. xv. 8).

All such fellowship ought to be refused, and was refused by the early preachers, as can be seen from the third Epistle of John, verse 7, "Because that for His Name's sake they went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles."

But it is to be feared that many of God's dear children rise but little, in this matter of giving, above the thoughts of the unsaved. Are there not some who would never give a penny if they knew that those who are out preaching Christ were always supplied, but who would give something if they discovered one at the point of starvation? Is this fellowship in the Gospel? I believe not. This is charity—the principle that moves a man to give a beggar a meal, an old coat, or a few pennies.

No servant of Christ ought ever to feel himself an object of charity. We may forget our true position and consider ourselves such, and allow others to think us such, but it is to our shame if we ever fall from the lofty place God has given us. Notice the language of the apostle, "Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content" (Phil. iv. 11).

He was just as rich when his purse was empty as when it was full. His appreciation of their gift was not because it saved him from starvation, but because it was "fruit that would abound to their account."

If I was starving, and some one knowing this, gave me what relieved my distress, I could thank God for it on the same principle that the poor of the Old Testament would thank God for "the gleanings" (Deut. xxiv. 19-22).

But if none knew my need, or if I had abundance, and God's people, knowing this, ministered of their substance because their hearts were in the work, then I ought to rise above the thought of need met, and thank God and the giver for this "fellowship in the Gospel," on the same principle that those who ministered at the tabernacle would thank God for "all the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat. The first-fruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given unto thee" (Num. xviii. 12); or, to use the language of the Book before us, "For fruit abounding to their account—an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God" (Phil. iv. 18).

When I first came into assembly fellowship I used to wish that those labouring in

the Gospel would just let me know when their pockets were empty. I felt as though I would not like to see them starve, and, on the other hand, I thought that it would be too bad to give my valuable money to them if they already had plenty. But God has since shown me that it was not His order that the "best of the oil, &c.," should only be brought in when His servants were at the point of starvation. It was God's portion, to be brought in at all times, and to withhold this was "robbing God." And when God received His portion, He feasted upon it Himself, and then caused His servants to feast upon it also, so that they did not need to look to man for their support, but to God, who charged Himself with their keep. (See Num. xviii. 8-19).

So it is to-day. God's servants tell their need only to God, and He meets it in His own marvellous ways. That professed servant of Christ who hints that he needs a little money had better be helped out of the box marked, "For the Poor," or given a cast-off coat, or hat, or an old pair of shoes.

Dear child of God, do you realise that what is given as "fellowship in the Gospel" is not to be given, primarily, to man at all, but to God, and ought not to be the gleanings of your income, but the "first-fruits"? A first portion set apart for Him who gave the first gift of heaven in order to make you His own?

The "first-fruits" were not necessarily the largest part of the harvest; nay, more, they might be less in quantity even than the gleanings, but it taught an important truth—God first.

Would to God that every wage-earner among the Lord's people, upon receiving his wages, would enter into the presence of God and thank Him for this harvest, and take out of it a *first* portion before a penny was used for any other purpose—a clean, sweet-smelling sacrifice to God.

Then there would be the harvest for himself and the gleanings for the poor—a beautiful and Divine order. The first-fruits for God Himself; the harvest for yourself, as being God's, and the gleanings for God's poor. All for God.

It is a false notion that the highest use for our money is found in relieving the poor.

God's poor are not above God Himself, and to give the first-fruits to the poor and the gleanings to God is surely not seemly. Mary will give the Lord Jesus what Judas will say ought to go to the poor (see John xii. 3-8).

If I were making an assembly collection-box, I would have two openings, marked respectively, "For God Himself," and "For God's Poor." This would indicate the relative importance of the two objects for which the money was given, and be a check on that unexercised giving which, it is to be feared, is too prevalent amongst God's people.

To see a slot marked, "Hall Expenses," looks too much like the familiar "Drop your penny here" of the slot machines.

"For Gospel Work" is not much better, for the mind naturally goes off to the workers, and the deceptive heart is apt to say: "I need the money worse than they do," "I don't just care for so-and-so" (to whom the collection is going), or it may be, "I like so-and-so, therefore I will give liberally," which is equally bad. The persons occupied in the work or the work itself occupying the mind, which ought to have God Himself before it.

But if we mark it "For God Himself," we have a continual reminder of God's claim upon us, and of our responsibility, and so an exercised conscience as to what is given. Then let this be used in God's work in renting halls, or in support of those who labour in the Gospel, or in whatever way God may guide the minds of those who are responsible to use it for God's glory.

Now, a word of warning to those who are not able to pay their debts. "Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is ministered by us, providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. viii. 20, 21).

God will not have His people rob their neighbours in order to swell His collections, and to profess to give to God what is due to the grocer is simply roguery, and a reproach upon God's work and name.

Then a word of encouragement to those who use their means in having "Fellowship in the Gospel." For God does give encouragement to such. "It is an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to

God." Surely this is encouragement indeed. Then see what follows: "But my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." Blessed encouragement to know that God is going to look after those who look after His interests upon earth.

Again, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix. 6).

"But what proportion of my income shall I give?" "Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, *not grudgingly, or of necessity*, for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7).

May God lead His people into heart-fellowship in His work, and give them to act intelligently according to His principles in their fellowship in the Gospel so that fruit may abound to their account.

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. ix. 15).

[As to proportion of income, no rate is fixed under the new covenant, but under the law it was one tenth, or two shillings in the pound, besides freewill offerings, &c.]

It may fairly be considered, without putting a yoke round any man's neck to bring him into bondage, that grace would not give less. There are those who lay aside regularly the Lord's portion first, but in the distribution of that, they may rightly be guided by such information as they may, in the providence of God, be in possession of as to where the need is greatest, although no "hint" was given by the Lord's needy ones.—ED.]

LORD JESUS, COME.

Tune—"Lead, kindly Light."

LORD JESUS, come. Thy promise still we plead,

Though scorned by some.

Across the sky in words of light we read,

"Behold, I come!"

Through all the storms that sweep o'er Life's dark main, [again!]

Sounds Thy sweet word, "Fear not; I come

Lord Jesus, come. Help us to be sincere

In this desire.

O let Thy voice fall sweetly on our ear,

Our souls inspire.

Show us Thy beauty and Thy wondrous grace,
Thus make us to see Thee face to face.

Lord Jesus, come. When shall Thy ransomed Bride

Her Bridegroom meet?

Her heart and Thine shall then be satisfied
In joy complete.

Caught up to meet Thee, changed by power divine,
She shall for ever in Thy likeness shine.

Lord Jesus, come. The night is dark and long—

Sadly we roam—

Then shall we sing Redemption's joyful song,
O take us home.

Take us beyond earth's sin, and pain, and gloom,
To Resurrection's heights beyond the tomb.

Lord Jesus, come. Bring in Thy peaceful reign,

The cloudless dawn;

O'er all the world the shadows deep remain,
The nations moan.

Bid darkness flee and cruel wars to cease;

Come, righteous Ruler; reign, Thou Prince of Peace.

Barrow-in-Furness,

T. R.

DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

PASSAGE READ—PSALM XL. 7.

PART I.—The complete revolt of man against God.

PART II.—The Perfect One who delighted to do the will of God.

PART III.—Following the path of obedience to the will of God.

PART III.

I WANT you now to see how this bears upon us. We are familiar with that word that He left us. John xiii. 15:

"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

What is the meaning of that? It means that we are saved to do the will of God; we are saved for nothing else. We are not answering to God's salvation; we are not glorifying God; we are not getting the blessing He intends for our own souls except we are *in the path of obedience to the will of God*. Have you thought of this?

This is a very serious subject; it is a subject I have trembled to take up, but it seems to me these things are little touched upon. We will get a great crowd if we announce

"The Coming of the Lord," or other prophetic subjects. But if we are not prepared to do the will of God, how can we be ready for the coming of the Lord? "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Permanence is stamped on the path of obedience; there will never be anything to regret in the path of obedience, while there will be everything to regret in the path of disobedience. Does the Lord Jesus Christ regret one step He took in obedience to God? Does He regret the Cross, with all its anguish? Hebrews xii. 2:

"For the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God."

Does He regret it? Oh, He has glorified God; He has brought glory to God out of a revolted world, and that is the recompense. He is full of joy at the right hand of God now, for He has glorified God on the earth.

And God has given us this opportunity and privilege to glorify Him in a revolted world where Christ glorified Him. There will not be such an opportunity in the Millennium; obedience will not cost then what it costs now. Satan will be chained in the Bottomless Pit, and the very flesh itself will be, somehow or other, different from what it is now; the life of a man will extend to a thousand years, like the life of a tree. Now obedience costs everything, but it will not then.

Turn to 1 Peter iv. 1:

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

We are to have the "same mind" as Christ. What is the mind of Christ? The mind of Christ was that, cost what it might, He would do the will of God. Let the suffering be ever so great, He might not swerve one hairsbreadth from the will of God. "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." It is your only armour. If you have not this armour you are a prey to Satan; but the man who sees that his one responsibility and privilege is to do the will of God is clad in armour. He goes out into the midst of a rebel world, but he is armed against it; he

has made up his mind, "I will do the will of God."

"For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." Don't you see the two things connected? You cannot "cease from sin" without "suffering in the flesh"; sin is the very element in which the flesh lives. It is he that has made up his mind to suffer in the flesh that is armed. Like the Apostle Paul, who said, "I die daily." He made up his mind every day as he rose from his bed that he would die for Christ that day if necessary. That man was proof against the wiles of the world and the devil; he was clad in armour.

Verse 19:

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing [in obedience], as unto a faithful Creator."

If the path of obedience brings you into suffering, it is according to the will of God. It is not a thing to kick against or repine at; it is what He has told you.

The God that created you, the God that claims your obedience, says: "Whatever obedience costs you, I am a faithful Creator; I will see that you are not a loser." If you look through this epistle you will find the very keynote of it is "doing the will of God."

Turn now to Ephesians vi. 5:

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

That brings it down to a very homely point. The most of the Lord's people in those days were servants—there were not many noble and mighty ones—and hence so much is said to servants, and such encouragement given to servants.

There the servant (or, properly, the bond-servant) is taught that, whatever the character of the master, he is not to serve with eyeservice, and whenever the master's back is turned to waste his master's time. I have known clerks over and over again to keep a novel under the lid of their desk. That is eyeservice; it is a service that goes on so long as the master's eye is upon them, and whenever his eye is off them it stops. Do Chris-

tians act that way? Oh, just answer for yourself. Is there anything of it in your life?

"Doing the will of God from the heart." Your heart is in your work, because you are doing it for God. "But he is a hard, exacting master;" "but she is a heartless mistress; there is no pleasing her." Do your work as to the Lord, and from the heart.

"Doing the will of God from the heart" brings me into unison with the eternal will of the Almighty God, and if I suffer in doing His will I commit my soul to a faithful Creator. Is not that blessed?

We are not now called to go out into the street and get a mob after us and be crucified. We are not called to that kind of service, but we are called to do the will of God at our work, and to do it always, and from the heart.

Then turn to Romans xii. 2:

"And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

What is the meaning of that? It is that we may prove experimentally what we are taught by the Spirit in the Word: that the doing of the will of God is good for us, and that it is acceptable, and that it is perfect. You and I are always thinking we can improve on the will of God; we think we can find a by-path that is better than the will of God. Bunyan painted it; he called it "By-path Meadow." Oh, to learn that God's will is good and "acceptable"; yea, it is "perfect"!

Let us be encouraged, from looking at these Scriptures, to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, to deny self, to take up the Cross, and to go after Christ in obedience to the will of God.

BIBLE STUDIES.

OUR HOPE.

The coming of the Lord is—

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|-----------------|
| 1. A saving hope | - | - | Rom. viii. 24 |
| 2. A good hope | - | - | 2 Thess. ii. 16 |
| 3. A blessed hope | - | - | Titus ii. 13 |
| 4. A joyful hope | - | - | Heb. iii. 6 |
| 5. A living hope | - | - | 1 Peter i. 3 |
| 6. A purifying hope | - | - | 1 John iii. 3 |
| 7. A hope of righteousness | - | - | Gal. v. 5 J.S. |

CHURCHES OF GOD:

AND THE DIVINE PURPOSES IN THEIR
FORMATION.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

PART IV.

HAVING briefly considered the purposes of a Church God-ward and self-ward, we now come to

III. ITS USES IN RELATION TO THE WORLD.

Between God's Church and the world there are radical and eternal distinctions. These differences are taught or assumed on almost every page of Holy Writ, but nowhere are they so strongly set forth and emphasised as in the last discourse and prayer of Christ (John xiv.-xvii.). In the reckoning of the Master His disciples do not belong to this world. In nature, aims, motives, habits, and destiny they are wholly different from men of the world, who have their portion in this life. They are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world.

To bridge over the distance between his own subjects and Christ's people has ever been a chief object of Satan, and so-called church history is largely a record of the success of the enemy along that line. But Churches of God, as now before us, are composed of those who profess to have been delivered from the authority and power of Satan, and to have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Acts xxvi. 18; Col. i. 13). By the sovereign act of God they have been graciously chosen out of the world, by the Cross of Christ legally delivered from it, and by the operations of the Holy Spirit they have been actually won to Christ, and weaned "from this present evil age."

In searching the Scriptures to discover the position of a Church in any given country or community this fact strikes one: A Church possessing political authority or influence, a Church mainly occupied with social reforms or the material interests of men, is not within the purview of New Testament teachings or precepts. No; a true Church is composed of spiritual men, bound together by spiritual ties, who by spiritual means aim to accomplish spiritual ends. Though in themselves good and desirable, other services occupy a

secondary place; and in view of eternity the real value of and justification for such will be seen to be the measure in which they can be utilised for the spiritual benefit of the recipients thereof.

As among those within so among those without, *the moving-spring of all effectual service is a divinely inspired compassion and love for men.* Christ not only loved His disciples, He also had a deep, tender compassion for sinners, and this compassion, like a mighty magnet, drew all sorts and conditions of sinners to Him: and, when they desired something better, the more sinful, ignorant, and degraded they were the more they were attracted to Him. And the measure of a Church's usefulness in a community will be the measure in which, as a whole, those composing it are possessed by that same Christly compassion.

What, then, are the chief duties of Christians toward men who are significantly spoken of as "them that are without"?

1. The first and great responsibility of a company of believers toward the world is TO PREACH THE GOSPEL. A Church is designed to be a sinner-saving institution. If it fails in that, it fails of one chief purpose of its existence. The Apostle Paul was the acknowledged apostle of the Gentiles, and to him as a representative Churchman was announced the divine programme of Christianity. To the nations he was sent to open men's eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that believers on Christ might receive the forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among the saints in light (Acts xxvi. 18). And every Christ-gathered, Christ-controlled, and Christ-equipped company of saints will, according to its power and opportunity, earnestly endeavour to carry out this programme. In preaching the Word they will be instant in season, out of season; they will be filled with a holy fear lest they receive this grace of God in vain.

Backed up by gracious and righteous lives this is by far the most needed and most important function of an assembly world-ward. By prayer and other means every one should daily have in view the cultivation of the evangelistic spirit and gift. This is not the responsibility of a few only. All in

the assembly should feel that they are in partnership with those engaged in Gospel work, whatever form it may take. The least that one can do, surely, is to now and then inquire how the Sunday school is getting on, how the open-air testimony is being maintained, whether the tract distributors are well supplied with ammunition, and to assure these workers that they are often remembered in prayer. No Christian so poor or busy but can do this.

Every assembly should desire and aim to have within itself the various gifts necessary for its full and true development. While welcoming help and ministry from without, to necessarily depend upon it is a sign of weakness. One fears that this mistake is being made by many companies of believers, especially for the Gospel testimony. With God and the Word of His grace assemblies should endeavour to become sufficient to carry on their own work in the present, and expect that others will be coming forward to take the lead when those now at the front are removed by any cause. But time and space call upon us to pass on.

2. *Believers should act as priests and intercessors for all men* (1 Tim. ii. 1-4). All men are constantly receiving many and great benefits from God, but they fail to thank Him for these. They are dependent on His care moment by moment, yet do not acknowledge this dependence by seeking His continued help and protection. What they thus sinfully neglect to do for themselves Churches of Christ should do on their behalf. Were this remembered by the saints there would be much more varied thanksgivings and intercessions both at home and in the assembly prayer meeting. If this scripture were more generally pondered by those who are wont to lead in prayer, among other things there would be more frequent thanksgivings and intercession for the King and all in authority. For it is the great way, according to the scriptures, by which a people who are partakers of a heavenly calling can influence the doings of the world-powers. Would that this were better understood and acted on by Christians generally! If it were we should in the future meet with fewer children of God who have vexed and

defiled their souls, and lost their Gospel zeal through striving with the potsherds of the earth.

3. *As a moral force Christians are to preserve the whole mass around from corruption and disintegration* (Matthew v. 13). Even a formal profession of Christianity in any land raises the general moral tone, and the purer the form of Christianity and the more general its profession the higher will be the standard of morality. Though every moral man is not a Christian, every Christian is a moral man. Many men of light and learning are in effect saying, Give us morality, and who will may have religion. Some emotional and ignorant professing Christians say, by their acts, "Religion" is everything, and morality of no importance. The true disciple of Christ will never, either in teaching or practice, divorce what God has joined together; and there is a vital and eternal connection between a right relationship of the soul to God and righteous dealings with our fellow-men.

Thank God, in England, even at the opening of the twentieth century, so-called Puritanism is still a force—the Christian conscience of the nation is still a power to be reckoned with. To intelligent Christian Chinese I have often remarked: The only hope for the preservation of your empire is that multitudes of you should speedily become true Christians.

A live Church acts as a preventative of evil in its neighbourhood—and this not so much by Christians protesting against it by their lips, as by their exhibiting righteousness in their lives. If there is one thing more than another needed in the present day it is that *those who name the Name of the Lord should depart from iniquity*. There are various kinds of iniquity—social, business, political, and ecclesiastical—and from them all the servant of the Lord must separate himself.

As long as the Church of Christ is in the world evil will be prevented from coming to a full head. In 2 Thess. ii. and other scriptures we have prophetically outlined the rise of one who is pre-eminently called *the wicked or lawless one*. I refer to it just to call attention to the fact that in verse six it is evidently the continued presence of a

system which prevents the rise of this man, while in verse seven it is as clearly a *Person* who hinders his manifestation; and this gives the whole truth of the matter. The Church acts as a moral preservative, not because of her own strength or righteousness, but because the Spirit of Truth and Holiness still dwells with and in her. Till His withdrawal this Spirit of Truth and Holiness, acting through Christians, will effectually oppose him who will be the embodiment of error and sin.

4. *A Church of God should be a centre of practical benevolence and good works.* Without leaving its distinctively spiritual ground it should do all that it wisely can for the poor, the orphans, and the diseased in its neighbourhood.

Christians are true philanthropists, because first of all they are *philtheists*, for lovers of God cannot but be lovers of men. Name over the eminent philanthropists of this or any century, and almost to a man they will be found to be spiritual Christians, more earnest for the eternal welfare of men than for their temporal.

It is not a genuine spirituality which is indifferent to the bodily and temporal needs of men; and it is not a true philanthropy which ignores and provides not for their spiritual and eternal wants.

Helping the poor and needy is one of the elementary truths of the Old Testament, and one of the charges against Israel and causes of their captivity was that they had not strengthened the hands of the poor and needy (Ezek. xvi. 49). This duty is also emphasised in the life and teachings of Christ and His apostles. The Lord showed that His followers would always have the poor with them, and that they would instinctively and naturally seek to "do them good." Also to believers from among the Gentiles the exhortation comes: "As we have therefore opportunity let us do good to all men," &c. And again: "Faithful is the saying, and these things I will that thou affirm confidently, that they which have believed God might be careful to maintain good works." Therefore, practical benevolence is an important part of an assembly's services among men.

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

WAITING FOR HIS LORD.

Luke xii. 35. 36.

By the late THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of
The Englishman's Bible.

"*LET your loins be girded about.*" Peter refers to this subject in his first epistle (chap. i. 13), "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." So also Jude 20, 21, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Get a clear, intelligent, and scriptural understanding of the subject of our Lord's return as the coming of the Son of God from Heaven, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him, in distinction from the coming of the Son of Man to the earth, the day of Jehovah, and the execution of judgment for the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

Also, between the judgment-seat of Christ and the grace to be brought unto us when the wood, hay, stubble of our imperfect testimony will be burnt up; and that of the judgment of the nations (Matt. xxv.), and also of the great white throne (Rev. xx.).

"*And your lights [lamps] burning.*" This appears to be a reference to Matthew xxv., when the wise virgins took oil in their vessels with their lamps, but afterwards the foolish complain, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps go out" (Greek), we cannot keep them burning. The lamp of testimony can only be kept burning by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the unction of the Holy One.

"*And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their own lord*" (Greek), for Christ Himself, the heavenly Bridegroom, whose return is desired for His own sake out of personal love to Him, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come.

"*When He will return from the wedding [depart out of the wedding feasts].*" It is important to distinguish between the singular and plural numbers here. It is not the

marriage supper of the Lamb which is here referred to ; it is rather to be connected with the parable of Matthew xxii. 1-14, when the kingdom of the heavens is likened unto a certain king who made a series of marriage feasts for his son, the rich provisions of God's grace in the Gospel, the feast of fat things, the wine on the lees well refined, founded on the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. The servant's witness of the Father's grace, as it is, "My oxen and My fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage feasts." God is now visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name, and a Bride for the Lamb ; He will accomplish the number of His elect before He establishes the kingdom and builds again the Tabernacle of David (Acts xv. 14-18).

And we are to account that the longsuffering of our Lord Jesus is salvation. He is not willing that any of those whom His Father has given Him should perish ; but when the last member is added to the body, the Church, He will come quickly, and will not tarry. And it is for this coming to take up His people and to receive His bride that we are waiting.

"That when He cometh and knocketh they may open to Him immediately." His language is, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in" (Rev. iii. 20). He is not only knocking at the heart of the poor sinner, waiting to save and bless him, but, according to Song of Solomon (v. 2), also at the heart of His beloved, "Open to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled." And also He knocks at the door of His Church (Rev. iii. 20), from whence, according to the third epistle of John, He has been excluded, in the persons of His own people, for inasmuch as this exclusion is to any of His members, He regards it as done to Himself. He will also knock in due time at the door of the servants' hall, when it surely will not do to keep Him waiting, but rather that, when He knocketh, they may open to Him immediately.

My hand was nearly shaken off, and my hair nearly shorn off for mementoes by those who willingly let missions die.—*Judson.*

Correspondence.

JEWISH CHILDREN IN THE EAST OF LONDON.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

DEAR SIR,—Work among the young always needs much patience and perseverance. It is, so to speak, a preparation of the ground on which to sow the good seed ; and when sown it needs much watering, but there must be the committal of it by faith to God, as the one who alone gives the increase.

I have always sought to get the Jewish children under the sound of the Gospel, and during the past twenty years many thousands in the East of London have heard of Jesus—some, perhaps, only once, others a few times, and a great number again and again. God has blessed the teaching in our schools to the salvation of a good many. Frequently I have been accosted in the streets by young men, who as boys came to my meeting, and who had grown out of my recollection, and I have been cheered greatly by their testimony to the blessing they received through the Gospel preached. Sometimes they have told me strange stories of their wanderings to one land and another, but God has watched over them and been with them.

One who used to be very troublesome in our schools some years ago is now preaching the Gospel. I heard a rumour of his death, but meeting his father one day I enquired if it were true. The reply was, "No ; he is worse than dead ; he is preaching the Gospel."

Many Jewish parents account their sons dead when they accept the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, and confess Him as their Saviour by baptism, so great is their abhorrence of Christianity and of Christ, whom they regard as an impostor. Thus many children are deterred from believing in Jesus by the threats of their parents, or by their loving entreaties not to bring disgrace and sorrow upon them. But the seed sown in young hearts often lies dormant till a time when, released from parental control, they are free to think and act for themselves.

Just before the Feast of the Passover, which corresponds with Easter, we close our winter classes for Jewish boys and girls by giving them an annual tea, followed by a distribution of prizes to those who have earned them, and gifts of clothing to all, many being in need of such help. We also make a special point of once more seeking to enforce the Gospel testimony given during the winter in simple language, week by week, and of pleading with the dear boys and girls to yield their hearts to the Saviour.

At their last treat, on 28th March, it was an

interesting sight to see the hall filled with the bright, eager faces of these little sons and daughters of Abraham, and to hear their voices singing so heartily familiar hymns, such as "When He Cometh," "Oh, Precious Words that Jesus said," "I Know there's a Bright and a Glorious Home," &c., and earnest prayers were offered that many might give themselves to the Lord.

Will British Christians pray and work more devotedly and continuously for the salvation of the children of that nation through whom all their spiritual blessings come, for "Salvation is of the Jews," and though, through unbelief, they have for a time been cast off until the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, yet meanwhile there is a remnant according to the election of grace to be gathered out until from Jew and Gentile the Church is complete, and then the time of Israel's full blessing will come.

ISRAEL ISAIAH ASCHKENASI.

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Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

WHO ARE OVERCOMERS?—Are all regenerate persons overcomers, as set forth in the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in Rev. ii. and iii.?

THE POSITION OF CONVERTED JEWS.—Is it obligatory upon all converted Jews to give up the observance of the Mosaic ceremonial, and to live as Christians of the Gentiles, and worship with them; or have they the option of continuing as Christians the observance of Jewish customs and ritual?

CHRISTIANS AND SIN.—In 1 John ii. 1 I read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." In 1 John iii. 9 I read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not sin; . . . he cannot sin." How am I to reconcile these two apparently opposite statements?

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

The SON of MAN of HEBREWS ii. 6.

QUESTION 436.—Please explain Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8. It has often been said that "Man" and "the Son of Man" in these verses is in reference to Christ, but if this is the correct view, then I

fail to see the sense of the words "but we see Jesus" in verse 9. Was not Adam "crowned with glory and honour?" And were not "all things put in subjection under him?" (see Gen. ii. 15, 19, 20).

Answer A.—Psalm viii. was true of man in Adam. Though made lower than the angels, he was crowned with glory and honour in being given dominion over all the earthly creatures, as there described. But God, in thus making man after His own image, had a greater purpose; and seeing that the fall made way for it, and gave occasion for it, He would accomplish this purpose in a second Man, who should have dominion over all things, even the angels themselves. This we see even now, though as yet He waits for the earthly kingdom, when the "all things" shall include those who are now His enemies, not yet subject to Him. In the first instance the Psalm was written of man in creation, looking at God's goodness and greatness in this, rather than at man's present fallen condition. At creation he was in the image of God, thus foreshadowing Him that was to come. w. c.

Editor's Note.—The quotation in Hebrews ii., verses 6 to 8, is from Psalm viii. The two words rendered "man" in the Psalm (verse 4) are different, the first being "Enosh," descriptive of man in his frail, mortal, sinful condition, the second "son of man" being literally "son of Adam."

That the God who made and upholds Creation in its wondrous vastness should condescend to be mindful of "Enosh," and should visit (in His grace) the son of Adam (*i.e.* sons of Adam as such), is that which causes adoring astonishment to the Psalmist. The question is not answered in the Psalm. Only the honour and dignity conferred on Adam at Creation is referred to, as indicating some purpose in the mind of God as yet unfulfilled. The New Testament, in Hebrews ii., affords us the clue. We are there informed that Adam's fall was only making a way for the fulfilment of God's eternal counsels in the second Man, the last Adam.

We see not yet all things put under man. On the contrary, we see man himself a slave to sin and Satan, to suffering and sorrow, to death and corruption; but this we do see by faith: "We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour." His being so gloriously exalted as the Son of Man is the pledge that in God's time He shall have the dominion that fell, through sin, from the hands of the first Adam; and a dominion of which Adam's at Creation was but the type and foreshadowing, excelling infinitely in its extent and glory and blessedness that with which Adam was crowned in Eden.

Thus the purpose for which God created man,

viz., *to have dominion*, though postponed, is not frustrated, and will receive in due time in Christ Jesus its glorious and eternal fulfilment.

THE GREAT SINNER AND THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

QUESTION 437.—Please explain how Mark iii. 29 and John iii. 16 can be reconciled. See also the 15th Paraphrase, the last two lines of the first verse:

"For while the lamp holds on to burn—
The greatest sinner may return."

Can the *greatest sinner* and the *whosoever* of John iii. 16 not include also the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost? If so, how is it stated in Mark iii. 29 that he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness*?

Answer A.—The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was the attributing His works to an unclean spirit. In so doing they rejected the one testimony God had given in the Scriptures to the Messiahship of Jesus. And no other would be given till the final "sign of the prophet" [Jonas] in His resurrection. To those who spoke against Himself, stumbling at His apparently mean origin and personal claims, He could appeal to His works, as He did in answering the disciples of John. To those who rejected the testimony of His words, which proved that "the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him," there was no further appeal. They put themselves out of reach of conviction, of faith, and therefore of forgiveness. They did not come within the circle of the "whosoever believeth in Him" of John iii. 16. The two statements are in full agreement. w. c.

Answer B.—Is it not going beyond the Scripture to use the phrase, "The unpardonable sin"? Scripture never uses it, and I think the expression is misleading. The statement in Mark iii. 29 should be read in connection with the similar passage in Matthew xii. 31, 32. The two passages mutually explain each other.

The Lord Jesus had been casting out demons and working miracles, and these He did by the power of the Holy Ghost (see Matt. xii. 28), and one of the objects in the manifestation of that power was to give an adequate witness to the truth of His Messiahship, for the works which He wrought were a sample of the "powers of the world to come" (Heb. vi. 5), or the Messianic Age. The Pharisees admitted the miracles, but said the power by which they were wrought was Satanic, and not Divine. This was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and as there was no other power by which they could be convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus, either in that age or any other, their deliberate rejection of that witness made it impossible for them to be forgiven, either in that age or the Messianic age that was

coming. The subject has nothing to do with the proclamation of forgiveness of sin and salvation through faith in a crucified and risen Saviour, which is free to all who believe.

Many devout students of God's Word doubt whether it is possible to "blaspheme against the Holy Ghost" now—certainly the sin cannot be committed in the same way as the Pharisees committed it, for the Holy Ghost is not working by outward signs in these days. Of course, the Holy Ghost can be resisted when He works conviction in the conscience; and in a certain sense modern infidelity, which rejects His testimony in the Word of God, also blasphemeth Him, and while such rejection lasts there cannot be forgiveness, but there is abundant evidence in the Word that all such, if they repent and give up their opposition, shall be forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ and the mercy of God.

H. C. C.

Answer C.—It should be clear to all that the "unpardonable sin" was saying that the Lord Jesus had an unclean Spirit (see Mark iii. 29, 30). The enormity of this sin is seen by referring to Matt. xii. 17-24.

God spoke through Isaiah of His Son, and said, "Behold My Servant"; but the Pharisees meant by the awful utterance of verse 24 that He was SATAN's servant. God said, "My Chosen, My Beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased: I will put My Spirit upon Him." The Pharisees said, "No; He is accursed of God, His enemy; it is not the Holy Spirit by whom He works, but an *evil* spirit from the evil one." All this in the face of words and works that proved the utter folly and malicious wickedness of those who spoke or thought such things of the Saviour. Common sense was opposed to their statement (verses 25, 26), and love should have prevented it being made (verse 27).

John iii. 16 promises salvation to "whosoever believeth on Him"; but such sinners *never did* or wished to believe on the Son of God. They rejected God's testimony, blasphemed the Spirit, and accused the Son of being in league with Satan! Surely their hearts must have been as a millstone, and utterly unreachable.

1 John i. 7 might have been quoted by the questioner, but the answer is the same. Only those who *come* for cleansing are cleansed, and such as these Pharisees never would come. They rejected the one Saviour and the one Sacrifice, and so there remained no way of escape for them" (Heb. x. 26, 27).

There is a wholesome truth in Romans i. 24, 26, 28, which we do well to bear in mind. If God "gave up" the sinners spoken of there, why should He not leave to themselves the *greater* sinners of Mark iii. and Matthew xii.? w. h. s.

WORLD-CONVERSION OR WORLD-EVANGELISATION.

BY A MISSIONARY.

"Welcome the beggarliest truth, so it *be* one, in exchange for the royalest sham! Truth of any kind breeds new and better truth; thus hard, granite rock will crumble down into soil, under the blessed skyeey influences; and cover itself with verdure, with fruitage and umbrage."—*T. Carlyle.*

PERHAPS one of the first disappointments which the young missionary meets with after he has "broken the back" of the language, and is beginning to take an active part in gospel effort, is the apparent lack of success in his work. He came out fresh from home, full of a Christ-inspired enthusiasm and love for souls, and unless he had previously passed through a course of conversational instruction in the company of an older and experienced missionary—a kind of lesson as valuable as it is rare—he naturally looks to see the fruit of his labours almost immediately. And who would condemn such zeal and such faith? Would to God we were all more on the watch for souls! But how soon such hopes are shattered and such expectations lowered we all know. Some of us who are young, both in years and the work, have but recently been taught that zeal and optimism are not synonymous terms; and while we cannot have too much of the former (if it be unbiased and sanctified), yet the latter must be limited by the Scriptures of Truth.

Leaving the first burst of disappointment behind, we settle down steadily to the work before us, imitating in a greater or less degree our more experienced colleagues; and we find ourselves soberly wondering *why* the dreams of early days have proved so ephemeral. We had always thought that God's purpose in the gospel was the conversion of the world, and we consequently came forth full of great expectations.

Having passed through some such experience as this, the writer was a few months ago compelled to reconsider, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the question, Does the Bible teach us that the world is to get better, and eventually become converted under the influence of the Gospel? If the Scriptures, the Christian's only Guide-book,

sanction the holding of such a view, then we may well be grievously disappointed at so much fruitless effort. If, on the other hand, we can find no Divine warrant for anticipating such results, then we may patiently and contentedly plod along in the work of evangelising, careless (*i.e.*, without care) concerning results.

Thinking it may be of interest to missionaries and Christians generally, I record below the results of my study. While writing, I am not unmindful that much I may say will doubtless meet with the disapproval of some, but I venture to hope that readers of *The Witness* will patiently weigh what is said with the open Word of God before them.

THE SUBJECT STATED.

According to the parable of the leaven (Matt. xiii. 33), it is commonly taught that the world is now improving, and is to continue so, until presently the whole population of the world shall yield obedience to the sovereign commands of God in the Gospel, and thus become "leavened" in a good sense.

The task we have before us is to discover from the Holy Scriptures the truth about this matter: Is such a view consistent with the prophecies and analogy of the Old Testament and the *teaching* of the New?

So far as I have been able to ascertain, this short parable is the chief, if not the only, Scripture adduced to support the doctrine advanced. The question, therefore, arises, Are we justified in drawing such important conclusions from such a premiss? Can a single passage of Scripture (*and that a parable*) be pressed into service to support, not to say prove, a theory directly opposed to the whole tenor of Old Testament analogy and New Testament teaching? One of the first rules we have to learn in Biblical exegesis is that one emphatic and definite statement on any given topic is of more value as testimony, and is safer as referee, than half a dozen equivocal or doubtful texts. Here the rule is conversely applied: A solitary parable is advanced to establish a theory in positive opposition to (1) What we should reasonably expect of man, considering his past treatment of God's blessings [Old Testament]; (2) Much of the direct teaching

of our Lord when on earth [gospels]; (3) Many passages in the writings of His apostles [epistles]; and (4) the inspired prophetic picture of the future drawn by St. John [the Apocalypse]. Later on we shall again refer to the parable of the leaven, but first of all let us remark on other and equally important points.

I. WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES REGARDING THE LAST TIMES? The "last days" so frequently referred to in the Word of God under various names are by practically all Bible students identified with the present age, beginning with Pentecost, on to present time. We will not now enter into a defence of this opinion, but would merely suggest to the reader a comparison between Joel ii. 28-32 and Acts ii. 14-21. In the New Testament much is said concerning the character of the days in which we find ourselves; and while considering such passages we do well to bear in mind their prophetic character. Through the pen of His servants the Holy Ghost is foretelling the depraved religious, moral, and social characteristics of a (then) coming age; and we cannot but have noticed that these predictions necessarily involved the future spread of the Gospel, for how could an apostacy occur where *the truth* was unknown? The Holy Spirit then, while perfectly cognisant of the future rapid and all but universal spread of the knowledge of the Gospel, speaks in no uncertain terms of the sheer abandonment to iniquity and unbelief of the world-population in the "last times." But to the Book.

(1) 2 Peter iii. 3-9. Here it is foretold that in the "last days" men shall arise who will presumptuously scoff at the idea of the second coming of the Lord and the rapture of the Church—not necessarily atheists, but rationalists: believers in the God of creation, but not in the God of revelation. "Their own pleasure is their sole law," and such will therefore be unrestrained by the solemn thoughts of a coming judgment (cf. Jude 17-19).

(2) 2 Timothy iv. 3, 4, R.V. This portion predicts the coming of a time when men "will not endure sound [wholesome] doctrine; but, having itching ears, they will hearken to themselves teachers after their own lusts."

And note, this is to be the character of *professing Christians*, whose spiritual state will be so low that they will be unwilling to be arrested in their lustful course by the faithful ministrations of true teachers; nevertheless, in order to retain a semblance of religion, they will call around them teachers to their own taste—recognised, indeed, but as godless as themselves. It cannot be that reference is here made to individuals here and there turning from the truth, but rather to the *vast majority*, who, in choosing for themselves, will become heretics in the truest sense of the word [*αἵρεσις*, to choose], apostatising from the truth of God, and loving the lie of the devil. Otherwise, why is such emphasis given to these warnings in the New Testament, especially in the pastoral epistles? The passages must find their fulfilment in a general "falling away."

(3) 2 Timothy iii. 1-9. The selection from Peter's second epistle speaks of *scoffers*; the verses just quoted describe *heretics*; this passage tells of the utter corruption of mankind—socially, morally, religiously—in the "last days." These are doubtless the last days, and if, notwithstanding the fact that the Gospel has been "advancing" for nearly two millenniums, we compare this black prophetic picture with "things as they are" to-day, I do not think we shall fail to see the correspondence. A glance at the latter half of Romans i. will create the suggestion that in the perilous (*lit.*, difficult) times to come (now present?), men (Christendom) will relapse into all the vile practices of heathenism. Let us here also draw attention to the inclusive way in which the prophecies open—"For men," &c.

(4) 2 Thess. ii. 1-12, R.V. Here is foretold the awful climax the world will reach before the coming of the Son of Man in judgment, viz., the setting up of "that Wicked (One)," or "antichrist," "man of sin," "beast," as he is variously designated, to whom the world, with the exception of the few who will refuse to receive upon their forehead or right hand his brand of infamy (Rev. xiii.), will pay the homage due to God only. But that climax is *now* being reached, "for the mystery of iniquity [*ἀνομία*, lawlessness; cf. Matt. xxiv. 12] doth already work"; and but for the

restraining influence of the Holy Spirit ["he who now letteth," 2 Thess. ii. 7] the antichrist would even now be revealed in all the strength of his godlessness. The world is indeed ripe for such a revelation; ripe, too, for the judgment which must follow thereon; but in grace the sword remains sheathed yet awhile (cf. Eccles. viii. 11).

Thus we see that rank *anti-Christianity* is to be characteristic of the days immediately before the scenes of God's judgments, and will probably be evolved out of the *pseudo-Christianity* which, as we have noticed, is to be the spirit of the closing days of this age.

(5) Luke xviii. 8: "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find [the] faith on the earth?" The simple inference which this question of our blessed Lord carries with it is that He will *not* find the faith on the earth when He comes in power and glory to judge the world. God ever has His trusting remnant, and we learn from the Revelation that some will remain faithful amidst a world enamoured of a God-hating man of sin.

II. Thus far we have been considering some of the texts directly speaking of the character of the "last days." Now, may I be allowed to advance an argument indirectly bearing upon the question, and showing by comparison the hopelessness of looking to see the world's conversion?

God in His sovereignty has been pleased, in the course of the world's history, to pass men through a SERIES OF TESTS OR DISPENSATIONS to prove whether or no they have any righteousness for Himself; but in each of these tests, as we shall see, man unquestionably and absolutely fails. Let us cursorily notice these several dispensations in order.

(1) In Eden our first parents were tested in *innocence*, under the one known command, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat" (Gen. ii. 17). Sinless and pure, of them only can it be said that they were innocent (Gen. ii. 25). They came from the hand of their Creator sinlessly perfect, but truly human, having an independent will, and capacity of exercising same. But they fell, and thus "brought death into the world, and all our woe." In the garden they fell so low as to give credit to the words of one who was classed as a

"beast of the field" (Gen. iii. 1); and by heeding the first lie ever told on earth ("ye shall not surely die"), the spell of innocency was broken. Man's first and brief period of testing was over, and immediately was ushered in the second, viz.:

(2) *Conscience*. The words of the serpent contained *some* truth: "Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, *knowing good and evil*." Henceforth Adam and Eve lived under the light of a self-created conscience. They knew what was evil, they knew also what was good; and the "sons and daughters" begotten unto Adam "in his own likeness"—that of sinful flesh—were similarly disposed, though they as yet had no direct revelation from God. But instead of rightly making use of the moral faculty and choosing good they chose evil, so much so that the more they multiplied upon the earth the more corrupt they became, until at last the wickedness of man becoming great, "it repented the Lord that He had made man," and in His grief He determined to destroy him and cleanse the earth of its pollutions by a flood. Thus man failed when tested under the light of conscience only.

(3) Then came in the *Law*, with its "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" so emphatically laid down. Under the last trial, if a man sinned he did so against his own conscience only, speaking rationally. If he sinned now it was against the revealed will of a holy God. Sin is lawlessness (1 John iii. 4, r.v.), and with God the retributive principle (Rom. vi. 23) is eternal, attaching to no special epoch. But by the bringing in of the law sin became "exceeding sinful" (Rom. vii. 13), in that it became *transgression* (Rom. iv. 15). But what do we find was the effect of the written law upon the chosen people of God as representing the nations of the world (Rom. iii. 19)? Do the oft-repeated injunctions to act and live righteously, and the equally oft-recurring warnings against disobeying God's commands, have the desired effect? No; quite the contrary. The presence of a forbidding law seems only to have roused into even greater activity than ever the already existing tendency to evil. Man broke the written law of God as readily as he had infringed the unwritten, hidden

law of the heart—conscience (see Rom. vii.). Thus when placed upon the ground of responsibility man once more fails, as the most casual readers of the Old Testament histories will admit. The captivity of both Israel and Judah was the result. The prophets constantly reiterate that it was because of their sins the Jews were led into captivity. "They obeyed not Thy voice, neither walked in Thy law; they have done nothing of all that Thou commanded them to do: therefore Thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them" (Jer. xxxii. 23).

(4) The fourth test was the most gracious of all, viz., by the *actual presence in the midst of men of their Creator—God*. In innocence, under the light of conscience, under the Mosaic economy, man had miserably failed. And "last of all He sent unto them His Son, saying, They will reverence My Son" (Matt. xxi. 37). For thirty-three and a half years the Son of God was treading this sad and restless world of sorrow; for over three years He was making felt His benign and holy influence in public ministry, revealing to lost, ruined, and failing man the very heart of God. The inspired summary of His life, as seen by creatures, is given by the Apostle Peter: He "went about doing good" (Acts x. 38).

How did this short dispensation terminate? The answer is to be found on the heights of Calvary, without the walls of the city of Jerusalem, where by the eye of faith we behold, stretched an accursed victim upon a cross of wood, the dying form of the Christ of God. There at the cross are concentrated the love of God in all the perfection of its unique grandeur and the bitterest hatred of man. And there, too, we learn as nowhere else the transcendent holiness of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. "They crucified Him," and that awful tragedy proved the utter depravity of the heart of man, and his natural hatred to God.

(To be continued.)

CAN that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege.—*Livingstone*.

JUDGMENT AND PUNISHMENT in RELATION to the UNBELIEVER.

By GEORGE W. NEATBY, London.

"YOU will not be punished for your sins, but for rejecting Christ." Such are the words which are often heard from the lips of Gospel preachers. Are they true? If not, what a terrible thing that they should be so often repeated. To some they are an integral part of their creed, and to challenge their truth appears like making light of the rejection of God's unspeakable gift.

But let us look at them in the light of God's Word. "What saith the Scripture" must be the divine touchstone by which all our assertions, even the most cherished, must be judged. I think a glance at one or two Scriptures will convince us that such a statement is not only not found in Holy Scripture but is utterly opposed thereto.

For the believer the question of sins was settled once and for ever at the cross. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). But no such thing is ever said about an unbeliever; on the contrary, we find that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter ii. 9); and again, "For because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6); and again, "And they were judged (in the sense of condemnation or sentence of punishment), every man according to his works" (Rev. xx. 13). Possibly Luke xii. 47 is even more explicit. There we see the man beaten according to his measure of guilt. The man who has lived a life of sin and high-handed rebellion against God, and that in the full blaze of the revelation of God's love in the cross, will be beaten with many more stripes than the man who has sinned in a lesser light. The punishment will be meted out according to strict justice, even "unto every man according to his works."

But just as there is generally a grain of truth in the wildest fable, so the statement I quoted at the outset is founded on a passage of Scripture misunderstood. In John iii. 18 (R.V.) we read these words: "He that

believeth on Him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the Name of the only-begotten Son of God."

The Revised Version here renders the Greek word *κρινω*, *judged*; and this is the strict meaning of the word, and the reason why the passage has been misunderstood is because the *judgment* of the unbeliever has been confounded with the punishment of the sinner, as such.

The prisoner is *judged* before he leaves the dock, but his punishment has yet to come. For example, a boy of seventeen is committed for trial on a charge of theft. It is his first offence, and has possibly been committed in great extremity of hunger. On the same day a man of fifty, hardened in vice, is committed for trial on a like charge. The verdict in both cases is "Guilty," but the sentence is vastly different. The judge passes sentence according to the respective merits of each case. So with the unbeliever; the immoral and moral, the religious and the profane, are, as far as judgment is concerned, in exactly the same case—they are "judged already." But God, who is infinitely holy and just, will apportion each his punishment according to the merits of each case. To say that God's controversy with men is not now about a broken law but a rejected Christ is perfectly true, for God is not now pleading with men about sins. This he did until the cross, which closed the history of the first man before God. The cross has abundantly proved man's guilt, and the question now is whether he will "flee for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel."

There is an ever-increasing need of doctrinal clearness in the preaching of the Gospel. There are, alas! many expressions used in preaching the Gospel which are not found in Scripture, and whose only merit is antiquity. The Lord graciously give us to have a holy jealousy for the truth in the proclamation of the Gospel of the Glory of the blessed God. If any unsaved one should read this, let me say to you, dear fellow-sinner, do not trifle with this solemn question. *Out of Christ*, you must meet the doom and punishment of your sins; *in Christ*, all judg-

ment is passed. If you will but take shelter in Him you can say:

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus—
There they spent their utmost power."

Amen!

CHRIST RISEN.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART III.

NOW, look at the fifteenth verse (Lev. xxiii.):

"And ye shall count from the morrow after the Sabbath."

That is, "the first day of the week." The Sabbath commemorates the first creation, the first day of the week commemorates the resurrection of Him who is the Head of the new creation. We have bid good-bye to the first creation at the Cross of Christ. The first creation is under the death-sentence of the Cross. The new creation is there in the Risen One, the glorious "Firstfruits." The first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and celebrates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Now, it is good for the world to keep a Sabbath, and alas! for the nation that gives up its Sabbath to work or recreation. The days when our forefathers pulled down their blinds in their homes on the Sunday were good for man. But am I to call upon a world that has rejected and does not believe on the Lord Jesus to observe a day in commemoration of His resurrection? Surely that is only for the saints. The world never set eyes on Him in resurrection. He didn't show Himself openly to *all* the people. He showed Himself to witnesses chosen before of God—redeemed ones saw Him, and none other. Many saw Him, but the world never saw Him. The first day of the week is a blessed day; don't secularise it, keep it for the Lord whose day it is—prize it as one of those precious privileges which God permits us to have in the enemy's world—one day in the seven to wait upon the Lord. I love every first day of the week: as the daylight dawns we remember it is the day on which the Lord Jesus burst the bars of death and the grave—it is the Resurrection Morn. Oh! may His saints value it.

"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths.

[that is, seven weeks, seven periods of seven]

"shall be complete:

"Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord."

"Fifty days." That fiftieth day was what we have in the second of Acts—the day of Pentecost. Pentecost means "the fiftieth." It was the first day of the week too; "the morrow after the Sabbath." And what was to be brought on the fiftieth day?

"Ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord."

This is indeed something new. The like of this never took place before. Whoever heard before of a meat offering like this:

"Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two-tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord."

Loaves baked with leaven! Was not leaven prohibited? Yes, leaven was prohibited in all the offerings to Jehovah *made with fire*. Leaven could not come on the altar, for anything that comes upon the altar represents Christ, and there was no leaven in Him. Therefore these two loaves are not to be put upon the altar. But, why two? The "new man" that God has fashioned out of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ; the new thing that has "risen with Him" is the Church, "the body of Christ," gathered out of Jew and out of Gentile—the two are made one and both are accepted in the one risen Son of God. Hence two loaves. But why with leaven? Because they are a type, not of Christ, but of the Church, and the flesh is in us yet, and until we drop this old man and depart to be with Christ, or when the Lord comes, and in a moment we are changed into His glorious image—until that moment we have evil in us. Evil in us is one thing. Paul said: "I know that in me dwelleth no good thing." He was conscious that evil was in him. But evil in us is one thing; evil *breaking out* is quite another. God teaches us here that notwithstanding that the believer has a corrupt nature and a heart that is ever ready to turn aside, and a proneness in the flesh to that which is

evil, notwithstanding all this, he is "accepted in the Beloved."

Now, look what follows—18th verse:

"And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams; they shall be for a burnt offering unto the Lord, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the Lord.

"Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.

"And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs."

Now, do you see the difference? The sheaf of firstfruits did not require this, it was essentially pure; but when you get the "two loaves baked with leaven," seven lambs, one bullock, two rams, the kid, and the two lambs must all be presented with them—blood must flow, otherwise they could not be accepted. But waved before Jehovah with that which told of death for sin, they are accepted; they are holy. And you and I, conscious of infirmity, conscious of evil within, are accepted in the Beloved One by His precious Blood which cleanseth from all sin. Let me mention here, in passing, that the word for "firstfruits," elsewhere used, is different altogether in the Hebrew from the word "firstfruits" applied to the two loaves. The former word is not only first in order, but first in the sense of pre-eminence, whilst that applied to the two loaves only means first in order. So the Church "is a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James i. 18) being gathered out of all kindreds, and nations, and peoples, and tongues, and united to the Son of God in heaven. When all Israel shall be saved, and all nations shall be blessed, that will be the harvest. Christ is pre-eminently THE FIRSTFRUITS. We are "a kind of firstfruits" accepted in Him. By-and-by the harvest will come, when the world will be placed under the reign of the glorified Son of Man.

I will ask you, in conclusion, to glance at the 5th chapter of Romans, 10th verse:

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be *saved by His life*."

I want to press that verse upon you. When God speaks about being saved He means more than being simply justified. If God was to account me righteous, and leave me just as I was, that would be a poor thing; but God does more than that. He knows my weakness, the corruption of my nature, and that I need a living Saviour, therefore He has provided for me a High Priest within the veil, who is able to save to the uttermost *all* that come unto God by Him. "We were reconciled, when we were enemies, to God, by the death of His Son." God could not reconcile an enemy on any other ground, consistently with His own righteousness. But being reconciled, "How much more shall we be saved by His life." If He so loved an enemy that He died for him, that is, if He died to win me, how much more will He save me now that He has only to put forth the mighty power of His resurrection life. Oh! these "much mores" of the 5th of Romans: mark them every one.

It is a living Saviour that we need to save us; we must be in continual touch with the Mighty Redeemer at God's right hand. The power of Christ alone can save—"Without Me ye can do nothing." We are absolutely powerless. We are like an electric car going up a hill; detach its arm from the wire overhead, and it will slide down the hill as fast as it can to destruction. We need to be in touch with the power of the living Saviour. Oh! it is not mere theory; it is not doctrines—precious as doctrines are—for Christ is the summing up of the doctrines of His Word. But it is possible to be up in all the doctrines of Scripture, and yet not be in touch with the living Christ.

There was one poor woman pressing through the crowd to get at Jesus, but the crowd was so dense that she could only, by stretching out her hand, reach the hem of His garment; for she said within herself, "If I may touch His garment, I shall be whole." Did Jesus say, "Thy touch hath saved thee"? No; "Thy faith hath saved thee;" and the same faith can touch Him now. You may receive His power now—power to love what you hated, and power to hate what you loved; power to overcome sin, no matter what its hold upon you is.

There is no sin that the Blood of Christ cannot cleanse, and none that the power of Christ cannot deliver from. It is not merely to know truth, to know doctrine, but to know a living, present Saviour.

My dear old friend the late Mr. Lincoln used to print a little card every New-year's day, and give one to each attending his ministry. Once he gave me one of those cards. I will tell you what was on it:

"Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright reality,
More present to faith's vision keen
Than any earthly object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie."

I said to him, as I read it, "Is that all there is of the poem?" I thought there might be several verses. Turning to me in his abrupt way, he asked, "What more do you want?" I felt rebuked. I felt there was no more needed than that to know the living Saviour, to be in direct contact with Him, to know His love, to know His power, to know His wisdom and His grace. "What more do you want?" God grant us a better knowledge of the risen Son of God.

JONAH'S REASON FOR RUNNING AWAY.

TO the superficial reader of Holy Scripture many of its deeper glories are completely veiled. "The deep things of God" are not found lying on the surface; they are in the depths. Pebbles we may pick up on any strand, but if we want pearls we must dive for them. Not only do things spiritual escape our notice, but many historical facts elude our hand for lack of close application. This is pre-eminently true of the flight of Jonah. His reason for running away does not appear at first sight. We scan the first chapter in vain for the least hint of it. The second chapter is devoted to prayer. The third chapter shows Jonah on his way to Nineveh. Not till we reach the fourth and last chapter does the reason of his strange behaviour leak out. He fled because God is merciful. Listen to his own words spoken to God: "I pray Thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I

knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil" (Jonah iv. 2, 3).

After his "belly of hell" experience (ii. 2), one would expect to find Jonah a humbled man; but is it so? There was no place for repentance or forgiveness in Jonah's gospel. Recently forgiven the high-handed sin of disobedience, he is ready to seize the inhabitants of Nineveh by the throat. If God spared Nineveh after he had prophesied its destruction, then Jonah's reputation was blasted for ever! Jonah had the mind of God about Nineveh before they repented, but he had not the heart of God toward them after repentance.

The reason Jonah gives for fleeing from men is the reason we give for going to men. The knowledge that God is merciful, and that His mercy is based on the eternal satisfaction of His righteousness in the Cross of Christ, has sent, and is sending, thousands of preachers unto all the world. Now, it is easy to criticise Jonah; but his history was not written for our criticism, but for our learning. Have not we been provokingly disobedient to God? Have we not shown much temper when our wills have been thwarted, and our words seemed to fall to the ground? Has not our reputation been more to us than the salvation of souls? The eye of a "Greater than Jonah" is constantly on us; may He help us to "consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted." T. B.

BIBLE STUDIES.

COMPANIONS.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|
| Godliness and honesty | - | 1 Tim. ii. 2 |
| Godliness and good works | - | 1 Tim. ii. 10 |
| Godliness and contentment | - | 1 Tim. vi. 8 |

"Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth"
(Psalm xii. 1). J. M. H.

READY.

The believer should be "ready"—

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. To give an answer of the hope | 1 Pet. iii. 15 |
| 2. To preach the Gospel | Rom. i. 15 |
| 3. To distribute | 1 Tim. vi. 18 |
| 4. To every good work | Titus iii. 1 |
| 5. To be bound | Acts xxi. 13 |
| 6. To be offered | 2 Tim. iv. 6 |
| 7. To meet the Lord | Luke xii. 40 |

CHURCHES OF GOD:

AND THE DIVINE PURPOSES IN THEIR FORMATION.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

PART V.

IN this our closing paper we desire briefly to indicate the individual application of what has gone before, and to make a practical suggestion or two on an important matter to assemblies as a whole.

Some may brush aside the force of what has been presented by arguing that we have from the Scriptures set up an ideal which can never be realised. But others will not be satisfied so to do, for the answer to such an objection is simple and apparent: no Christian of our acquaintance is always and in all things what he should be. Do we therefore lighten the claims of grace or lower the scriptural standard of holiness? Most certainly not. While admitting the sin and imperfection, we still set before ourselves and all saints the responsibility to walk even as Christ walked (1 John ii. 6).

So, although we acknowledge that no Church, since it is composed of far from perfect individuals, will ever be everything that it ought to be in its various relationships, we should still keep before us the divine pattern, and do our utmost to carry it out. The failures of individual Christians do not lead one to question Christ's power and willingness to save His people from their sins. The failure of Churches should not lead one to acquiesce in the substitution of some human system for scriptural Church order.

Whether in the past or the present, whether for the individual or the congregation, since God is what He is, He cannot but set an exalted standard before His people. But He ever makes full provision for reaching it. Thus for the individual and for the assembly the ideal may become the actual. Therefore we would affectionately urge each reader of these papers to honestly face the question: If these are the purposes and marks of a true Church, do I belong to one?

In Christendom, at the present time, there are many sects and systems bearing Christ's Name which the instructed Christian of the

broadest sympathies cannot recognise as Churches after the New Testament order; yet probably in them all some true saints are to be found. But it is not a question whether true children of God are associated with such systems, but whether it is that which corporately is according to the mind of Christ.

Let us in a few sentences recapitulate what we have seen from the Scriptures:

1. A Church of God is composed of those who make a credible profession of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; of those who bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and whose living faith shows itself by works. And if these three qualifications are not demanded of those seeking to unite themselves with any company, that society lacks the first mark of a Church of God.

2. Such a Church is "sound in the faith." It will zealously guard against teachings which in any way touch the full Deity, sinless nature and life, and atoning death of the Redeemer; or that tends to weaken belief in the divine origin and absolute truthfulness and authenticity of the Scriptures; or that denies the spiritual ruin of all men and the eternal judgment of the unbeliever.

3. On the one hand, such a Church neither neglects nor ignores the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; nor, on the other hand, does it make these necessary to or the means of obtaining or sustaining spiritual life.

4. An assembly of Christ will not be so fettered by rules and regulations that no room or opportunity is left for His sovereign action by the Holy Spirit in leading forth the saints in approaches God-ward and in their own up-building.

5. Such a Church will not be gathered on a party or sectarian basis; it will heartily welcome to its privileges and responsibilities all children of God, unless the new-comers are in error concerning some foundation doctrine, or are guilty of conduct for which one in the assembly would be scripturally put away.

6. Finally, if in a right condition, as well as in a scriptural position, such an assembly will be active and earnest in reaching un-

saved ones with the gospel; and in man's temporal needs and misfortunes it will play the part of the good Samaritan rather than of the one who passed by on the other side.

Even in these days, thank God, there are throughout the world hundreds of companies of believers which bear the marks of true Churches; and in the main, it may be said, they are answering the divine purposes and intentions in their formation. In spite of known weakness and failure, God our Father is worshipped and served, Christ is trusted in and obeyed, the Holy Spirit is honoured and not quenched, believers are comforted and edified, and unbelievers are awakened and saved. From persecution from without these Churches have rest, and are being built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort (*paraclesis*) of the Holy Spirit, are being multiplied (Acts ix. 31). The word rendered "comfort" in this verse includes much more: it embraces all the activities of the blessed Paraclete in, toward, and through believers and the Church.

Let me once more urge the Christian reader to honestly face the question of his ecclesiastical relationship, and if on doing so he finds himself connected with that which bears not the marks of a scriptural Church, for the glory of the Lord, the good of others, and his own profit, let him sever that connection and seek out, even at present loss and inconvenience, and throw in his lot with a company, however small or despised, that possesses the characteristics of a Church of the Living God. Let us all seek to "*follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*" (2 Tim. ii. 22).

And to the many who will read these lines and believe that they are in and of assemblies of believers gathered on New Testament principles, let me urge the importance and solemnity of such a position. It behoves all of us to strenuously endeavour to become all that we should toward our fellow-believers, and to do all that we can in the various departments of Church life. There must be no sleeping partners; all should have an interest and share in the works of faith and labours of love of the assembly. Alas! that any should ever act as if they thought that

by taking the Lord's supper once a week they fulfil all their Christian obligations.

In closing, a practical suggestion or two concerning the benevolent work of the assembly may not be out of place. With thankfulness one has observed that the recent overwhelming material needs of millions in India have called forth collective gifts from not a few assemblies. These needs are exceptional, and, we trust, only temporary; but there are demands at our very doors which continue all the year round, and every year, for the Master's words are still true, "The poor always ye have with you." I doubt not it would be God-honouring, and helpful to assemblies themselves as well as to the institutions, if at set times united offerings were sent to well-known philanthropic undertakings. Seeing that for the help and good of men there are so many lovingly and wisely-conceived efforts in our midst, it may seem invidious and unnecessary to make a selection; but there are some, such as the Ashley Down Orphanage, Quarrier's Homes, &c., which are conducted on sound financial and Christian principles, which definitely and confessedly aim at spiritual as well as temporal results—such, surely, might well be regularly helped by assemblies of God.

Then there are certain local charities—hospitals, homes for the aged and infirm, &c.—which, under the present circumstances, to contribute to is rather a matter of *debt* than charity, for not infrequently believers in assemblies also receive help and benefit from them. It should never be forgotten that these institutions are all fruits of the life, teachings, and death of Jesus Christ. Where His Name is unknown, in the main, such institutions will be sought for in vain; and the more wide and spiritual the knowledge of Him, the more, it will be found, that all kinds of benevolent institutions spring up and flourish.

Not long ago, at the close of a Sunday evening meeting in a certain town in England, a widely-known and highly-esteemed servant of God made an announcement to the following effect: "Next Sunday morning the offering of the Church will be for the local hospital; and, considering the object, a collection will be taken at the close of the evening meeting."

For some time past, I believe, these matters have exercised the minds of many children of God, therefore it gave me great pleasure to hear such an announcement in the before-mentioned assembly. Why should not something of this become general among scripturally-gathered Churches throughout the world? The obligation once seen and admitted, the fulfilling of it will soon follow.

It is certain that thousands of believers would gladly, two or three times a year, contribute their sixpences or shillings to a collective offering for the help of such praiseworthy enterprises, who would never themselves send their little gifts. Ought not such to be considered, and opportunity provided for them to do God's will in these things?

But here we must stop. Let every reader prove all things, and hold fast and carry out that which is according to the truth in these and other matters. And may He, who is still the Head of His body the Church, use these few short articles for His own glory, and for the blessing and help of fellow-members of that body which is the fulness of Him that filleth all its members with all spiritual graces and blessings.

ABISHAI, ONE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

PAPER II.

ALTHOUGH surrounded by the unfined dangers of an enemy's camp, Abishai was safe. And why was he safe? Because he had gone down with the Lord's anointed. He was in the leading of God; and all who are in His leading are in His keeping. The great eye of everlasting love was following every movement of David and his trusted follower. The arm of Omnipotence was ready to shield them. Yea, to keep them safe in danger's hour, the word had gone forth from the excellent Glory commanding Saul and all his host to fall into a sleep so deep that no one should perceive the sound of hostile footsteps in the camp. Let us learn here that none are so safe as those who go forth with the Lord's anointed. If we observe a shifting policy—if we stand still to calculate the chances of success, and the possible consequences of devotion—we

shall find ourselves beset by difficulties and overpowered by temptation. Overcoming faith is not the portion of those who guide their life by the compass of policy. But if we are prepared to *go down with Christ*, we shall prove in our experience that there is One with us who can still the enemy and the avenger—One who can command the enemies of our soul to sleep—One who can say to the angry billows of temptation, “Peace, be still,” and there shall be a great calm. May this not be the great reason of much failure and defeat?—we are not prepared to go down with Christ.

The path of faith—the path of devotion to the chosen One—must needs be the path of safety, for the simple reason that *God is there*; and we know that His presence is salvation. It seems to be characteristic of the divine life that they who tread God’s path shall share His triumph. Surely this is the “path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye hath not seen” (Job xxviii. 7). For is it not written of that path that the lion’s whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed it by? It is a path of safety and of victory, and those who tread it are proving in their experience what it is to be always led in triumph in Christ (2 Cor. ii. 14, R.V.).

It is instructive to note that Abishai was one of those who identified themselves with David *in rejection*. The first time he comes before us in the Scriptures, he is in association with a rejected king. There were others who evidently preferred to wait to see if “the kingdom” was going to be a success. Joab was one who waited. We never hear of him during the time of rejection. But no sooner is David crowned king in Hebron than Joab looks about for a good position in the kingdom. And he finds it! Strange that time-servers should often triumph, yea, and rise to power. Yet so it was. But Abishai was not one of these. He had no “axe to grind”—no private interests to serve—no revenge to cherish—no ambitions to gratify. He was for David; let him be crowned or crownless, it mattered not to Abishai. He may not have had Jonathan’s faith—that David would yet reign over Israel as the acknowledged king; but in devotion he was not second to

Jonathan. Abishai, despite his failings and his impetuosity, could say, like Ittai of a later day, “In what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be” (2 Sam. xv. 21).

It has been said that the failures of good men are the greatest. Doubtless this is due to the fact that failure in such a case shows black against the white background of a hitherto consistent testimony. Abishai has a dark chapter in his history; and perhaps it looks all the darker because of so much in him that was excellent. Scripture clearly associates him with his brother Joab in the assassination of Abner. We are all familiar with the circumstances. In the course of the “long war between the house of Saul and the house of David” a sanguinary conflict took place by the pool of Gibeon. In the subsequent flight of Saul’s men we find that Asahel, Joab’s brother, was slain by Abner, purely in self-defence. The young man’s blood was clearly on his own head. It was no case for revenge, yet Joab determined to avenge his brother’s death. We know with what consummate treachery he attained his end; and we know the anguish that rent David’s heart when Abner fell. We are not surprised at Joab’s action, for it is not out of keeping with the general tenor of his character. But we are surprised and saddened when we find Abishai a confederate with Joab in the deed of blood (2 Sam. iii. 30). In the work of the Lord there is nothing more lamentable than to see a good man becoming the tool of a carnal believer. Yet sights like these are to be seen. How they come about is sometimes a mystery. Of this much, however, we may be certain, that an Abishai must come a long way down from his excellency before he can lend himself to a revengeful Joab. We must be prepared to say “No” to Joab as well as “Yes” to David. We need to take heed lest we strengthen the hands of iniquity. We have no doubt that it was Joab who struck the fatal blow (2 Sam. iii. 27), as it was on his head that the curse afterwards fell (verse 29). Yet our Lord does not conceal or excuse the circumstance that Abishai was there, evidently consenting to the death of Abner. And perhaps he would not have been there

had he not been a *brother* of Joab. Family relationship has often a great deal to do with unholy alliances. When the claims of flesh-and-blood are allowed, there can be no single-eyed acting for God. Thus it comes to pass that the question is not: "What is the offence?" but "Who is the offender?" If he is a brother of mine I am tempted to say to myself: "No doubt my brother is in the right, and I must make *his* cause *my* cause." But my brother according to the flesh may be in the wrong. And in that case I may have to learn by bitter experience that fleshly compassion cannot work the righteousness of God. In that testing moment when Levi took his stand for the Lord it is recorded of him that he "said of his father, and of his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew he his own children" (Deut. xxxiii. 9, R.V.). If Abishai had been on his watchtower repudiating, like Levi, the claims of the flesh, he would not have been one of those who rung from David's heart the words: "And these men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me" (2 Sam. iii. 39). w. s.

THE LORD MY STRENGTH.

"Look unto Me. . . In the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah xlv. 22, 24).

TO Whom else can I look?
 On Whom else can I lean?
 Thou art alone my stay;
 Thou, who hast made me clean—
 Washing away my sins
 In Thy sin-cleansing Blood;
 Bringing me ever nigh
 Unto Thy Father—God.
 Oft have I trusted self;
 Now I will trust but Thee;
 Self-confidence is gone,
 No strength is there in me.
 But Thou art all my Strength,
 O Lord, my righteousness;
 And Thou hast humbled me
 Only that Thou might'st bless.
 And Thou hast turned mine eyes
 Away from self and sin;
 I look to Thee, and lo!
 Thy joy and peace flow in.

Oh, now I see Thy face,
 And now I know full well
 That in Thy glorious light
 No miseries can dwell.
 Oh, now I know the joy
 Whose fullness dwells in Thee;
 I know Thy peace and love,
 For Thou hast pardoned me.
 Praise have I sought for self,
 That I might raised be;
 Be THOU ALONE raised now,
 Though Thou abasest me.

Leeds.

H.

GOD'S GLORIOUS HIGH THRONE.

(Jeremiah xvii.)

Notes of an Address by JAMES WRIGHT, Bristol.

PAPER II.

WE are in trial; some great perplexity has come upon us during the last few days. It is an unmixed blessing, and deliverance will come, but until then you and I can say from our hearts, "Father, I thank Thee for this." We are exhorted in everything to give thanks, and therefore, for the most perplexing and trying and aggravating trials, we should from the very bottom of our hearts give thanks, for several reasons. One is, it is a proof that the Father has us in hand, disciplining us, for, "What son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Heb. xii. 7). Another reason is, that by this very thing the Lord strengthens our faith—that is His object. When we get near to Him, on our knees, and in spirit very close to Him, we continually cry, "Lord, increase our faith" (Luke xvii. 5), and we say, "Lord, draw us nearer to Thee." And the Lord answers us by sending trials that teach us that we have no strength, no wisdom, no power of our own.

"Trial makes the promise sweet;
 Trial gives new life to prayer;
 Trial lays us at His feet,
 Brings us low, and keeps us there."

What is the fruit of it? Increase of patience. Do not let us lose the blessing—do not let us be in a hurry. First of all, thank God—from our hearts thank God—for the trial, and then thank God for His revealed character—that He is faithful, and will not suffer

one of us to be tempted above what we are able to bear (1 Cor. x. 13). He never has, and you and I are not going to be the first instances. An old saint once said she would not mind being the second. But God has never in one single instance allowed any of His people to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but "*with the temptation*" has made a way of escape—not six months before, not six weeks before, not necessarily six days before, not even six hours before.

When the Lord made a way of escape for Israel at the Red Sea, it was not five minutes before, so to speak, but *with it*. When the temptation reached the necessity of interposition—just in time, for God's help is never five minutes too late—He said to Moses, "Stretch out thine hand over the sea" (Ex. xiv. 16), and a path was made for them through the midst of the waters. I pray you, tried soul, grasp that word. God means what He says, and very often He delays, and purposely delays, the way of deliverance till the moment of need, but He is always in time for it. Now, who does all this? The One who sits on this glorious throne. You know how Pharaoh said to Joseph: "I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou" (Gen. xli. 40, 44). Therefore, I say, the risen Christ, who is the exalted Christ of God, is our true Joseph; everything is in His hand. Let it be a word of God to our hearts and consciences, "Go to Joseph" (verse 55). And if we have thanked God for the way of escape, telling Him we know He will deliver, then we get the joy beforehand, before it comes, and can be as joyous as if He had delivered, because He is faithful, and will keep His promise and make a way of escape. Our temptation is to try and *make* a way of escape. This was what Abraham did in obtaining Ishmael, which was trying to get deliverance in the flesh, but he did not get the promise in that way. So the principle applies: We may get *a* deliverance by cutting the meshes of the net, but we do not get the *Lord's* deliverance. When Elisha was teaching the King of Israel to shoot arrows in token of deliverance from Syria, he put his hands upon the King's hands and

said, "Shoot. The arrow of the *Lord's* deliverance" (2 Kings xiii. 17). O, what a vast difference between *a* deliverance and the *Lord's* deliverance!

The greatest wisdom for you and me is to wait for the Lord's deliverance, and there is no word between the covers of this Book which is more calculated to strengthen our confidence in God and to keep us calm in the hour of trial than this: "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." That is, the One who sits on the throne, and has universal dominion at this moment, is the One who loved me with such a love that He gave Himself for my sins, and purged my sins away with His blood. It is He who occupies this glorious and high throne, and nothing can shake the foundation of this throne or alter one of the purposes of the One on the throne, and His purpose is blessing. Therefore this dark trial, whatever it is, has one purpose, and that is blessing. Oh, let us never imitate Jacob and say, "All these things are *against* me" (Gen. xlii. 36), but rather say, "All these things are *for* me."

In verse 13 we have a solemn warning addressed to those who reject salvation—who reject grace that reigns through righteousness. The grace of God is manifested in and executed by this King who sits upon the glorious high throne, and who is exalted to that place in the economy of redemption as the reward of His obedience unto death. Every soul that rejects salvation by grace, through the atoning work of our Lord Jesus, is confronted by this warning: "All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed."

No soul that rests on that salvation will be ashamed, but all those who refuse salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, their names are "written in the earth" (verse 13).

What does that mean? We learn that by contrast. When the disciples returned to the Lord Jesus, rejoicing in the success that attended their service, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name," He did not rebuke them, but told them of a higher joy. "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not . . . but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven"

(Luke x. 20). Not that we may not rejoice in service, but we are to rejoice a great deal more in this, that we are children of God, and our names are in the Family Register.

Note the contrast: "*Written in the earth.*" Written in heaven means an eternal inheritance. We are born from above—born of the Holy Spirit. It means that we are actually sons of God, children of God. Now, that is a greater thing to rejoice in than any success in service down here. It is a great thing, because it means this, that I shall be in the presence of God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit throughout eternity. It means that I shall be without blame before Him in love. It means that I shall be brought into a holy fellowship, embracing every blood-washed sinner, the innumerable multitude. As surely as I am a child of God, I shall be among them (Rev. vii. 9). I shall sit down in heaven, and with all the best and most blessed men will be my eternal fellowship; but still more, with Him who loved me and wrote my name in the Lamb's Book (Rev. xxi. 27).

Now, what are names "written in earth"? The very opposite. If you have your name only written in earth, I will tell you what will be the end of that, and of you. The name represents the person. My name in the Lamb's Book of Life means I shall be up there, and be led by Him to the fountains of living water. Every day of that endless eternity I shall be drinking deeper and deeper into the river of joy. But "*in earth*"—what does it mean? Peter tells us: "The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up" (2 Peter iii. 10). Then what will become of the names which are written in it? The persons represented by these names will be burned up with unquenchable fire—the grain gathered in, the chaff burned. Oh, how the Holy Spirit puts the two sides of truth! "All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed," which means neglecting this great salvation, going on from day to day as if Christ had never left the Father's home, never humbled Himself to the death of the Cross, and all who thus forsake Him shall be "written in earth."

In the next verse we have the cry of faith, and if there is a soul convicted of the awful

sin of unbelief that separates from God eternally, the Holy Ghost fits words to the lips of that contrite sinner: "*Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed.*" It is written: "Who-soever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved." Now, if there is a soul in that state, just take these words and make them the vehicle to express the thoughts and desires of your heart. Cry out in a sense of your need. You are sinking, like Peter (Matt. xiv. 30), and cannot save yourself. Then stretch out your hand now, this moment: "Heal me, and I shall be healed."

What is the result? "*Thou art my praise.*" No longer any glorying in the flesh, no longer any self-confidence. Here is the experience of the reconciled soul, reconciled in God's way, and accepting Christ. "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. i. 31). "Thou art my praise." This is just the utterance of every saved sinner who looks upon the face of the Anointed One, "Thou art my praise," "Thou art all in all to me." Whom have I in heaven but Thee? Thou hast loved me from all eternity with an everlasting love. Thou gavest Thyself for me; Thou hast saved me and united me with Thyself.

"I looked . . . to Him,
He looked . . . on me,
And we were one for ever."

I hide myself in Thee—I have none beside Thee. Whatever others do, I will only speak of Thee as worthy. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v. 12). God give you grace thus to do!

Correspondence.

GLASGOW INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

DEAR SIR,—Nearly two months have passed since gospel work was begun in connection with the above. As was expected, it has not been free from difficulty; but if the effect of this has been to turn away the eye from man to God, this will be a blessing.

The multitudes of men and women visiting the city and thronging the Exhibition have greatly exceeded expectations, and evidently the rush of excursionists from far and near is only beginning, and may be very great. Is not this an event in the providence of God that affords exceptional

openings for exalting Christ, and should not every saved man and woman bestir themselves, and enquire how God would have them share in this marvellous opportunity. Over 200,000 gospels and booklets have already been scattered, and as a rule have been received gratefully. The open-air meetings have been interesting, many of them being very large, and the spirit of hearing has been marked.

Inside the Exhibition, where there are 7000 assistants (young men and women, many of them strangers to the city), the work has to be done quietly and carefully, but the experience has been greatly to encourage.

May this brief summary encourage God's remembrancers to bear up this work at a throne of grace, that Satan may be defeated; that helpers fitted by God may join in the work, and may persevere unweariedly during the four months yet remaining; that suitable books may be selected, and be mightily owned of God; and that the needed funds for the right carrying on of such a work may not be withheld.

Commending this solemn occasion to the sympathies and prayers of God's people everywhere,

2 CHRONICLES XX. 15.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

WHO ARE OVERCOMERS?—Are all regenerate persons overcomers, as set forth in the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in Rev. ii. and iii.?

CHRISTIANS AND SIN.—In 1 John ii. 1 I read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." In 1 John iii. 9 I read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not sin; . . . he cannot sin." How am I to reconcile these two apparently opposite statements?

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

ELDER SUNDAY-SCHOOL SCHOLARS.—What means should we adopt to retain under our care and teaching the young people of our Sunday-schools, who consider themselves too old to attend the ordinary Sunday-school Classes?

- (2) How should classes for such be conducted?
- (3) What method of teaching would be most profitable?

"FOR EVER."

QUESTION 438.—Does the term "for ever," in Hebrews x. 12, have reference to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice, or to the duration of His session at God's right hand? The punctuation in Bibles differs.

Answer A.—At first sight the answer to the question would appear very simple. If the expression translated "for ever" is the ordinary one, implying endless duration, as found in the words "Thou art a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedek and Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, to-day, and *for ever*," then it is clear that it must apply to the "one sacrifice," or rather to its results, for the duration of the session of Christ at the right hand of God is distinctly limited by the words in the following verse, "till his enemies be made his footstool."

But, and this is the important point, the word here translated for ever is not the ordinary word used for "eternally." It occurs but four times in the New Testament, and that only in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In two of these places, Hebrews vii. 3 and x. 1, it is translated "continually," where the reference is to that which characterises the priesthood of Melchisedek himself (there were no gaps in it) and the yearly offering of the day of atonement (no year was to be left out). Neither were eternal, but uninterrupted as they went. So in the verse under consideration in ch. x., and the verse 14 that follows. The force of this latter passage is that the blessed position of acceptance into which the believer is actually introduced by the "one offering of Christ" does not fluctuate, but is invariable and uninterrupted. In like manner the session of Christ at the right hand of God is uninterrupted by any necessity of his rising to offer a fresh offering. It is therefore permanent and continuous in character.

Rotherham applies the "for ever" to the session of Christ, and translates very literally in all four passages, "for the uninterrupted continuance." Darby also makes it clear in his synopsis that it is the continuity of Christ's session which is in question.

The conclusion is that the stop in this verse should come before "for ever," thus linking it with what follows.

W. H.

Answer B.—That the word "for ever" refers to the sacrifice of Christ is evident from the context. The sacrifices under the law had to be offered *continually*, and yet never took away sin, or made the comers thereunto perfect (verses 1, 4). The priests who offered them had to *stand* (verse 11), for their work was never finished.

What a contrast in verse 12! The one Man by one sacrifice did what the many priests and repeated sacrifices did or could do. *Their* work, too, only availed (in any sense whatever) for a

brief time, while *His* avails for ever. Having completely finished a work that was never to be repeated, He sat down.

Thank God for the work *literally* finished. Let us not, however, imagine the Son of God as literally sitting *immovable* upon a throne. Our present King is on the throne, even when engaged in the many duties or visiting the many places to which his enthronement calls him. So it is with our Lord and Saviour.

W. H. S.

Answer C.—On the correct reading of this passage the authorities seem greatly divided. The readings of the translators to which I have access are as under:—

A READING.	B READING.
One sacrifice for sins for ever—sat down.	One sacrifice for sins —for ever sat down.
EARLIER TRANSLATIONS	(see <i>English Hexapla</i>).
Wycliffe (1380).	Tyndale (1534).
Authorised (1611).	Cranmer (1539).
	Geneva (1539).
	Rheims (1582).

RECENT TRANSLATIONS.

Revised Version (1881).	Adam Clarke.
J. E. Howard.	Henry and Scott.
Dr. Moulton (in Bishop Ellicott's Commen.).	Barnes.
	Delitzsch.
	Alford.
	Darby.
	Lewin.
	Conybeare & Howson.

1. The Revised Version gives the *B* reading in the margin.

2. Dr. Moulton says that the analogy of verse 14 is distinctly in favour of the above (*A*) reading, and that the Greek word rendered "for ever" is more suitably applied to the offering of a sacrifice than to the thought of the following words.

3. Alford says: "I incline to join 'for ever' with what follows, but would have it an open question. My ground is that the words seem better to refer to an enduring state than a past act."

4. Darby says: "Christ having perfectly completed the work . . . could sit down, and abide so, having done all. It is in contrast with the priests standing . . . Connecting 'for ever' with sacrifice spoils the whole force of the passage."

Unless it be Delitzsch (whose commentary I have not been able to see), none of the above-named authorities have any remarks on the passage except the four from whom I have quoted.

It will be noted that whilst the number of translations and commentaries is largely in favour of *B* reading, yet both the Authorised and Revised Versions, which were each the work of a considerable number of scholars, favour the

A reading. Having quoted the views of the above authorities, I would wish to remark:

1. From the above divergence of view it is evident that the Greek text gives no clear light as to the clause with which "for ever" should be connected.

2. The question must, therefore, be judged chiefly by the context. The *immediate* context (verse 11) does not help us much, as "for ever" (verse 12) may be taken either as in contrast to "never" (verse 11), "Can never take away sins," "one sacrifice for sins for ever" (thus favouring *A* reading); or "for ever" may be taken in contrast to "daily" (verse 11), "Standeth daily," "For ever sat down" (thus favouring *B* reading).

The chapter as a whole, however (from verse 1 to 18), seems to me greatly to favour *A* reading (that is, connecting "for ever" with sacrifice). We find no further reference to Christ's permanent session at God's right hand (beyond verse 12), whereas we find at least three references to the "once for all" (i.e., "for ever") character of Christ's sacrifice, contrasted with the constantly repeated and ineffectual character of the Levitical sacrifice. (Contrast verses 1, 2, and 3 with verses 10, 14, and 18.)

3. I would remark in closing that with which ever clause we connect "for ever," it appears to tell with almost equal power as to the eternal efficacy of Christ's sacrificial work. In the *A* reading the testimony is *direct*—"one sacrifice for sins for ever;" in the *B* reading it is *indirect*—"for ever sat down," signifying the *perfect* accomplishment of his sacrificial work.

As an illustration: it would make little or no difference whether we said, "Mr. — having finished his work for that day, closed his office," or "Mr. — having finished his work, for that day closed his office."

T. C. W.

Answer D.—On the whole, it seems more in accord with the general teaching of the epistle (where, in reference to Christ, His work, and its results, the words "for ever," "everlasting," "endless," &c., are used about 19 times) that this passage teaches the perfection of Christ's sacrifice *for ever*, viz., "This Man, after that He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever"—a sacrifice once for all (verse 14)—then took His seat at the right hand of God. Yet it may be contrasted with verse 11, where the "priest standeth daily, offering oftentimes," while here it may be said Christ offered but *once*, and then for ever sat down. Both aspects are true, but the former seems the primary sense.

A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—We give four answers to this question, one of them (*a*) the only one of many received which favours the *B* punctuation. We incline to adopt the *A* punctuation, notwithstanding the dogmatic statement of so great an authority as Mr. Darby.

WORLD-CONVERSION OR WORLD-EVANGELISATION.

BY A MISSIONARY.

(Continued from page 104.)

(5) **PENTECOST** ushered in the fifth dispensation, under which we are still living, viz., *the presence of the Holy Spirit*. Properly speaking, man to-day is not upon his trial; his sinfulness and guilt have only been too conclusively proved. He is now under condemnation. But by virtue of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ the gospel of the grace which bringeth salvation is being universally preached, and by it the Church elect is being saved, while the Gospel comes to all (Rom. iii. 21, 22). The Holy Ghost, the blessed Paraclete, is the continued life of the Lord Jesus upon earth, and is to us and the world what He (the Lord) was to the disciples and the world in those days—One in the midst to teach and lead to repentance (John xvi. 8 14). This gospel age of sovereign grace is still being protracted; God is inviting sinners by His servants to close in with His offer of reconciliation, and by His Spirit is convincing men of sin; but do we find the world becoming “leavened” by the Gospel? On the contrary, we find it becoming leavened in the true use of the word, and daily waxing worse and worse. And thus the world is to continue until after the removal of the Church (the faithful gathered out from all nations during this present age), when the climax of evil will be reached in the world, all restraint being removed, running after him who is to be the very incarnation of sin (2 Thess. ii. 3), “who shall concentrate in himself all the apostasy, persecution, and evil of the various forerunning antichrists, Antiochus, Mahomet, Popery.”

(6) The next and final testing of man is to take place during the *millennium* or *thousand years of peace*. During that prophetic period man, we learn, is to be placed in the most advantageous circumstances possible:

(a) The devil, the great author of evil, will be bound and shut up in the bottomless pit (Rev. xx. 1-3), so direct temptation will be altogether removed.

(b) Rebellion and lawlessness will meet with summary punishment (Ezek. xviii. 4, 19-24; Jer. xxxi. 29, 30; Isa. lxxv. 20), so

the force of evil example will be reduced to a minimum (cf. Eccles. viii. 11).

(c) The benign influences of the age and man's peculiar environment* will incline him toward righteousness, so transgressors thus summarily dealt with will probably be few.

(d) Above all, the Lord Himself will be King (Isa. xxxii. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. xiv. 9, &c.), and He will reign as monarch never yet has reigned, in strict equity and righteousness.

But notwithstanding all these advantages and aids to soul-culture, we find that after the thousand years of righteousness and peace, with “that old serpent” in chains, and an absolute freedom from the power of influence to sin, man once more rises and asserts his natural hatred to God by joining Satan (now loosed from his prison for “a little season”) in war against the Lamb (see Rev. xx.). Sin dormant for a millennium will now break forth in bitter hostility against God and His Christ, thus proving the eternal principle of Romans viii. 7.†

Thus we see that even under the most salutary conditions the leaning of natural man will still be towards wickedness. Well says the poet-prophet, “Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord” (Isa. xxvi. 10, R.V.).

As we consider these several scriptures and analogies with unbiased minds we cannot but be convinced of the hopelessness of expecting a world-wide return to God. We are far from being pessimistic in thus prejudging the results of missionary effort; our hopes are as bright as the promise of God which assures us that we shall reap if we

* During the “thousand years” there shall be great wealth (Zech. xiv. 14). Ruined public buildings of ancient memory shall be rebuilt (Isa. lxi. 4). Captivity will be no more (Ezek. xxxix. 25-28). Universal peace is to be the order of the age (Isa. ii. 4). Sickness will be unknown (Isa. xxxiii. 24; xxxv. 5, 6). The lower orders of creation will also be blessed (Isa. xi. 6-9; lv. 13; lxxv. 25; Ezek. xxxiv. 27, &c.). Antediluvian longevity is to be restored (Isa. lxxv. 20).

† The marginal reading of several passages in the Psalms referable to the coming age of universal peace (“yield feigned obedience”) is amply sustained by the uprising at the close of that age, and shows the shallow and hypocritical nature of the submission made at the beginning (Psalm xviii. 44; lxxi. 3; lxxx. 15, &c.). In that day the Utopian dreams of socialists and others will be realised, but only to be blasted at the close.

faint not. Let us then continue to sow in the strength of the Lord, knowing that "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm cxxvi. 6).

III. Thirdly, I would ask, What, in the light of the New Testament, is THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THIS PRESENT AGE?

If the hope of the world's conversion were held out to us in the Bible, we should, and rightly so, look in faith to that end; but is there anything in the Word of God to warrant our holding such excessively sanguine views regarding the spread of the Gospel? I think not. Our commission is to "preach the Gospel to every creature," to "make disciples of all nations"; and, as Dr. A. T. Pierson so well points out, our work, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is to *evangelise* the world. And if the result proves to be not the world's conversion, but the *outgathering of the Church*, is it not exactly the scriptural goal of this age?*

To the truth of the Gospel every individual believer is a witness, and his ever-present duty is the furtherance of God's purpose in the Gospel, viz., that *every* person in *every* nation should become acquainted with the good news of God's salvation. The results are not left with us to decide. It is ours to sow, to water, and oftentimes to reap, though the time and extent of the harvest it is God's prerogative to determine.

In Acts xv. 14 there is a brief summary of the purpose of God in regard to the spread of the Gospel—a kind of miniature chart of the whole missionary age, Dr. Pierson has called it. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people for His Name*," NOT "to convert the world." (Cf. Matt. xxiv. 14, and note the expression "*for a witness*.")

This eclectic principle seems to be underlying all God's dealings with His creatures throughout past dispensations, and without effort our minds will at once revert to Noah, Abraham, the Jews, the Twelve, and now the elect Church or Bride of Christ.

And is not current history fulfilling the prophecies of the early writers of the New

Testament, and thus in agreement with the points I have been advancing? Take for example England, America, or any other "Christian" nation, and consider how very far it is from being nationally righteous, not to say converted, in spite of the fact that the Gospel has been known and preached for all these centuries. Say rather how near these nations are to becoming engulfed in the surge of social and moral corruption.*

Taking a still broader view of things, what indeed is the fact nineteen centuries after Christ's death? "*Two-thirds* of the world is still sunk in heathenism, which means open rebellion against God. *Two-thirds* of all professing Christians in Christian countries are unsound in the faith. Millions of them pray to the Virgin Mary and the saints instead of to Christ. Even among those who are nominally orthodox there is much unreality, worldliness, and a low standard of Christian life."†

The salvation of the world from present corruption is due to the presence of the "salt of the earth"—the Church. When she is removed, and with her the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit, the bridled wickedness of man will break forth, and the world will run after the antichrist to give to him the worship due alone to God.

Moreover, the rate at which converts are being made, whether in the homelands or in the heathen fields of labour, should be sufficient to lead us to wonder whether the hope of the world's conversion were not a forlorn one. Occasionally revivals occur reminding one almost of Pentecost, as witness the missionary marvels of the South Seas, &c., but so occasionally as to place them under the category of miracles. The American preacher already quoted says very laconically, "Converts are to be *weighed*, not *counted*"; and we know that conversion is an individual matter. So if there has ever been such a thing as the conversion of a nation (which one doubts), it can only have been as each individual of that nation personally trusted Christ and His finished work for pardon.

* Of course we are not now thinking of the mechanical improvements which of necessity follow in the train of civilisation, and advance with the years.

† From a sermon by Rev. R. Middleton, Church of England minister.

For "what is a nation but an aggregation of individuals under one Government. The watchword of the student movement is a grand one, "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation," and we cannot find a better one with which to start the new century. But, as Mr. John R. Mott, M.A., says in his new book bearing this motto for its title, evangelisation is not Christianisation. "It is important that we clearly understand . . . what is meant by the evangelisation of the world in this generation. It means to give all men an adequate opportunity to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and to become His real disciples." This is a noble aim, and we are responsible as individual believers to keep it constantly before us.

Then, again, such passages as John xiv. 17 and 1 John v. 19 seem clearly enough to show that the attitude of the world towards Christ and His Gospel is and can be anything but favourable. Speaking of the latter text, the late Dr. Brookes, of St. Louis, said in reply to the question, "Do you think that the world is becoming better?" "Why do you not ask if I think that the devil is becoming better? God says that 'the whole world lieth in the wicked one,'* *i.e.*, the devil."†

Nor should we overlook the position and service of believers in this present age. To note but three of the many figures used, they are:

1. *Witnesses* (Acts i. 8)—in and to a world that hated and crucified the Lord of Glory.

2. *Light* (Matt. v. 14, cf. Phil. ii. 15, R.V.)—for illumination amidst the surrounding darkness of sin.

3. *Salt* (Matt. v. 13)—for preservation, without which influence the world would go to speedy corruption.

On these points it is needless to dwell, but let us simply observe that in Holy Writ the Christian is constantly compared with the worldling, in order that the wide difference between them might be remarked; and he is also continuously warned against conforming himself to the ways of the world (*ex. gr.* Rom. xii. 2). All this goes to prove that the saved are, in accordance with God's purpose, a distinctly separate body of people from the world: an *ἐκκλησία* in the real

sense of the word—an assembly of people "called out" from a larger number. We will close this section of our study with a quotation from Henry Drummond:

"The day may be when the path of righteousness shall be the glorious highway for all the earth. But it is not now. Christ did not expect it would be so. He made provision for the very opposite. . . . Light must conflict with darkness, truth with error. There is no sanctioned place in the world for a life with God as its goal, and self-denial as its principle. Meek men must be victimised, spirituality must be misunderstood, true religion must be burlesqued. Holiness must make a strong ferment and reaction in family or community, office or workshop, wherever it is introduced."*

IV. But we have still made no reference to the PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN, which is, I believe, the only or principal text made use of by those who teach the views this paper is considering. What can be the meaning of the lesson here taught by our blessed Lord? Without laying myself open to the charge of dogmatism, I suggest that leaven in scripture is invariably symbolic of evil (Matt. xvi. 6; 1 Cor. v. 6-8; Gal. v. 9, &c.); and the single dubious (?) passage is the parable in question. The use made of the word in the New Testament is in keeping with its application in the Old, where as one of the forbidden ingredients in the Levitical offerings it is also obviously typical of evil (Lev. ii. 11; x. 12. See also Exod. xii. 15; xiii. 7; xxxiv. 25, &c. Cf. Amos iv. 5).

But there are two passages in the offerings where leaven is commanded to be used, viz., Lev. xxiii. 17—in the offering of the Firstfruits, and Lev. vii. 13—in the Peace-offering. But this only confirms the above remarks, for it was necessary in order to a complete type to introduce leaven in the offering of the Firstfruits (type of the Church on earth) as figurative of the ever-present evil in the Church so long as she is on earth.

Anent Lev. vii. 13, I cannot do better than quote the words of C. H. M., the well-known expositor of the Pentateuch: "It [leaven] was the Divine recognition of the evil in the worshippers." †

* Alford. *Truth*, vol. 22, No. 5.

* "The Ideal Life."

† "Notes on Leviticus," page 316.

The parables of the wheat and tares and of the net in Matt. xiii. clearly teach the presence in the kingdom of the heavens (Christendom?) of *evil persons*, and that of the heaven as intelligently tells of the presence of *evil doctrine*, which is to continue to "work" and spread until presently, after the Church-rapture, the whole will become leavened. In the meanwhile it is our deep responsibility to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3,* R.V.).

The very nature of heaven forbids the thought that the Holy Spirit would have chosen it as a symbol of the good and insinuating influence of the Gospel. The chemical definition of yeast or leaven is: "A substance in a state of putrefaction, the atoms of which are in a continual motion." Thus we find in yeast a perfect type of evil doctrine acting upon the mass of professing followers of Jesus Christ. Such doctrines as the Larger Hope, the non-eternity of punishment, the unnecessariness of the Atonement, the insufficiency of the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and the denial of the Deity of the Son, are to-day being taught from Christian (?) press and pulpit, and are an existing confirmation of the foregoing statement. May the Lord continue to keep us His servants faithful to His Word amidst abounding error!

This Parable of the Leaven, then, would seem to apply to the present day only in its *development*, but to the future in its *fulfilment*; and, far from supporting the idea of the world's conversion, when viewed from the standpoint which we have been taking, teaches just the opposite.

"The field is the world." The "two measures of meal," which had its origin in the field, being a portion of the whole harvest, "out-gathered" and milled, is the (professing) Church. The "leaven," secretly working in the meal, is evil doctrine, sometimes clandestinely, sometimes openly, but always powerfully, acting upon the mass of Christendom.

In the course of these remarks I have gone over, though somewhat hurriedly, a few of the scriptures and arguments which appeal to one as strongly militating against the conception of a universal return to God. The Word of Truth seems clear on the subject, and we as simple believers want to be sure when coming to the Scriptures that our minds are perfectly sober and unbiassed, otherwise we unconsciously import into its pages preconceived notions. The danger of holding and following the traditions of our fathers is almost as great with us as it was with the Jews in our Lord's time. May we all be made willing to "receive with meekness the engrafted word!" R.

THE GOD OF JESHURUN.

"Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord" (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

MOSES had reached the borderland. From the brink of eternity, and in the solemnity of his farewell to those who had been pilgrims with him for forty long years, he casts his eye backward over the past. Memories of God's kindness to himself and the people crowd in upon him, and mentally he compares his God with the gods of the heathen. As he does so his soul is filled, and it bursts forth in praise: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help," &c. On reading the long story of God's forbearance and grace, we are not surprised at this outburst of Moses. He, however, goes further, not merely praising God, but also sounding the praises of His people, who had too often been as a thorn in the flesh to him—provoking him to speak unadvisedly with his lips, and thus keeping him out of the land. Unadvisedly he *had* spoken, but calmly and deliberately, as became a man with one foot in the grave, he now in effect declares that of all the peoples he had ever seen God's people were the best, and that, in spite of all their faults. The world seems to see only the inconsistencies of God's children, and more is the pity we grow such a crop of these. It has no eyes to see the hard-fought battles with sin nor tongue to tell of victories won. Let there be a fall, a stumble, and, oh, how such will be magnified. The brave

* "The presence of Judas among the apostles, and of Ananias and Sapphira among the first disciples, were proofs of the power which moral evil possesses to combine itself with the holiest works."—CONYBEARE AND HOWSON'S "Life of St. Paul."

and perhaps long-sustained fight ere sin was yielded to, awakes no sympathy in its heart. Only the fact that he has fallen will be known.

How often do we who are God's children in the true world spirit have eyes for that only which is uncomely in our brethren. We think they have only weeds in their gardens, while did we but look carefully we might find some fragrant lilies of the valley growing there. God thinks there are none like His people in the world. Let us beware therefore of belittling, hurting, or despising the poorest and most wayward of them. They need our sympathy and a helping hand, rather than sharp, critical words. Even when far away in the distant land, those who have been really born again have a something about them that you cannot find in the world. I cull the following illustration from Mrs. Ogren's diary. She and her martyred husband had been exposed to shame and suffering for Christ's sake in one of the public rooms of a Chinese yamen. Unfriendly eyes had glared at them the whole day long. But "some people came to visit us who showed by their treatment of us that they were not of this world. My husband asked them secretly about themselves, and they said they were Christians, *but their own tortures had been so great and what they heard from other places so terrible, that they had renounced the faith.* We saw their hearts still clung to the people of God, and they rejoiced to help us. We were glad to meet them, and exhorted them not to forsake the Lord. My husband said, 'Poor people! They are like sheep without a shepherd!' He said he would be willing to stay and gather together these scattered children of God." Many would call those natives "apostates," and hold them to be unworthy of any sympathy or help. God's suffering servants, however, when the tender mercies of the wicked were most cruel, were thankful for the visits of those quiet men, who sat down and looked kindly upon them, and did kind deeds when all others were against them. It is not hard to appreciate those who are gems among the people of God. But we need to remember that the world is not worthy of the poorest of them. "Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" R.S.

CHRIST GLORIFIED.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART IV.

IN 1 Peter i. 11 we read of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." These are the two leading subjects of the whole Scripture. In one of the parables of the Lord He said: "A certain king made a marriage for his son." The marriage, and all the arrangements about it, the feasting, the garments, and the guests were intended to work together for the honour and for the joy of the king's son—he was the central object of it all. And the central object of all God's purposes and plans revealed to us in the Scripture is the exalting of Christ, the glorifying of His Son. The sufferings, looked at from one point of view, were a means to the end, and the end is the glory; so that, when we look at some aspects of the glory of Christ, we see that which God had in view as His great purpose, viz., the glorifying of His Son. The highest interests, and the highest joy, and the highest blessing of all God's creation is to know God Himself. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." If we consider that God's object in creation, in redemption, and even in judgment, is the display of Himself, then we see that in exalting and glorifying His own dear Son He is working for this end. Now, in this passage we have brought before us the truths that the prophets (and I think that here includes all the writers of the Old Testament Scriptures) wrote of, and which they had afterwards to enquire into, and to find out the meaning of. That is the peculiarity of prophecy, and wherein it differs from teaching, viz., that the man uttered words given him by the Holy Spirit, and afterwards enquired what they meant. He might have little or no knowledge of what they meant at the time he uttered them, but they were God's words, and therefore he enquired into them, "searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify." Such is prophecy.

And just at this point let me call your attention to a common error, that is to speak

of *the men* as inspired. We have no such thought in Scripture. It is *the words* that are inspired. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," or literally, "all Scripture is God *breathed*." That means that the words are not words of man's wisdom, but words which the Holy Spirit inspired. They are Divine words—God's words. The men might be such as Balaam, or Caiphas, or Saul—he, also, was among the prophets; they were not inspired men—they were very fallible, or even unregenerate men; but the words they spoke or wrote were inspired words. Now, these words God has preserved for us wonderfully in the Old Testament and in the New; and they form a complete Book, a Book that is not merely what some would have us to believe, viz., a collection of old manuscripts put together after a human fashion, but an organic whole, like a tree from whose smallest fibre in the root to the smallest twig of its outgrowth is instinct with one life, in perfect order and harmony—a living organism. Such is God's revelation to us of all that He has seen fit to communicate for our blessing and His glory—the Scriptures of Truth. Now, as I have said, the chief subject of God's revelation—as He is the object of all God's purposes and plans—is the Lord Jesus Christ; first, His sufferings, then His glories that are to follow. Sufferings first, glory afterwards!

Now let us look at another passage or two. Acts ii. 32:

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Wherefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Read also chapter iii. 13:

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses."

We have here the great issue between man and God. Man denied Him, and murdered Him; God has raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand. God

has glorified the One that man murdered, and that is the great question still. The question is, Does your heart acknowledge the worth of the Lord Jesus whom God hath raised up from the dead and set on the throne? There is only one way to know Him, viz., by knowing yourself a lost sinner and knowing Him as an Almighty Saviour. That is the way to know His worth. If you now receive Him as your Saviour He is willing to receive you. There is no question about that. He loves the sinner. He gave Himself that such might be saved, and now He is waiting simply for you to trust Him.

Now turn with me to another passage. John vii. 37:

"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."

Now, you remember we read in Acts ii. that:

"Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

The Holy Ghost descended on that day of Pentecost from the throne of God and filled the assembled disciples that were waiting for the fulfilment of the promise, and this fact was the evidence that the Lord Jesus was now glorified. According to the Word

"The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

What was the glorifying of the Lord Jesus? It was not that any glory could be added to Him as the eternal Son of God. The glory of the eternal Son—the Divine Person; how could it be added to? But you know that He humbled Himself. He became partaker of flesh and blood, He became a Man—a *true* Man, but absolutely free from every taint of human corruption. Begotten by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary, born into this world a little babe, He grew in stature, and grew in wisdom, and grew in favour with God and man. He became truly man—God and man

in one person. Unitarians may scoff at it, but it is the Divine teaching in the Scriptures that He was God-Man—"Emmanuel, God with us." And when He became flesh He became God and Man for ever, and it is "Jesus Christ of the seed of David" (2 Tim. ii. 8) that is now at the right hand of God. Oh, wondrous mystery of godliness that God should be manifest in the flesh! God has glorified the Man Christ Jesus, and He is now at the right hand of the throne—not merely God, as He was before He came into the world, but God and Man in one Person for ever—Emmanuel! I cannot understand how that Man in whom God was manifested, whose every word, and every work, and every step was a manifestation of God, should be rejected by the world. "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." Light came into the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. As we have seen, the world did not know His worth. A few whose hearts had been touched, whose eyes God had opened, a few recognised Him, trusted Him, loved Him, obeyed Him, contended and suffered for Him—a few—but the world did know Him. He was in the world, but the world knew Him not. Now, what has God done? God has publicly acknowledged His work and worth. God has shown what is His appreciation of that blessed Man who trod this earth as a heavenly stranger. God has signified His delight in Him not only by raising Him from the dead, but by putting Him at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and putting all authority in heaven and upon earth into the hand of the One who was nailed in weakness to Calvary's Cross. Thus God has glorified His Son Jesus Christ. We cannot see it, but we know it is a fact; we know it is true. Our God is a God that hides Himself; He is sometimes inscrutably hidden; we cannot discern His hand oftentimes, but faith knows assuredly that the Lord Jesus is at the right hand of God on the throne, and that in the end everything must work together for the glory of God who has exalted Him, and for the good of those who are His own loved ones and redeemed. God has glorified His Son Jesus. Beloved friends, is it not a delight to us to think of it? Is it not a joy

to our hearts to consider that the Cross and the shame, the sorrows and sufferings are all past, and past for ever, and that the One who sorrowed and suffered here is now in that Presence where there is fulness of joy, and at the right hand of God where there are pleasures for evermore?

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—VI.

SAVED IN HOPE.

By W. H. BENNET.

HAVING dwelt upon the bondage, the groaning, and the hope of "the whole creation," the apostle goes on to speak of *our* groaning and *our* hope: "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23). The Holy Spirit, who dwells in the believer, is the firstfruits and pledge of all future blessedness, and He gives us the earnest and foretaste thereof in present communion with God, thus causing us to feel the weight of that which hinders our full enjoyment of it. It is not therefore the one who knows least of the fellowship of the Spirit who experiences most of the groaning. Self-satisfaction with the idea of being "filled with the Spirit" is no evidence of His gracious working in the heart. The firstfruit of His ministry is poverty of spirit (Matt. v. 3), or in other words, "a broken and a contrite heart," with which He imparts true joy in the Lord. But the deeper our joy becomes as the result of the Spirit's revealing of Christ to us, and showing us "the things to come," the greater will be our sense of inability to fully enter into our blessings, whether present or future, and the deeper our groan of longing for the possession of what God has in store for us.

This is described as "sonship," and the explanation is "the redemption of our body." In one blessed sense the body is already redeemed, for the *price* of redemption has been paid; but "the purchased possession" has not yet been claimed by Him to whom it belongs. When the appointed moment comes He will change our body of humilia-

tion, so that it shall be conformed to the body of His glory; this will be redemption by *power*. The full and true glory of "sonship" we cannot know while in mortal bodies, or even in a disembodied state. The blessedness of this wonderful relationship to God is doubtless more fully entered into in the "far better" condition of those who are with Christ, for they are freed from many of the hindrances of which we are painfully conscious, but nothing less than the redemption of the body can put them or us into possession of "sonship" in its fulness. The Apostle Paul, indeed, spoke of his approaching death at the hands of the executioner as his "*release*" (2 Tim. iv. 6, *Gk.*), but it is not his teaching, nor the teaching of any part of Scripture, that being released from the body is the *fullest* liberty; it is only when the body itself is released from the bondage of corruption that the children of God can truly attain their "glorious liberty," and then will follow their manifestation.

"For in this hope we were saved" more truly expresses the meaning of verse 24. The changeableness of all things below is often very apparent in a degeneracy in the use of words, and few words are more misused than the word *hope*. "I hope" generally carries in it the meaning "I am not sure," and in the things of God people have got so accustomed to this use of it as to settle down with the idea that we cannot be certain about anything, but must do our best, and hope all will be well in the end. Yet the word by derivation and in its early use signified, "*To expect*, with pleasurable anticipations" (Ogilvie), and a careful consideration of its use in Scripture shows that so far from expressing uncertainty, it implies the highest degree of certainty, for it denotes nothing less than the *confident expectation of what God has promised*. The figure used in Hebrews vi., "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both *sure and stedfast*," is very expressive; but even if we confine ourselves to this epistle, the teaching is plain. The word *hope* is not used (except with reference to Abraham) until the question of *justification* is settled. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, . . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (chapter v. 1, 2): In

chapter xii. we read "rejoicing in hope," and in chapter xv. the apostle first declares that hope is the fruit of the patience and consolation ministered by the Scriptures, and then prays, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace and believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." "We were saved" when we received the Gospel, but the fulness of that salvation was still a matter of hope, and now is nearer than when we believed (Rom. xiii. 11).

Thus hope is never set in contrast with what is *certain*, but simply with what is *seen*, reaching forward by its very nature to what is out of sight, for "hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" As one has said, "We do not yet realise our heaven, but we *hope* for it; we do not yet see Jesus, but we *hope* to see Him; we do not yet exult in our emancipation from corruption, but we *hope* to be free; we do not yet drink of the river of God's pleasures, but we *hope* to." "But" adds the apostle, "if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience [*or endurance*] wait for it." The word used throughout this passage for *waiting* expresses intensity of expectation. Ardent desire is not impatience, and an "expected end" encourages to endurance during the time of waiting. It is because our "hope" is so certain and definite that it becomes a purifying power, for if there be a growing knowledge of what awaits us, the heart must surely go out towards it with such intense desire as shall make us truly diligent in seeking to be *now* in life and conduct what we shall *then* be in every sense (1 John iii. 3).

And as we reach forward to the full realisation of what "redemption" is, and seek to turn our hope into prayer, we have a mighty Helper: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity." The word "likewise" means in addition to all that has been said of the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in this chapter. He imparts life (verse 3), dwells in us (9, 11), leads us (14), enables us to mortify the deeds of the body (13), teaches us to cry in truth, "Abba, Father" (15), and, now it is added, "maketh intercession for us" (26).

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought." Subjects for prayer are indeed abundantly found in our circumstances and around us, and yet do we not often feel that we do not quite know what to ask for? Even such a man of prayer as the apostle once made a mistake in asking that a gift of God might be taken away (2 Cor. xii. 8); but behind those requests of his lips the Lord read the true desires of his heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, and answered *them* rather than the actual petition. But the special reference here doubtless is to the great prospects set forth in the preceding verses, and if we so feebly comprehend them, how shall we put our desires for them into words? When we are thus conscious of our inability to express ourselves before God it is a *comfort to be assured that our unutterable* groanings are fully understood by Him: "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit," and with Him there can never be any *mistaken* desires, for it is "according to God" that "He maketh intercession for saints." Shall we not then seek to know more of walking "in the Spirit," and being led by Him, that we may have more of the consolation which the knowledge of His intercession within us must bring?

"WHO WILL GO DOWN WITH ME?"

r Samuel xxvi. 6.

THE night was dark on Jeshimon,
Where Saul and his warriors lay;
Each one had laid him down to sleep,
And left the stars their watch to keep
Until the dawn of day.

But who is this that draweth near,
That slumbering host to see?
'Tis David, with his faithful band;
Though rightful ruler in the land,
A fugitive is he.

"Oh, I must go to yonder camp,
All hostile though it be,"
Said David, the rejected king;
"There is a spoil I wish to bring—
Who will go down with me?"

Then Abishai, of fearless heart,
Spake out right joyfully;

Nor sought reward, nor bargain made,
But in Love's language sweet replied,
"I will go down with thee."

Out in the dark and cheerless night,
Close to the sleeping foe,
The path is one with peril fraught,
Yet the child of Faith declares, "'Tis naught,
To the valley of death I'll go."

Thus David went, and Abishai,
Amid those sleeping men;
The spear and the cruse they bore away,
Yet no one arose, or said them nay,
And safe they came again.

For on Saul and his host that night there fell
"A deep sleep from the Lord";
And none awoke, or heard or knew
Aught that was done by the dauntless two
Who braved the vengeful sword.

But Abishai in that dread hour
Might bid his terrors flee;
And so shall it be, by night, by day,
With all who have been taught to say,
"I will go down with Thee."

That question still is sounding clear,
For the Man of Calvary,
Who wore the thorns upon His brow,
To His redeemed is saying now,
"Who will go down with Me?"

Oh, who will go down in the darksome night,
And warn from wrath to flee?
Oh, who will go down to the camp of sin,
To bring the long-lost wanderers in?
"Who will go down with Me?"

Oh, I will go down with Thee, my Lord,
By Thy grace so boundless, free;
For the way, as of old, Thou wilt prepare,
And it shall be mine perchance to bear
The precious spoil with Thee.

Yea, Thou wilt make the foes to sleep
That would lord it over me;
And, safely kept by Thy power divine,
The cloudy night as the morn shall shine
While I go down with Thee.

Then take me by this trembling hand,
Until the shadows flee;
Through all the changing desert way,
Whate'er befall, oh, let me say,
"I will go down with Thee!"

w. s.

KEEP THE BLINKERS ON!

By FRANKLIN FERGUSON, New Zealand.

SHORTLY after my conversion, in the year 1881, I spent a holiday with my father at Southport, a much-frequented watering-place in the West of England, where he was engaged in Bible-carriage work. On the day I returned home two evangelists called, who accompanied us to the railway station. As the train moved along the platform one of them stepped up to the carriage window and said to me, "Keep the blinkers on. Good-bye!" For a time I was left puzzling over what he could mean, until I remembered the blinkers are to keep the horse looking one way—straight before it—and to prevent its attention being taken with objects right or left, or things coming up behind. He did not say much to me, but they were words "fitly spoken," and oft remembered with profit.

Solomon may have known something about "blinkers" when he wrote, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil" (Prov. iv. 25-27). It had been well for Solomon had he kept his own advice. Concerning him we read, "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father" (1 Kings xi. 4). Such was the sad ending of the wisest man that ever lived, and Israel's most illustrious king. By all means let us finish well. Keep those blinkers on, and keep them on all the time: the danger lies in taking them off—even for a moment. No carter or farmer, with his wits about him, would take the blinkers from the heads of his horses while still harnessed in his waggon.

Keep the blinkers on! for age and experience are not always a guarantee you will keep well to the road. Many an old, steady-going mare, whose owner laughed at the mere suggestion of her "playing up," has done so, and smashed his cart and harness. Remember it was an old Noah who turned husbandman, and got drunk; an old Uzziah

whose heart was lifted up to presume to do what was not within his province, and became a leper to his death. It was an old prophet who caused the man of God that cried against Jeroboam's idolatry to turn out of the way, so that a lion slew him for his disobedience. Beware, ye elderly men and ye elderly women, that disaster mars not your closing days. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." The backwood's man's aim is to get a number of smaller trees in the line of an old, big tree he is felling, that when it falls it may bring down the lot. And should the devil be planning the overthrow of some young saints, right well he knows the diabolical work is best achieved by bringing down some aged, respected believer, whose fall may stumble the whole. "Therefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Keep the blinkers on! for childhood and youth are vanity. The young colt dislikes its freedom interfered with. You see it shake the head, and prance about, and try to get the blinkers loose. The will is strong. The spirited young creature must be subdued, and the master must have his way. His patience and perseverance gain the day; and though at first the colt fancied the part-blinding of his sight a hardship, its master has carrots and oats for it as well as blinkers. To us the admonition is given, "Be not as the horse, which has no understanding," and it is not for us to think it hard of the Lord to say, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Remember, my soul, thou art in His service, and that through infinite grace, and if He bid thee turn thine eyes from the delusive pomp and glitter of this world, do so with right good will and cheerful heart; for thou, too, shalt surely find that He hath for thee abundance of good food and the finest corn, as well as restraints.

We, as the Father's children, must not love the world, for the plainest of reasons—"It is not of the Father." That is quite enough for an obedient child who loves the Father. Must you crave the pleasures of that which is stated to be against God, even at enmity with Him? (Rom. viii. 7). Do you really

wish for an evening's enjoyment in the society of those who are lying in the Wicked One? (1 John v. 19). When invited to a social or a party with those who are guilty before God, can you go? (Rom. iii. 19). Those who cannot receive the Spirit of Truth, are they fit companions of a child of grace? (John xiv. 17). Can it be that a Christian has a liking to be at shows, dressed up and sauntering to and fro in the giddy throng who will soon have upon them "the day of the Lord," when both the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up? (2 Peter iii. 10). Do not turn aside from thy path to pick any of earth's roses, for under the scented leaves is a wasp that will sting thee. Nay, keep the blinkers on, and thine eyes shall not see them; and what thine eyes do not see thine heart cannot want, for what more canst thou desire all the road to heaven than the enjoyment of the Father's love?

Keep the blinkers on! for the well-watered plains of Jordan stretch temptingly before you. "Be content with such things as ye have, for He hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'" Behold the man who is contented with what the Lord allows him; he hath a continual feast. He knows no real scarcity, for his God doth bless him, so that oft hath he found "a scanty fare for one has been a royal feast for two." A man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses, but in being blessed of the God of heaven and earth.

"I would not ask for earthly store—Thou wilt my needs supply;
But I would covet, more and more, the clear and
To see my duty face to face, and trust Thee, Lord,
for daily grace."

Then shall my heart keep singing, and well it may. Let them be rich who will. Those roses may stay where they are—the thorns are too many and sharp. Wait on; there are fairer flowers without briars. They who will be rich will surely pierce themselves through with many sorrows, and fall into many and hurtful lusts. He who lays up treasure in heaven is the wiser man, and the coming day will declare it. Remember Abraham and Lot. Abraham sought not after flocks and herds, silver and gold, man-

servants and maid-servants, yet God gave him abundantly of all these things. His eye was single, his body full of light. God was sought first; other things were added. Lot, on the contrary, could not keep his eyes off the well-watered plain. He coveted; he sought for more. He got it; he lost all. Wretched man! Let ours be to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and He will add to us just what He knows will be for our good. Perhaps we could not all be trusted with as much as Abraham, not being sufficiently single-eyed.

Keep the blinkers on! for we move among sights and sounds enough to scare the wits of the stoutest. When men will stage the crucifixion of the Son of God, and make a theatrical show of the agonies of Calvary, nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. The shocking blasphemy and blood-curdling travesty of the sufferings of Christ is done in Europe to-day, and multitudes go to see. We have not quite come to that in the British Empire—God grant we never may—but contagion spreads. There is done among us, however, under the guise of religion, things which stink in the nostrils of God. Where the power to fill the "churches" is gone, and the preaching of the Cross attracts no longer, we see religious men introducing what a great London preacher appropriately called "The Devil's Mission of Amusements." We must keep the people together, they argue, and we must have money to carry on, and anything to this end seems to their perverted vision quite legitimate. These gentlemen stick at nothing; their stretching throats can swallow any camel—bazaars, raffles, concerts, theatricals—anything or everything! The services of a travelling opera company are eagerly snapped up for a Sunday evening sacred concert, and many a child of God is beguiled into listening to the Lord's songs from profane lips. Look well to the buckles of your blinkers, and tighten up the straps when such things are about, that there be no possibility of them slipping over your ears.

Keep the blinkers on! for there is among all classes a hideous familiarity with that which is "fast" and indelicate. I challenge

anyone to deny that novels and romances are read now-a-days in many a household which contain scenes and descriptions that would not have been tolerated fifty years ago. There is a widespread decay of delicacy and nice feeling among the rising generation, and little wonder, when the filthiest proceedings of the Supreme Courts are published in the daily press and read by those of tender years. The very foundations of the social fabric are giving way—and what shall the end be? Even as fire and brimstone destroyed licentious Sodom and wiped them out, so “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and all the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” (2 Peter iii. 10, 11). We live in perilous times. Keep the blinkers on!

BIBLE STUDY.

THE SPIRIT'S FRUIT (Gal. v. 22, 23).

“*Love.*”—This is the cluster of spiritual graces condensed and concentrated into one. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and includes every jot and tittle of its requirements.

“*Joy and Peace.*”—Here follow eight different ways in which love exhibits itself. The first two what it produces in the one who shows it. It fills him with heavenly gladness.

“*Longsuffering and Gentleness.*”—How love expresses itself when under fire. The pressure of adverse circumstances only brings out its excellencies. It overcomes evil with good.

“*Goodness and Fidelity.*”—The quiet and reliable ways of love in the ordinary avocations of life. It can always be depended on to fulfil its duty. How painstaking and satisfactory.

“*Meekness and Self-control.*”—The bridle love puts upon the natural dispositions. The girdle to keep rising tempers and passions in check. It puts its grip upon selfishness and elevates the moral tone, delivering from the grovelling in the dust of earthliness, which characterises fallen man.

M. I. R.

THE BEST CONSTRUCTION.

By T. BAIRD, Singapore.

ONE of our wise men has left the following remarkable record behind him: “I have long since noted down rules for practical life. One is very *simple*, but it carries me *far*. Put the *best* construction on every human action till a *bad* is *proved*, and call that *bad* no worse than it is *proved* to be.”

If Christians would note down such a rule for their guidance and apply it strictly to all they hear of other Christians, what heart-burnings and heart-breakings would be avoided. Have we not the exalted example of Christ before us in this very matter? See how He put the best possible construction on His sleeping disciples. Though the gloom and shadow of Gethsemane was settling down on His soul, He gave them credit for sympathy in those ever-memorable words: “The *spirit* indeed is *willing*, but the *flesh* is *weak*.” May God teach us the holy art of putting the *best* construction on every action of other Christians until a *bad* is *proved*, and call that *bad* no worse than it is *proved* to be.

One notable instance of the *worst* construction looms out very prominently in Old Testament history. David is sent by his father to seek the welfare of his brethren. When he finds them he is met by this sinful accusation: “I know the pride and the haughtiness of thy heart; it is to see the battle you are come down.” Oh, with what devilish cleverness some men misjudge the actions of others and put the worst possible interpretation upon them. May God fill us with that love which suffers *long* and still remains kind, so that however *bad* the actions of others may *look*, we shall, at least, not condemn them until we have full proof for so doing.

Correspondence.

FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

BEFORE reading the article on this subject in your June issue, I had been preparing a paper on almost identical lines, and was therefore the more thankful to see another pen express so many of my own convictions on a subject I know is exercising the hearts of not a few of the Lord's servants.

I would like, however, to touch on two or three points needing further attention :

1. Personal needs and working expenses. While it is well to remember that ministering to the needs of those who are out preaching Christ is but *one way* of showing fellowship in the Gospel, is it not necessary to remember also that caring for their *personal needs* is but one side of this particular way ? Those who divide their time by visiting assemblies in response to these invitations, and as far as possible going forth into neglected parts to open up fresh fields and plant new assemblies, have a very keen sense of the difference of these two things. In the first place, Churches feel their responsibility generally to minister to the evangelist's personal needs during his stay among them ; but when he would go forth with his Gospel tent, &c., wherever he assuredly gathers the Lord has called him, it must then be as counting only on a faithful God who never fails those who trust in Him ; for there is little prospect, as a rule, of either sympathy or support coming from the assemblies. Yet it is just here, pressed with heavy working expenses beyond his personal necessities, and without the usual supplies even for these, he feels most the need of the sympathy and fellowship of the assemblies—not their gifts only, but their interest and prayers. How much an assembly can strengthen or weaken the hands of the labourer as they minister, or withhold their fellowship, only such as have learnt by experience can say. Although he depends not on them, but on the Lord, he may be greatly refreshed and helped forward by their love, or discouraged and hindered by their want of sympathy. I believe a feeling of isolation tends to weakness, and the adoption of strange methods of carrying on the Lord's work, as the links of true fellowship, to divine results.

2. Appeals for the Lord's work, or fellowship in the Gospel. It is a mercenary age with the world, and nothing can more powerfully witness against its spirit of *grasping* than the spirit of *giving*, which the Lord would have to be characteristic of all His saints, not excepting those who receive from the Lord daily supplies through His people.

But we have not only to mourn the lack of true fellowship in the Gospel, but to see instead the monstrous growth of an almost universal system of begging for the Lord's work. To say nothing of great societies with salaried agents for representing their claims and raising their funds, institutions and missions issuing circulars to appeal for help, and reports to excite the liberality of their supporters, are there not a variety of more modest appeals which are becoming recognised as a general custom, if not the orthodox way of obtaining supplies. But is

that which is extorted from donors by such means fellowship in the Gospel, or charity ? It may help on a good work ; and that some have to a certain extent descended to this modern method for the sake of the Gospel and perishing souls, who nevertheless would rather suffer necessity than beg, cannot be denied. But that God delights in that which is spontaneous, not forced, is abundantly clear from such words as "Freely give," "First a willing mind," "Give not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver," "That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly." Freely, willingly, cheerfully, liberally, bountifully, are the words employed to express the spirit, manner, measure, and character of acceptable giving, for rich and poor alike. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart." If the assemblies abounded in *this grace*, having a readiness to will, and a performance out of that which they have (as Paul exhorted the Corinthians), their fellowship also would be ready beforehand, "*as a matter of bounty, AND NOT AS OF COVETOUSNESS*" (2 Cor. ix. 5), *i.e.*, not something *extorted* by touching appeals, but as a *willing* gift-offering to the Lord. On the other hand, those who seek to please God in their service would aim not to "speak in respect of want," or to "desire a gift," lest what is ministered become a matter of *covetousness* on their side, and not as a *bounty* from those who impart. I believe any spiritually-minded labourer would find greater joy in receiving a few pence in the former way than as many pounds after the latter, for he knows that the one is "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, *well-pleasing to God*," while of the other God might say, "Your offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto Me."

3. Individual or assembly giving. Another thing often felt is the great lack of the assembly character of giving amongst us. Many have individually learnt the blessedness of honouring the Lord with their substance, and with the first-fruits of all their increase ; such as become known by their liberality get almost bewildered by endless appeals ; but assembly-giving seems to be often confined to meeting local expenses. I do not forget that many meetings send collective gifts occasionally to workers in other lands, and some have united in a yearly offering for work at home and abroad ; but how many villages, and in some cases districts, lie practically unevangelised almost at the doors of the assemblies ! Yet for aggressive work by means of tents, vans, &c., in these neglected parts there is seldom any expression of assembly fellowship, and a collective gift is exceedingly rare. Surely fellowship in the Gospel in the New Testament is a *Church* matter, and nearly all that is written "concern-

ing giving and receiving" is in that aspect. Paul mentions the grace of God bestowed on the *Churches* of Macedonia to stir up in the Church at Corinth the same grace of ministering to the saints. The brethren sent on this errand are called the messengers of the *Churches*; so was it also in the supply of his personal needs. Referring to his early labours he says: "Now, ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated (had fellowship) with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only"—a very common experience, I judge, with those who leave the beaten tracks to begin the Gospel in more needy parts; but in a later period he despoiled other Churches, receiving supplies from them, to do service to the Church at Corinth, from which he would receive nothing, because of their unspiritual condition. Which Church is most reflected in our assemblies—that of Philippi, or Corinth?

Enough has been said to show clearly that the New Testament Churches acted in their Church capacity when showing fellowship in the Gospel. Those who went forth for His Name's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles, had the sympathy and love of the Churches from which they set out, and counted on the fellowship of those Churches to which they might come. But do not the assemblies to-day need some very definite instruction and exhortation on this important subject? And are not those who teach by word or pen, and those who guide the saints, responsible to set forth constantly the mind of God about it, and also to see that opportunity for performing it is not lacking?

Everything has its dangers. We may not have the dangers arising from the modern plan of carrying on missions by means of societies. We are free from system, but let us take heed that we are not free from sympathy as well, and forget "to do good and to communicate." God has a purpose and a plan for the Gospel, and we have joint responsibilities as connected with both. To spread the Gospel in all directions is not the responsibility of certain individuals only, but the bounden duty and privilege of the whole Church, and every local assembly should feel and show a real identification of interests with those whom they recognise as called to go forth to preach that Gospel, for what is fellowship but the common affections, interests, service, and warfare of the common life and relationship of saints? The creature dwells on that which is peculiar, for it tends to set forth the individual, but while we would not undervalue any individual grace, we should learn to cultivate that which is common, for it tends to fellowship; but it is often said that "only one or two in our assembly are in a position to give much." (Do not forget

the lesson of the poor widow who cast in more than they all.) Consequently it becomes an individual thing. In this way the poorer saints are not encouraged to give, and the more well-to-do give as they feel personally disposed. In some instances, to help some great society already endowed with large sums, where the cost of vast machinery eats up a considerable portion, or to those who are well known to the Christian public, while many a quiet, godly labourer is entirely overlooked, big sums are often given to that which has a big name by those who have not a penny for the less pretentious but more scriptural worker.

It is instructive to notice how much Paul made of Epaphroditus as the messenger of the Philippians, bearing their gifts of love to him, and then sent back by the apostle to cheer them with tidings of himself. He was much more than the channel of their gifts; he was the link of their hearts' affection. By all means let the weary labourer know the hearts which beat in common interests with him, for the love, and sympathy, and desire which come with the gift will greatly refresh his spirit, and be returned to further their joy, and this is "fellowship in the Gospel."

E. VENN.

Greystone, Yeovil.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayers that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

WHO ARE OVERCOMERS?—Are all regenerate persons overcomers, as set forth in the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in Rev. ii. and iii.?

CHRISTIANS AND SIN.—In 1 John ii. 1 I read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." In 1 John iii. 9 I read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not sin; . . . he cannot sin." How am I to reconcile these two apparently opposite statements?

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

THE POSITION OF CONVERTED JEWS.—Is it obligatory upon all converted Jews to give up the observance of the Mosaic ceremonial, and to live as Christians of the Gentiles, and worship with them; or have they the option of continuing as Christians the observance of Jewish customs and ritual?

ELDER SUNDAY-SCHOOL SCHOLARS.—What means should we adopt to retain under our care and teaching the young people of our Sunday-schools, who consider themselves too old to attend the ordinary Sunday-school Classes? (2) How should classes for such be conducted? (3) What method of teaching would be most profitable?

CAN THE SOUL DIE?

QUESTION 438.—Please explain Isaiah liii. 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death." Again, verse 10: "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." Is it possible for the soul to die? What is the difference between soul and spirit?

ANSWER A.—Yes, in the Scriptural sense of the word it is possible for the soul to die—that is, to be separated from God. It was the soul of Christ that suffered most when He gave Himself up for our sin. It was in His soul that He suffered the darkness and the sorrow through the hiding of God's face from Him; it was in His holy soul that He felt the horror of contact with sin and the awfulness of God's wrath against it. In Numbers xix. 5 the blood, as well as every other part of the heifer, was *burned*, and as we are taught in Scripture that the blood is the life ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ =soul), have we not here a beautiful type of that aspect of the suffering of the Lord Jesus who "gave His life ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ =soul) a ransom for many, and poured out his soul unto death? The difference between soul and spirit, I apprehend, is this: The soul ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$) of man is his natural life, which he has as a living being. "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul;" but the spirit ($\pi\acute{\nu}\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$) is that highest part of man by which he can apprehend spiritual things. When the Lord Jesus died He poured out His soul ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$) unto death; but ere He did so He said to His Father, "Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." H. C. C.

ANSWER B.—Like many other words, "soul" has in Scripture meanings different from what we usually understand by it in English. By it we mean the sentient part, the inner man, as distinguished from the body. Sometimes it takes that sense, as "Bless the Lord, O my soul." But commonly, and properly, it is the "natural" or animal life, that which ceases at death, giving place, in the case of man, to another state. In this sense the "soul" dies. In the suffering of death Christ gave up His soul, His natural life, that which He took at His birth, to take the spiritual in resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 44). There is therefore in the passages cited, or elsewhere, nothing to countenance the idea that the soul, as the term is, popularly

understood, ceases to exist. It is owing to an erroneous use of the word.

Soul, especially in the Old Testament, has yet other meanings. For example, of so many "souls," or persons, coming into Egypt (Gen. xlv. 15, 27). It is applied also to the lower animal life (Gen. i. 20, 30, mar.), and even to dead bodies (Num. vi. 6).

The distinction between soul and spirit is not so sustained in Scripture as to admit of our defining it. The inspired Word, exact as it is for the Divine purposes, does not lend itself to our metaphysics. W. C.

ANSWER C.—The Hebrew word for soul in the passages quoted from Isaiah liii. is often translated *life*, and may better be read: "He hath poured out His life unto death;" "when Thou shalt make His life an offering for sin." The same word is used in Jonah i. 14: "Lét us not perish for this man's life."

We read that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). Thus the human soul, being the breath of God, is indestructible, and cannot cease to exist. Both soul and spirit are put in contrast to the body as signifying the incorporeal part of man. The distinction between them must have been recognised from very early times, or we should not have different words for them both in ancient and modern languages. The soul is the natural life, with which are connected the affections, instincts, and appetites which we have in common with the lower animals. As we read, "When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy border, as He hath promised thee, and then shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after" (Deut. xii. 20).

The spirit, on the other hand, is the seat of the understanding, the loftier part of man's immortal nature. As a special creation, it is associated with the other great works of the Almighty as stretching forth the heavens or laying the foundation of the earth (Zech. xii. 1). The work of the Spirit of God in the affections and emotions of the new nature is associated with the Spirit. Thus Mary says, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke i. 47). The Apostle Paul says, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son" (Rom. i. 9); and again, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit" (Philemon 25). F. P. S.

ANSWER D.—In several of its meanings it can die. The term "soul" as used in the Bible has at least six distinct meanings. *Nephesh*, the Old Testament word for soul, is used more than seven hundred times, with very varied mean-

ings. Our translators seem to have been a little perplexed with it, for they translated it by forty-nine English words.

First meaning, "LIFE." Our translators have very frequently translated *Nephesh*, of the Old Testament, and *Psukee*, of the New Testament, by the word life. As an illustration, see Joshua ii. 13, 14. Rahab stipulated with the spies that they should "save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our souls from death." And the spies said to her, "Our soul for yours, if ye utter not this our business." The Gibeonites said to Joshua, "We were sore afraid of our souls, because of you" (Joshua ix. 24). "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardied their souls unto the death in the high places of the field" (Judges v. 18). Thus also the *Psukee* of the New Testament is used (see Acts xv. 26): "Our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Neither count I my soul dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course" (Acts xx. 24). In this sense the soul can die or be killed. This use of the word is very frequent.

Second meaning, "PERSONALITY." As an illustration of this use of the term see Genesis xli. 26: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were three score and six." See also Joshua x., where at Libnah, at Lachish, at Eglon, at Hebron, at Debir, and at Makkedah, Joshua destroyed utterly *all the souls* which were in each of these places. See again Ezekiel xviii. 20: "The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." The term soul is also used in the New Testament to indicate a person, as in 1 Peter iii. 20: "While the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight, souls were saved by water." This use is frequent, and in this sense the soul can die and can be killed.

Third meaning, BLOOD, THE SOUL OF ALL FLESH (see Gen. ix. 4): "But flesh, with the soul thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." See also in Leviticus xvii. 13, 14: "He that hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten, he shall ever pour out the blood thereof upon the ground, and cover it with dust, for it is the soul of all flesh . . . For the soul of all flesh is the blood." See also Deut. xii. 23: "For the blood is the soul, and thou mayest not eat the soul with the flesh." In this sense, also, the soul can die, for when poured out and covered with dust, the forces of Nature will forthwith begin to decompose it.

Fourth meaning, THE CONCENTRATION OF

BEING. When all the forces, faculties, and capabilities of a man's being seem to be gathered into one point, on one object, or into one focus, that is called soul. An illustration of this is found in Psalm ciii.: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name." Joseph's brethren said: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear" (Gen. xlii. 21). It was thus with the blessed Lord in the garden, where He was in an agony, and His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; and He said: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. xxvi. 38). This may in some measure help to grasp (just a little) the tremendous scenes of Isaiah liii. alluded to by the questioner, concerning which we tremble to speak particularly.

Fifth meaning, THE AFFECTIONS AND EMOTIONS. When man is spoken of in His triune existence, as in 1 Thess. v. 23, the spirit is the power or the energy which acts to bring the faculties into operation. The soul is the vehicle of the affections and emotions. There are many illustrations of this sense or use of the term soul, such as David and Jonathan: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul" (1 Samuel xviii. 1). So also in Song of Solomon we read repeatedly, "Him whom my soul loveth." The opposite passions or affections are also predicated of the soul, such as Zech. xi. 8: "My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me."

Sixth meaning, THE SOUL ITSELF AN ENTITY. In this sense it lives in the body during a man's lifetime, and at death is a living, conscious entity or personality, possessing many faculties, and living apart from the body, and independent of it. In this sense the soul does not die, neither can it be killed by human hand nor weapons, for the Lord Jesus said: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. x. 28). This distinct personality of the soul apart from the body is alluded to several times both in the Old Testament and in the New, such as Psalm xvi. 10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." Again, Rev. xx. 4: "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image," &c. In Rev. vi. 9, 10 are seen: "The souls of they that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." J. S.

CHRISTIAN GIVING.

Revised Notes of an Address by JAMES WRIGHT, Bristol.

IN reflecting upon the terms in which my subject this evening was announced, namely, "Christian Giving," I was struck with the immense scope of the theme. "Christian Giving" appeared to me to be almost synonymous with *Christian living*, because I am in the habit of singing here a hymn which runs thus:

"Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him,
Who can tell how much we owe Him?
Gladly let us render to Him
All we are and have."

Dear friends, *Christian giving* is *Christian living*. The Christian's life should be a gift, or, as that word in the hymn puts it, the payment of a debt, or rather the repayment of a loan. That is what the whole of my life should be to my gracious, heavenly Father, the God of all grace.

But as I had been asked to make these remarks in connection with the financial statement to which we have just listened, I took it to mean that I should present a few thoughts on some of the leading Scriptures that deal with the giving of *money* for the work of God, which is only a little bit, you see, of the whole subject. And I purpose just to pass in review several Scriptures, with a very few remarks of my own, because it is God's Word that tells on our hearts and consciences.

THE HAPPINESS OF GIVING.

The first Scripture to which I want to refer speaks of *the happiness of giving*. It is that well-known word in Acts xx. where the Apostle Paul reminds the elders of Ephesus, whom he called to Miletus, of the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed [that is, more happy] to give than to receive." So you see the very words convey the thought, "If I want to be a happy Christian, I must be a *giving* Christian, because it is a more happy thing to give than to receive." Now, who had the pre-eminence in this? The blessed God, the happy God. He gave out of His own bosom His well-beloved Son, of whom we sing:

"The Gift of gifts, all other gifts in one."
He gave Him. No gift has ever reached that, or ever can, so He is the mightiest

Giver, you see, and therefore He is the most blessed, the happy God. *How* did God give? He gave with His right hand. Matt. vi. 3: "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." The right hand, in Scripture, is the emblem of power, and so to give with the right hand is to give with our might, and that is how God gives, and therefore He is a right-hand Giver. Now, if we want to be happy we must be imitators of God, and give with our right hand, *i.e.*, with all our might.

LIBERAL GIVING.

And this leads me to the second passage. Rom. xii. 8: "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity"—margin, "liberally"; R.V., "with liberality"; margin, "singleness." It all comes to the same thing. "With simplicity" means with one purpose, which is the idea of the Apostle in Phil. iii.: "This *one* thing I do." So I must give with my right hand, with my might, liberally, as this passage puts it. *Christian giving* should be liberal giving, according to Rom. xii. And what is Rom. xii.? The verses after 1 and 2 are an unfolding and amplification of the thought which is given us in these two verses: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Now, that is the same word that is used in the account of the Transfiguration to describe the altered appearance of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Be ye *transfigured*;" and all the following verses are details of the transfigured life, all beautiful exhibitions of the Divine life to which we are exhorted. Romans xii. is evidently the Holy Spirit's description—a full-length portrait of the transfigured man. And one feature of the transfigured man is his *giving liberally*. The transfigured life, dear friends, is not that weak thing which expresses itself merely in words, but in deeds. In the transformed person, transformed by "the renewing of the mind," you see a reflection of the glory of the character of Christ, and that one will be a liberal giver.

GENEROUS GIVING.

Now turn for a moment to another Scripture, 1 Cor. xvi. 1: "Now concerning the collection for the saints." That begins a chapter, but if it did not we should see the force of it a good deal more. How does chapter xv. end? "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Why is it not in vain? Because of the resurrection which is the subject of chapter xv. There are two things which this chapter teaches that are not in vain—our *faith* and our *labour*: and our labour is not in vain for just exactly the same reason that our faith is not in vain, viz., because of resurrection. That is, everything I do now has a bearing on the resurrection morning. And so in regard, then, to giving; my giving liberally with the right hand has a bearing on the resurrection morning, and therefore the Apostle, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, passes, not abruptly, but in Divine connection, from the great doctrine of the Resurrection to the simple act of giving: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Now concerning the collection for the saints," It is most natural, because, What does resurrection involve? Our union with Christ is in resurrection, our partaking of His resurrection life. And therefore we are exhorted in Rom. vi. to "walk in newness of life." And one manifestation of the newness of life is *generous giving*, just as the expression of the transformed life is when a selfish, gathering heart becomes a scattering heart. So, "concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store." On the resurrection morning, you see. How beautifully in harmony the whole thing is! On the first day of the week the Apostle advises them to take stock. In worldly things most people take stock once a year, but the Apostle advises it once a week, and doing it on the resurrection morning, because the thought of resurrection supplies such a powerful motive to giving.

PROPORTIONATE GIVING.

Then another thing, giving, to be liberal, must be *proportionate*. So the Apostle says: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God hath prospered him*." That is the first aspect of the proportion of the gift. So, for example, if I gave this time last year £1 every Lord's Day for the different branches of His work, or a shilling, or sixpence, and that was then a fit proportion, if God in the riches of His mercy and kindness has prospered me, and doubled my means since then, and I only give the same to-day, I am not giving liberally—with my right hand, with my might *now*; for I ought to give more now that the Lord has blessed me with more. And that is one thing that some dear Christians do not consider, that giving, to be liberal, should be in proportion to their prosperity. Liberality has nothing to do with the *amount*—not a bit. There "sat" One "over against the treasury," and saw how the people put into the treasury. It does not say He saw what they put in, but how. Ah! there is a vast difference between *how* and *what*. Now, my practical point is, you and I should come into this place on a Lord's-day morning with the consciousness, "The Lord is sitting over against the treasury to-day." He has never vacated that place, and oh! He is waiting and watching how I put in, that is, whether I put in in proportion to the increase of His benefits towards myself. I should hold as a steward the means given me by Him, and His heart is delighted when He sees in me a recognition of the truth that He is sitting over against the treasury watching, and that He knows the proportion I give.

GIVING ACCORDING TO POVERTY.

Then another aspect of this proportionate giving is the relation that the amount of my gift bears to *what is left* in my possession. The liberality of giving increases in proportion to the poverty resulting from that giving. Now, that leads me to the next Scripture, 2 Cor. viii. 1: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit"—that is, make you to know, give you information about—"the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia." One thing in passing: How beautiful the language of the Apostle. He

never talks to one Church about the failures of another Church. When dealing with the Church at Corinth he censured them sharply, but when speaking to the Church at Corinth about the Churches of Macedonia he did not say a word about the failures of those Churches, though they may have been many, but he tells of the grace bestowed. Now, let us always act on that principle, and when talking of one brother to another, tell about what God's grace has done, and never talk about the weakness and the marks of the old nature in that brother. And if we acted thus, it would help in the cultivation of love. It is a cowardly thing to file sovereigns and clip bank-notes, and this is like filing sovereigns. Each one of these brethren is a heavenly coin, and we have no business to take the file of criticism and file these coins; it is a miserable thing. Now, let us look at one another as the Lord's coins, and value one another, and pray for one another, but never criticise one another uncharitably.

Now, "We do you to wit of the grace of God *bestowed*." It never does people harm as long as you speak of what God has done for them. Praising the poor, human instrument may do harm, but speaking about what God has bestowed does not, because it puts them in their right position. "How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Now, does that not express beautifully what I said, that liberality increases in the ratio of the poverty which is the result of the gift. "For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves," giving to the utmost point of giving, so that they were left absolutely poor.

(Concluded in our next.)

PRAYER.

CONSTANTINE the Great was one day looking at some statues of noted persons who were represented *standing*. "I shall have mine sculptured kneeling," said he, "for this is how I have risen to eminence." Thus it is with the Christian. If he would obtain any real eminence in the Christian life, he must be often kneeling in prayer to God.

THE SCOPE OF SALVATION.

(1 Peter i.-ii.)

BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

PART I.

IT is clear that "the salvation of God" covers much more than what the popular use of the expression conveys. The term itself has become, alas! very "cheap" in our days of easy-going profession, when the phraseology of Divine things is so often put in the place of the possession of *the things themselves*.

In the first two chapters of Peter's first epistle the subject of "salvation" is looked at from various points of view. As I apprehend it, we have it in connection with THE PURPOSES OF GOD, in connection with THE APPROPRIATION OF FAITH, and thirdly, in connection with THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF THE DIVINE NATURE IN THE CHILD OF GOD (i. 5; i. 8, 9; ii. 2, R.V.).

It is with the first that the epistle opens. Salvation is regarded as the grand finale of all the ways of God with man, and, as thus considered, we have it not as yet. We are on the way to it. Not that there is any doubt in the apostle's mind as to our finally reaching it, though he speaks of the pathway towards this goal lying through a fiery oven of tribulation and testing. But there is a power commensurate with the grace that has called to salvation. The salvation is not yet "revealed"—it awaits "the last time" for its realisation—but believers are "kept by the power of God," while that which is the object of their desire is only known to faith.

It is evident Peter has his eye on the end. Indeed, his two epistles bring us to the verge of Time. We seem to breathe the solemn air of Eternity. He looks beyond "dispensations" to the coming of "the day of God," in the which that which is material shall be removed to make room for that which will allow the Divine perfections a greater scope for display, and in which righteousness will be able to take up its undisturbed repose.

Peter does not make mention of that great event which the Apostle Paul, "by the Word of the Lord," brings before the mourners in Thessalonica (1 Thes. iv.). Was that one of the "mysteries" which "the teacher of the Gentiles" was specially commissioned to make

known? Not that Peter slighted the more abundant revelations granted to his younger fellow in the apostolate. He goes out of his way to express fellowship with them (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16), though owning that there were many things in the writings of Paul "hard to be understood," which could easily lead to "destruction" if handled by ignorance or instability.

Nor are we to say that, therefore, Peter's ministry is "Jewish." That he addressed Jews by nature, who had become "Christians" by grace (iv. 16), is evident, and no doubt he speaks to them in a way specially interesting to Hebrew believers. But his aim is clearly to bring them out of Judaism, and to establish them in "the true grace of God," which is Christianity, that which has divinely supplanted the legal order of Judaism (v. 12).

The Judaising of professing Christendom is sad enough. What shall we say of the eagerness of many to Judaize the major part of the New Testament? Even the older Scriptures I would read in the light of the Lord, as the apostles did, drawing from them their spiritual essence, which is in the same life and nature as the choicest parts of those Divine communications which the hyper-dispensational critics of the present day have left to "the Church."

Dispensational differences there are. But they may easily loom too largely before us, overshadowing that which is of greater moment, the eternal principles of truth which dispensations were intended gradually to reveal. These will abide in their own Divine glory when dispensations have run their course. When the building is finished the scaffolding is removed.

Peter then looks on to the winding up of everything in judgment, and the coming into view, out of the universal cataclysm, of a paradise of new creation blessedness, in which earth will be the mirror to reflect the purity and gladness of heaven; an "inheritance" better than the one bartered away by Adam, or the one forfeited by Israel; incorruptible in its nature, undefiled in its character, and that fadeth not away, but one in which God will be all in all.

In chapter i. he looks back into the infinitudes of Eternity before Time began, and

he looks on to the infinitudes of Eternity when Time shall be no more. Again and again he returns to this subject: "The end of all things is at hand; be ye, therefore, sober, and watch unto prayer;" "He is ready to judge the quick and the dead," taking no account of the millennium between; "The God of all grace has called you to His *eternal* glory by Christ Jesus," looking beyond the mediatorial kingdom committed to the Son of Man, to be yielded up again to the Father, when its object has been accomplished. Then—at "the end"—will be revealed all that was hidden in the womb of the Divine counsels, and all that the incarnation, death, resurrection, and glorification of the Son had in view to bring about.

And that salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, will be a sufficient answer to the devil and his angels for all the havoc they have wrought in God's universe, and will also fully justify the marvellous patience of God through the revolving centuries with that which seemed to compromise His character, *i.e.*, the continued triumph of *evil*, and with that which seemed to defy His power, *i.e.*, the continued tyranny of death.

What the child of faith has in the meantime, the "salvation" in which he finds a present deliverance from the evil, and a present victory over death, we hope to consider, God willing, in a second paper. 71

BIBLE STUDIES.

SOME UNANSWERED PRAYERS OF SCRIPTURE.

Elijah requested that he might die 1 Ki. xix. 4

Was taken to heaven without dying.

Job prayed that God would des-

stroy him - - - Job. vi. 8, 9

God delivered Job, and gave him twice

as much as he had before.

Paul prayed that the thorn

might be taken away 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9

God gave him grace sufficient to endure the affliction.

Moses prayed that he might go

over into Canaan - Deut. iii. 23-25

Died after getting a sight of it from Pisgah.

David prayed for . . child's life 2 Sam. xii. 16-18

The child died.

The Saviour's prayer in . . .

Gethsemane Matt. xxvi. 38-44 J.W.W.

CHRIST GLORIFIED.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART II.

NOW let us read John xii. 14 :

"These things understood not His disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him."

They did not see the meaning of these things at the time. It had never struck them that every detail had been predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures, but "when Jesus was glorified"—that is, when He had sent down the Holy Ghost to dwell in them—then they remembered. Fresh light was shed upon everything when they were possessed of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that you and I need to bring the Scriptures to our remembrance—to show us the meaning of them, to enable us to use them effectually for the good of others. To go about the work and testimony in the power of an ungrieved Spirit is the need of this day. But I turn to this passage specially to show that the result of the glorifying of the Lord Jesus was His sending down from the Throne the very choicest gift He could send. From the midst of the glory of the Throne of God He sends down His own blessed Spirit to dwell in His people. There were perhaps some people years ago that were very fond of you—they were bosom friends of yours—but they got on in the world, and rose to such a pinnacle that they don't care to know you now, and if they met you on the street would rather turn away their heads than recognise you. Happily some are above that, and don't forget their old friends. But there is one Man that never does. The glory of the Throne has not altered the affections of the Lord Jesus. He came to the Cross and He has gone to the Throne in eternal and unchanging love, and the first thing He does from the Glory is to send down His holy and gracious Spirit. He loves us just the same on the Throne as He loved us on the Cross. There is not a bit of difference. The glorified Christ is surrounded with the acclamations of myriads of angels, holy, exalted, glorious beings, but He never forgets for a moment the feeblest

on earth that has trusted Him for salvation. "Thou hast ascended up on High," "Thou hast received gifts for men." He didn't receive the gifts for Himself. Some of us receive gifts for ourselves; we put them in our own pockets. The Lord Jesus received the gifts for men. "Yea, for the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell among them." And so having reached the Throne He sends down the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in the very streets that had re-echoed with the cry, "Away with Him, away with Him!" but fifty days before, thousands are now saved, justified, and sanctified, indwelt by His Spirit, praising Him, loving Him, glorifying Him, waiting for Him, and longing to see Him and to be with Him. What a change! That is the love of the glorified Christ. Oh, it is grand to think of Christ in the glory, and to know that the Friend we have there is One that never changes—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!"

Now let us look at it from another point of view. Ephesians i. 15 :

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto the saints,

"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him :

[You see, if the spirit of wisdom is given, it is for one divine purpose—it is for the knowledge of Him. There is no growth in grace except there is growth in the knowledge of Him.]

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

"Which He wrought in Christ when he raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to come :

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church,

"Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Here we have a most elaborate description of the glory given to Christ. It describes

the glory of the place that God has given Him in most unmeasured terms. And after the Holy Spirit has led us to look up, up, past angels and all the most glorious, intelligent beings in God's universe, and has shown us the glorified Christ invested with all authority, "Now," He says, "that is the Head, and you are the members." So just as the feeblest member of my body is in living, vital connection with my head, so the feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is in vital connection with the One that is at the right hand of the Majesty on High, so much so that He is "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." I cannot understand it, yet so it is.

It has been discovered recently by scientists that all sensation is localised in the brain; that everything you feel, whether it be with the finger, the foot, or any other part of the body, is communicated as if by electric current to the head. All sensation is located in the head. Oh, what a thought that is, that the Lord Jesus up there on the Throne feels for every one of His members! Thus the sufferings of His members here are still called "the afflictions of Christ" (Col. i. 24). What a thought! Touched with a feeling of our infirmities! Then you know also that all intelligence is in the head. If you could imagine a man living without a head, you would say that man would not be much worth! We sometimes hear it said, "He has got no head," which simply means that he has got no intelligence; and if we had not Christ we would have no head, no intelligence. He is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. We have no supply for our needs but in the Head; we have no wisdom to guide us but in the Head. It is only as we are receiving the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ from day to day, it is only as we are being vitalised and empowered by the indwelling Spirit received from Christ, the Head, that we can live to His glory.

Christ is the Head of the Body—the Church—and just as the body needs the head, so the head needs the body, and the very members that are the most feeble are oftentimes the most necessary. Christ's fulness needs my emptiness, Christ's power needs

my weakness, Christ's wisdom needs my foolishness, and so the body is the completion of Christ just as Christ is the completion of the body. The Church is the fulness or completion of Christ in Ephesians i. 23; Christ is the fulness or completion of the Church in Colossians ii. 10. What is this Church which is His Body composed of? Frees, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, &c.? No. If they all amalgamated to-morrow, that would not constitute the Church, for the world has no place in the Church, and no unsaved one forms a part of it in God's account. The Church is composed of every living member of the Body of Christ—everyone quickened by the Holy Ghost, everyone who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, everyone that is counting on Him for salvation, they constitute the Church.

Oh, may God give us to see distinctly this aspect of the Church—the Body of Christ—and then don't let us ever despise a member of that Body. A mother does not value her children by their age. Many a mother that has lost her little infant of only a year old has found it the deepest sorrow of her whole life. Our Lord Jesus Christ loves everyone, the feeblest and most ignorant member just as much as the oldest and most experienced. It was John who spoke of Himself as "that disciple that Jesus loved." Was it that Jesus loved him more than the rest? No. It was just that John better knew the love of Christ. Oh, that He may give us, with His life, with His power, with His blessing, with His peace, to know the love that passeth knowledge.

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—VII.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR GOOD.

By W. H. BENNET.

THE connecting links of Scripture are sometimes overlooked, and thus, while much is gained from two statements, much is lost by not observing the link between them. It is very blessed to enter into the truth expressed in these words, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose"; and the words which follow are also very blessed,

"Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. viii. 28, 29); but it is only when due emphasis is laid on the "FOR"—the link that binds these two truths together—that we feel the force and beauty of the whole. We are thus taught to compare God's ways with "His own Son," and His ways with the "many sons" whom He is bringing into fellowship with Him, and we learn that God has a purpose to accomplish, towards the carrying out of which the powers of earth and hell must—whether willing or unwilling—be subservient.

We see this in the case of the Lord Himself. It was the design of God to lead Him by the pathway of suffering to that high position of dignity and glory which He now fills; "for it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. ii. 10). And while Judas and Caiaphas and Pilate, and all who took part in the crucifixion of the Lord of glory, were doing their own will, and seeking their own ends, they were but the instruments of carrying out God's purpose. This was equally true of Satan, who led them on to murder Him whom by temptation he could never overcome; and it will be no small part of his eternal shame, and the eternal shame of all the enemies of the Lord, to discover that, not simply in spite of their opposition, but by means of that opposition, God has fulfilled His own counsels.

But that which is true in the case of the Lord is also true of those who are His. It always has been so, and will be so to the end. Whatever comes to the child of God, whether directly from the hand of God or, by His permission, from Satan, is sent or allowed with the one definite aim of conforming him in heart and spirit to the blessed One unto whom he will soon be perfectly conformed, even in body as well as spirit, for ever.

We should also mark the word *together*. On this Dr. Winslow remarks: "Observe the unity of operation. They 'work together,' not singly and separately, but conjointly. Seldom does affliction come solitary and

alone; the gentle wavelet upon the surface forebodes the agitation of the waters, and is often the precursor of the mountain billow. Trace not the wisdom only, but the love of thy God, O child of suffering, in ordaining your path to heaven through *much* tribulation. Single and alone, the good these trials were designed to convey were but partially accomplished, and the evil they were designed to meet but imperfectly cured. How would the adjustment, harmony, and symmetry of God's arrangement be destroyed if one dark dispensation were lacking of, perhaps, the many which hover upon our horizon! It is the combination of sound, the harmony of many and often discordant notes, that constitutes music. Oh, how imperfectly are we aware, not of the necessity of trial only, but of a plurality of trials, in order to wake from our lips the sweetest, loftiest anthem of praise to God! Thus it is that the most deeply tried believers are the most skilful and the most melodious choristers in God's Church. They sing the sweetest on earth, and they sing the loudest in heaven, who are passing through, and who have come out of '*great tribulation*'."

This is often quoted "*shall work together*," as though it had reference to future result only; but the apostle speaks of an ever-present working: "*All things are working together for good*." While this is a great reality to faith, it is not evident to the eye of sense. When Jacob had lost Joseph, and Simeon was detained in Egypt, and the governor made the presence of Benjamin the condition of a further supply of corn, he exclaimed, "*All these things are against me*;" but when he reached the end of his course he could say, "*The angel which redeemed me from all evil*." We can see that when he uttered his doleful complaint the things he lamented were really working together for his good. The lost son had been sent beforehand to save their lives by a great deliverance; the son retained in Egypt was kept as a link between Joseph and his father, who mourned him as dead; and the demand that Benjamin should be taken was part of Joseph's wise scheme to bring about a desirable conclusion. All was working, under the hand of Him who "called for a famine" to fulfil His

purpose of taking Israel to Egypt and keeping them separate from the nations that He might truly bless them.

So with Joseph. He had "anguish of soul" when he was sold by his brethren; and when, under a false accusation, he was cast into prison it is expressly said (according to the old version of Psalm cv.), "the iron entered into his soul." When the chief butler, to whom he had showed kindness, and from whose intercession he expected help, "did not remember Joseph, but forgot him," it must have been another bitter ingredient in his cup; but again we see how all was working together to bring about the end God had in view—not merely the deliverance which Joseph sought, but honour and service.

We see "the end of the Lord" in these things, as well as in His dealings with Job, and He has graciously given us these records of His ways, that we may so profit by them, and by all His words of promise, as to be able to say, "*We know* that all things work together for good to them that love God." Through His grace we can say, "We love Him because He first loved us"; and in unchangeable love and infinite wisdom He is ordering all for our good. The Apostle Paul did not simply state this as a truth for the Church of God, but as a truth *experienced by himself, and endorsed by others*. The late Dr. David Brown beautifully says: "It was a household word with the household of faith; not that, *as here exhibited*, it had perhaps ever before struck one of his readers; but with the teaching they had already received and the gracious experience which was common to all who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, it had but to be put before them to be recognised as an undoubted and precious truth."

When we reach our home, and retrace our earthly pathway, with God's perfect light shed upon every part of it, we shall *see* how blessedly true this was. Till then "we walk by faith, not by sight," and we fear not, even in the dark, and it may be at times with tearful eyes, to set our seal to the words, "We know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

CEDRON.

FLOW on, dark Cedron,* flow
As in the days of old,
Still murmuring thy tale of woe
Which never can be told:
The sorrow of that Kingly One,
The Son of God, and David's Son.

Once tears by David shed
Were mingled with thy flood,
When as a fugitive he fled
And by thy waters stood;
Deep anguish rent his heart that day
As on he sped upon his way.

Pursued by one he loved,
And fain had died to save,
What grief his inward spirit moved
When thus he crossed thy wave.
But grief like his has oft been borne,
And love as true found like return.

A grander tale is thine:
One greater far than he
In lowly grace doth intertwine
Fond memories with thee:
Pursued by those He came to save,
In deep distress He crossed thy wave.

Earth's judgment hour had come,
When He or sinful men
Must bear sin's just but fearful doom—
Had He but faltered then,
Our portion had been dark despair,
Our cries had rent Gehenna's air.

Immortal Cedron, brook
Beneath the olive's shade;
Thy story is of One who took
Our place. On Him was laid
The sin, the sorrow, and the shame
Of all who truly trust His Name.

Flow on, dark Cedron, flow;
What river is like thee?
By that mysterious night of woe
Thou shalt remembered be
Long after earth has ceased to run
Her yearly circuit round the sun.

A. W. P. S.

* The name "Cedron" signifies "*dark torrent*."

"PROPHESYING" AND "RULING" IN THE CHURCH.

1 Corinthians xiv.

IT is well in reading this Scripture to bear in mind chapters xi., xii., xiii. There we discern, in chapter xi., the cause of chapter xiv., viz., the *divisions* amongst them as the result of forgetting their *oneness* in Christ Jesus. How different in Acts ii., where the enemy had not come in to mar the unity of the spirit.

Then in chapter xii. the Spirit of God recalls them to the great fact of their dependence one on another, and under the figure of the natural body displays God's idea of what He expected the Church to manifest, viz., service one to another—each member doing to the whole what the members of the human body do for it without jar or friction of any kind, if in health. At the close, the Spirit of God says: "Yet show I you a more excellent way," viz., love, as defined in chapter xiii. Thus, as God is good, the faithful servant in Luke xix. won his reward by being like God in his service, even as Paul in chapter xi. 1.

In chapter xiii. 1-7 the want of resemblance to God in the use we make of His grace debars us from future reward. In reading chapter xiv. it is well to understand what a prophet in its primary meaning is, and what it means when the Spirit says, "All may prophesy."

In early times the Scriptures were incomplete, and what were in existence were in the hands of the few. Consequently, God spake by prophets. He gave them a *revelation* direct, therefore the word was God's. In 2 Timothy ii. 2, Paul, as an inspired man, orders Titus thus: "The things which thou hast heard from me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." That, however, was far short of what we now have in the Holy Scriptures. For what guarantee had early saints that those who reported Paul's words reported them faithfully? For instance, what one says may be repeated a month hence, but much of its point may be lost or mutilated in the telling. It all depends on the faithfulness of the one who repeats the

saying. But if the same party, instead of committing his words to men to carry, sits down and puts his words on paper, there can be no uncertainty as to what He said. Now, this is what God has done for us. He has been pleased to give us the Holy Scriptures (writings) in these "perilous times" (2 Tim. iii. 1), so cheap, that no one need be without a copy. And herein we note how Satan defeats himself, for what he uses to propagate error as fast as he can, God has used to multiply His Word.

There is immense force in the term "Holy Scripture." Newberry translates it sacred or temple writings, which, through Jewish pride, have been so marvellously preserved. In 2 Peter i. 21, "Holy men of God spake as they were borne along (Newberry) by the Holy Ghost." Here we have certainty; the moment we know the exact words we know *that* is God's thought about the matter. Thus, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable" (2 Tim. iii. 14-17).

Now, the prophet gave the mind of God by direct *revelation*, and his word was for edification, exhortation, and comfort. In these days, when there are no prophets, what answers to 1 Corinthians xiv. 3 is a man who, having ascertained the mind of God from the Scriptures, in communion with God, and by the Holy Ghost, speaks unto edification, exhortation, and comfort. Chapter xiv. begins: "Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy (that is, speak to edification, exhortation, and comfort)." 1 Corinthians xii. 31 puts it thus: "Covet earnestly the best gifts." Now, Exodus xx. 17 says: "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbour's." God means what He says in both Scriptures. Thy neighbour's house is his own, but the Word that edifies is not his own except as derived from a source *open to all*. The mistake the Corinthians made was, they thought (as the professing Church now seems to think) that the Word came *out from* them, instead of *unto* them (verse 36). Paul seeks, in chapter i. 4-6, to bring this home to them, "I thank my God always on your behalf, that in everything ye are enriched *in Him*." So that prophesying must ever be in the

proportion of faith (Rom. xii. 6). You might try to move a tramcar in vain, but let the wire be touched in the right way and the power comes to move it. So, beloved, our words have no power until we touch by faith the One in whom is all knowledge and all utterance. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and, therefore, true ministry is faith in touch with Him.

But why are we to covet? Simply because the Church is dear to God—His pearl (Matt. xiii. 45, 46). And ministry after the pattern of Ephesians v. 25, 26 is precious service, and will in no wise lose its reward (Matt. x. 42; Luke xii. 42, 43). Thus, however gifted, we are only stewards of wealth won for all saints on Calvary's cross. All fulness is in Christ; from thence may our pitchers be ever filled. How simple and how well illustrated on the day of Pentecost—the rushing, mighty wind filling all, and the house as well—while in Luke iii. 22, the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus *in bodily form*, and out of His fulness have we all received, and may go on receiving.

"Have you felt the Spirit's power?
Still there's more to follow."

Now, 1 Cor. xiv. lays down the Lord's rules for the assemblies of His people, and the gist of the rules is, that all is to be done for the good of the whole, and also "decently (becomingly) and in order," that is, according to God-given ability. The figure of the Body in chapter xii. illustrates this: it would be very unbecoming to go down to business on hands and feet, and more unbecoming to use the feet to bring food to the mouth. We are to think soberly as to our fitness (Rom. xii. 3), and the foot in the spiritual body can only have faith in God to do the foot's work, "according to the proportion of faith."

Wherever, therefore, there is disorder, let us remember God is not its author (ver. 33). SELF is at its post, so that instead of obeying the Lord (as in this chapter), "all seek their own," instead of seeking the good of the whole (ver. 12). We cannot read this chapter without seeing how it lays bare our low estate. The Holy Spirit contemplates each individual saint as having "a psalm, a doctrine, &c., when they come in." No fault

is found with this, and ample room is given to all to help the whole (see verses 12, 16, 19, 26, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39).

Is it not true that in nearly every assembly you might point out at the beginning who will take any part. Why is this? We answer in the words of another: "When the *priest* failed (1 Peter ii. 4, 5, and connect Heb. xiii. 15, 16) the *prophet* came in, and when the prophet failed the *King* came in." So that, instead of the Church being ruled by the Word, one man comes to rule, and not by the Word. We once heard of one who said, "I don't believe in rule by *majorities*," and that one carried his point and ruled by a *minority*. Alas! that it should be so. But why is it? Because the Spirit of God is grieved and hindered by want of rule in the assemblies of the saints, a rule which can on occasion discern soul and spirit in the ministry, and thus help fellow-saints to discern the flesh in anyone who would sow discord among brethren.

Now, it may be said, "This is clerisy." No, no, for that would be to lord it over God's heritage; nevertheless, there is such a thing, as in Titus i. 9, one who can effectually rebuke, before all, them that sin, that others may fear. Thus, in Rom. xii. 8, he that ruleth is to do it with diligence. The word "rule" has in it the sense of *presiding*, so that while the Holy Spirit instructs us through a teacher, the same Holy Spirit presides through a ruler. Whenever, then, we discern a spiritual teacher, we are to own him; and whenever we discern a spiritual ruler, we are to own him, yes, and stand at his back, as the eleven did in Acts ii. 14; and in dealing with his failures we need much to remember 1 Tim. v. 1, that is, "not rebuking him before all, but entreating him as a father."

But why is there so little of this ruling in the fear of the Lord? Is it not worldliness? But what is worldliness? Being rich does not necessarily constitute a worldly Christian. Worldliness is the spirit and ways of the world shaping our action. All party work is worldliness, so Peter was worldly in Galatians ii.; self was at the bottom of his actions, and that is what Paul rebuked (see Gal. ii. and 1 Cor. iii. 3).

T. C.

THE LOVE OF THE FATHER.

1 John iii.

THERE is always some likeness between a child and his father, either in the face, or the hair, or the eyes. It is also the case in God's family, where there is a spiritual likeness. God is righteous, and whosoever doeth righteousness is born of God. The doing of righteousness is a proof that the seed of God is sown in us.

This thought of being born of God wrings from the heart of the apostle a note of admiration. He could not do other than stop and admire the love of the Father in calling us His children. But he wants others to join in his feelings of admiration. Behold! Open your eyes and contemplate this striking spectacle—the love of the Father in calling us *His children*.

Jesus tells Nicodemus of the love of God to the world, and no doubt Nicodemus was extremely amazed to learn that God not only loved the Jews (the aristocracy of the human race), but the world—these despised Gentiles plunged in idolatry and subjected to the most hideous vices—and that whosoever believed in Him had eternal life. Here the apostle looks round upon the intimate circle of the family where the Name of the Father is known, and in a transport of joy exclaims: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." There is a certain difference between these two kinds of love. The love of God to the world is expressed by compassion in seeing its state of misery; whereas the love of the Father when a child is born into His family is expressed by a joy unspeakable—a satisfied heart at receiving the so-much-desired object—as in Zeph. iii. 17: "He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing"; as also Abraham receiving Isaac, the child of promise: "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me."

Let us consider this marvel of the *love of the Father*. We were born in sin, contracting sinful habits, so that it was as much impossible for us to alter the course of our life as for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or a leopard his spots. Rebels awaiting judgment with the expectation of condemnation and

hell, how have we become of God? Not by our merits, nor by our efforts, but by the call of the Father: "that we should be called the sons of God." It is a rebel condemned to death for his crimes become child by the call of the Father. The Father sees him in His Son, and recognises in him a well-beloved, in whom He finds all His delight.

Admire the love of the Father in the communication of His life to His children. We had in us a nature inclined to sin—the fatal propensity was there rooted in our nature; the commandment of the law could not change that in the least. It is just as if you were to order a number of hens to cease scratching in your garden; you can hinder them by frightening them, but as soon as they are left to follow the bent of their nature, *they will scratch as much as ever*. What, then, can change that? God communicates His life to us—a pure, impeccable life—so that the things we loved before we love them no longer, and the things we disliked most we love them now. We are enabled to practise righteousness, we are enabled to love—we who have not a bit of love in our composition. Have you never seen one of these earth-worms rolling in the mud? If by a marvel of power I could change that worm into a bird, it would leave the mud and fly aloft in the sky, and you might call upon him to take again his former mode of existence. "No!" he would say. "No more mud for me; the air, the pure, fresh air, that is my element!"

Again, admire the love of the Father in the liberty granted to His children to approach unto Him. They have free access to His heart, to His house. They may ask whatever is necessary. If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed. The Son abideth always in the house.

Although now children of God, the design of God towards us is not yet achieved. Like a sculptor who has begun to chase his block of marble, you see a few traits of resemblance, but the figure is not yet perfect; so with us. Though born of God, and having the Holy Spirit in us, yet the flesh is still there, as the old stump of the grafted tree. It may still play us a bad trick. Even Paul was in danger of pride. We are still in this body

like in a tent, which must be demolished to give place to a substantial, eternal house in the heavens. We are freed from the domination of sin, but not yet from the presence of sin (Romans vi.), and that demands much watchfulness on the part of Christians.

A glorious hope attaches itself to the vocation of the children of God. When it shall appear, when the perfect design of God shall be unveiled, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. It will be true as to our bodies. Instead of these bodies full of infirmities, which enchain us to the earth, we shall receive powerful, glorious, spiritual bodies, like that of our Master, which will permit of our rising into heaven without the use of wings. But I doubt that this be the point of view here. It is rather the moral likeness, the spiritual transformation, according to the transcendent holiness of Jesus. To leave behind us all vestige of corruption, every element of weakness, that is enough to make our hearts break with joy. To become pure as He is pure, so that it will be as much impossible for us to sin as it is for Him—what joy! That will be the transformation effected by the sight of the Lord Jesus when He shall come. We see obscurely to-day, but then face to face, and the reflection of His image will be perfect in us. They shall see His face, and His Name shall be upon their foreheads.

This hope produces a purifying effect upon the Christian. It is not said he *must* purify himself, but he *does* purify himself. As long as we are here we need washing to get cleansed of the spots and wrinkles. We are not beyond the darts of the enemy. "As He is pure." The faithful disciple does not lower the standard to let his pretensions rise; that would only lead to dangerous illusions. The height to which he aspires is the celestial holiness of the Lord Jesus, which will only be attained at His second coming; but meanwhile he takes that direction, and runs towards that goal. He washes himself, having before his eyes the immaculate purity of Jesus Himself.—*By Mr. Squire, Neuchâtel. Translated from the French.*

PRAYER and pains through faith in Jesus Christ will do anything.—*John Eliot:*

NOTES FROM A YOUNG MAN'S BIBLE.—XI.*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

Chap. xiv. 1.

HEART TROUBLE.

ALL the trouble in this passage is about Christ. *They could not understand Him.* Pomp of empires and courts, displays of royal and martial glory, divine honours and endless reign over subdued nations, and an ever-widening kingdom were (as they supposed) to be His. They hoped that all this was at hand. But He whom they had taken as their Messiah talked of going away and dying. The shadow of future trouble—an absent Christ; their position was perilous; all that was most powerful of men and influence was set against them in immovable hatred. This had not seemed much while Christ was at hand to lean upon, but it appeared overwhelming regarded in the light of His absence. Looking upon these men, He knows if the warnings so disturb them, how much the events will be felt, and He directs them to the one Anchor—"Believe in Me. Believe that I am right. You think that I am wrong in not taking to Myself temporal splendour. You believe that I am wrong because I appear to let My enemies triumph. Because you do not understand, you doubt My rectitude. Do not fear; I am right. Believe that I am love; absence will not alter love."

Chap. xiv. 6.—"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." It is in the Cross of Christ, in the mission of the Son of God, that the Divine Fatherhood displays itself in full revelation. If you shut your eyes or withhold your heart from that which is the supreme discovery to us of the Fatherhood, then all your conceptions of the Divine Fatherhood will not merely be inadequate and imperfect, but they will be mutilated, as it were, in the very centre. On the other hand, when the mediation of Jesus, His Cross and passion, are disconnected from the Divine Fatherhood, the source of the Redeemer's mission becomes altogether obscured. The mediation of Christ is a means

* E. H. B.—A young man of rare ability, spirituality, and promise, who departed to be with Christ after a very brief illness, 3rd February, 1892, aged 27.

to an end, and if that end be hidden from sight, the great transaction refuses to interpret itself to our hearts. Christ died not to *save us from God*, but to "*bring us to God*." What may be involved in truly remedying sin, and putting the sinner right with eternal righteousness, the angels of God cannot tell; how much less can we? Our forgiveness of our children affords us no sufficient sense of the height and depth, and length and breadth of God's forgiveness, and by no means enables us to say how God can and ought to pardon sin. In the revelation which God has given us, it is ever and always asserted that the sacrifice of Christ solves the mystery. Whatever Christ did for the benefit of sinners He did by the will of God; whatever He was for us, He was from God. "I have come from heaven to do the will of Him that sent Me." But who and what was this Saviour? "I and My Father are one." Here we touch the mystery of the matter.

Chap. xiv. 15.—"If ye love Me." The laws of states have no preface like this; they are grounded simply upon what appears righteous, and are enforced. Jesus speaks not merely as Lawgiver, nor is it merely as a Friend; a friend does not command. Here is One who has authority over us, but He does not take His stand merely on that. As the Saviour-King He commands and appeals to our love.

Chap. xv.—The vine-clad hillside with the smouldering fires that have consumed the fruitless branches yield the suggestion for immortal discourse.

Chap. xv. 2.—"He pruneth [cleanseth] it." This treatment requires a very different instrument from that one with which the Gospel begins (Matt iii. 10). An axe is for tree-felling; a pruning-knife for branch-dressing.

Chap. xv. 9.—The love of the Son.

Chap. xvii. 23.—The love of the Father.

Chap. xv. 14.—"Ye are My friends if ye *do* whatsoever I command you." The measure of knowledge of God's will is the measure of doing. You will incur less responsibility by taking God's Word to mean what it says, than by putting your own construction upon it. "The line of plan is the line of power." God will let men perish, unless they are

willing to be saved in God's way. The line of obedience is the line of blessing. A disobedient child will only get blessed in chastisement—left-hand blessing. "That man is blessed in his *deed*" (James i. 25).

Chap. xvi. 8.—The special work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin through anointed Christians. On the day of Pentecost He did not convince direct from heaven.

Chap. xvii. 1, &c.—Glory; His one absorbing passion to glorify the Father. If ever a cross awaits us, let us welcome it in the spirit of the Master (John xii. 26). The Holy Spirit glorified Him (John xvi. 13, 14). The Holy Spirit is so divinely loyal to Christ that you never know the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit. He never speaks of Himself. The only way you know the Holy Spirit is when some sweet inflow of Christ comes over the soul. You know the Holy Spirit not by raptures or feelings, but by the presence of Christ within. You never see the wind, but you know it when it brings on its breath the sweet fragrance from a bank of violets; so you never see or feel the Holy Spirit but by a sweet waft of Jesus. Jesus glorified in His Church (John xvii. 10). Like a prism, we can add nothing to the sunbeam, but we may split it up and show the beauty that is in it. As the setting sun sometimes strikes a window, flooding it with light, so that you cannot see the curtains, the blind, or the casement, then you turn to the west and see the setting sun; so when we get to that we shall be right. On His brow the Father hath put a triple crown of glory—the glory of His perfect Manhood—the glory of His perfect work as a Servant—the glory of His Deity. Rev. i. 5: "Unto Him that loved us." The work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Him. Shall not that be the one passion of our life? It is our work.

Chap. xvii. 3.—"That they might know Thee," &c. Seventy-one times in Ezekiel we have the expression, "That ye may know that *I am the Lord*." Knowing God means confidence in Him. Psalm ix. 10 means communion with Him. Exod. xxxiii. 13-17: knowing God means confession of Him. Christ to Nicodemus, "We speak that we do know," means consecration to Him. The

reason why Israel sinned, they did not *know* Him. Isaiah i. 3: Knowing Christ is to know the Father.

Chap. xviii. 37.—Contrast this with the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is no broken, despairing man whom you observe. "I am a King," He says, never lowering His glance in the presence of Pilate. And never did the shout of a conqueror, when he had scaled the ramparts and stood upon the heights, and was shot down in the moment of victory, mean so much as that shout whose reverberations must have reached heaven, when He cried a few hours later, "It is finished"! Do you see any trace here of a broken will? His strength was in the fact that His natural, human will was in perfect consonance with the will of the Father. Here is a picture of true resignation, a voluntary surrender to the will of God.

Chap. xix. 28.—"I thirst." This was the human aspect—the thirst for man's sympathy, man's heart, man's confidence, man's love. They gave Him the vinegar, the gall, the bitter hyssop of the mockery and emptiness of their forms and ceremonies. In the divine aspect it was the thirst for the Father's presence, which He had never till now been without, expressed in Psalm xxii.; xlii. i.

ALWAYS CONFIDENT, BUT NOT ALWAYS WILLING.

THE words most frequently on our lips are not always those which have the deepest endorsement of our hearts. This is true in many departments of God's revealed will, but pre-eminently so regarding "Absent from the body, present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8). As to the *theory* of this great transaction we are perfectly orthodox, but when the hour comes to put into practice what we profess to believe a mysterious something we cannot well define arises in our throats. Like the apostle, we are "always confident" as to the final result. With him we know to be absent from the body means to be at home with the Lord. But are we prepared to go the whole length? He was not only *confident*, but *willing* (2 Cor. v. 8). I greatly fear

that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches have choked out the joy of living for ever with the Lord. Should the Lord come before we fall on sleep we shall not require to be "absent from the body." We will take our bodies with us, made luminous with His glory. But should He tarry, we may have to die. If we are *confident* of the *result*, let us at least be *willing* to taste the *experience*. May He give us grace to be so.

T. B.

Correspondence.

AN ITALIAN'S LETTER.

Translation of a letter written by an Italian believer, who less than five years ago in his unconverted days tore up a Testament that had been given him.

For lack of employment he has been obliged to leave his own country in order to earn a livelihood for himself and family, and wrote this letter to the fellow-believers from whom, on this account, he was separated.

To Signor C., brother beloved in Christ our Salvation, and to all the brethren in the Church of R.

DEAR BRETHREN.—In spite of the distance which separates us, my heart is turned towards you and towards the place where I had my second birthday—that is, where I was "born again"; towards those roads where the Lord stopped me with the light of His Word which shone around me, and turned me from the evil and dark way in which I was walking, and caused me to enter the way of truth and life. For this mercy, after God, I thank His servant, Signor C., and also His servants, Miss E. and Miss W., as well as all who had any part in the holy enterprise which was the means of my salvation, as also I believe it was of all of you.

Oh! it is certainly a great joy to have found the Lord! We were poor wanderers in a disastrous way, laden with a great burden that was well tied on to our backs by Satan, the weight of which was insupportable, but the mercy of God, which surpasses everything else, did not allow us to go on any farther, and stopped us before One who loosed our bonds and took off our burden, Himself bearing our iniquity (Isaiah liii.). Let us be very grateful to Him who loved us so much, even giving Himself to death for us—giving "His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and hid not His face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah i. 6; Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 29-31). Thinking upon these passages we shall know

more how much He has loved us, and we shall be strengthened to keep near to Him and to hate sin, knowing that it cost the Son of God an ignominious death. And who were we that God should have cared so much for us miserable creatures, laden with every wretchedness?—even giving for us His only Son, white as the snow and brilliant as, and even more brilliant than, the sun in His innocence and purity!

Oh, mystery of love, never sufficiently known! Thinking of the sad end of His life we ask ourselves: "And could not God who stayed the arm of Abraham when about to slay Isaac his son, could not He have stopped those who slew Jesus? No! Having been pre-ordained from the foundation of the world for the salvation of poor sinners who should accept Him with their hearts, it was certainly impossible, and although three times He prayed to Him who could save Him from death (Matt. xxvi. 38-44), His Father was silent, thus confirming His death. It was a terrible moment! Yet to complete, the work of our justification, a Just One was needed, and He alone was such. Thus taking our place, the storms of God's wrath which hung over us fell on Him. He walked to Calvary where He was barbarously nailed to the cross, and after three hours of agony cried twice with a loud voice, and bowed His head and gave up the ghost (Matt. xxvii. 46-50). In that moment His sufferings and ours—for sin—ended; all was finished, and we can sing in chorus:

"The work is completed—
Ended every tear and grief.
Now the Victim's blood
Bathes the cross and the ground.
Oh! joy to the Mighty and Holy!
Let us sing of grace,
Oh! Redeemer Jesus—
Our Lord art Thou."

Yes! now He is in heaven at the right-hand of the Father interceding, and although Satan desires to have us that he may sift us as wheat, the Lord has prayed, and still prays for us (Luke xxii. 31, 32).

Let us rejoice and wait with a happy face for His appearing, and as the believers of the Old Testament anxiously waited for His coming—as we see in the case of Simeon (Luke ii. 25-32)—let us also be anxious to see and know Him who loves us so much. Simeon saw the little child; we shall see Him in His glory.

The Word tells us that "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come." Let us "comfort one another with these words," and, stretching a veil over the world, let us have our hearts fixed on heaven, where the Redeemer has gone. Yes! let us look to the land where there is no parting—waiting for the Lord to come and

take us to His Father's house, where, united to the great multitude which no man can number, we shall sing in chorus as we reach heaven's gates:

"Thine only is the power, the grace, and the glory;
Thine only the wisdom, and strength, and honour.
Thou art our God, the eternal, mighty Lord."

I close, dear brethren, greeting you lovingly in our Lord Jesus, our peace. May His grace ever be with us all. Amen.—Yours affectionately,

11th April, 1901.

A.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting Answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

WHO ARE OVERCOMERS?—Are all regenerate persons overcomers, as set forth in the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in Rev. ii. and iii.?

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

THE POSITION OF CONVERTED JEWS.—Is it obligatory upon all converted Jews to give up the observance of the Mosaic ceremonial, and to live as Christians of the Gentiles, and worship with them; or have they the option of continuing as Christians the observance of Jewish customs and ritual?

ELDER SUNDAY-SCHOOL SCHOLARS.—What means should we adopt to retain under our care and teaching the young people of our Sunday-schools, who consider themselves too old to attend the ordinary Sunday-school Classes?
(2) How should classes for such be conducted?
(3) What method of teaching would be most profitable?

CHRISTIANS AND SIN.

QUESTION 439.—In 1 John ii. 1 I read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." In 1 John iii. 9 I read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not sin; . . . he cannot sin." How am I to reconcile these two apparently opposite statements?

Answer A.—In the end of 1 John i. the apostle

is writing of saints in their mortal bodies, who cannot say (except they lie) that they have no sin; who cannot even say that they have not sinned. There is also a real danger of sinning again, hence the exhortation of chapter ii. 1: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." There is also our blessed resource, in the event of the possible sorrow and shame of sinning, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."

In chapter iii. 4-10 the apostle is writing of the new creation and its purely divine origin, begotten or born of God. Scripture is perfectly uniform in its testimony to the perfect purity and holiness of the new creation—the new man—so we read: "The new man which according to God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24). Also, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, according to the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10). In this paragraph (1 John iii. 4-10) it is not a *born-again* man that is spoken of, but that which is born of God—the new creation—the new man—where all things are of God. He does not sin—he cannot sin. Sin never does nor can proceed from God. That which doth sin is of the devil. The old man, which is corrupt, sins whensoever he acts.

The responsibility of the born-again man is to put off the *old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the *new man*, which according to God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Neglecting or failing to do this is sin, and so the deep need of the Advocate.

J. S.

Answer B.—Here, as so often elsewhere, it is needful to note two distinct senses in which Scripture uses its terms. First, of the new birth by faith in Christ, which brings eternal life, as in John i. 12, iii. 3, 15, 16. And, secondly, that which consists in likeness to the Father, as in Matthew v. 45, John viii. 39, 44, &c.

John is here using the term in the latter sense, the sonship of likeness. He has stated this in chapter ii. 29: "If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him." And still more plainly in chap. iii. 7: "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as (in the same way as) He is righteous;" that is, personally, not by imputation. The whole passage is about our being manifested as children of God. We are His children, but this is not yet manifested as it shall be when He is manifested, that is, in glory. How the children of God are to be manifested as such now is by likeness to Him in righteousness and in love, in "purifying ourselves, even as He is pure," that of us it may be true in our measure, "As He is, so are we in this world."

All this is incompatible with sinning. There is no likeness to God there. It is of the devil, likeness only to him.

The sonship of faith in an atoning Saviour, in the forgiveness of sins (chap. ii. 2) admits of the possibility of sinning, and makes provision to meet it. The sonship of likeness, of manifestation as being God's children, is incompatible with sinning. Though not forfeiting sonship in the sense of a place in the family, we forfeit thereby the sonship of Matthew v. 45, or 1 John ii. 29, the manifestation of God's ways as becomes His children.

But while this may keep the contrite heart from the despondency that often comes from misunderstanding the text, it should make us lowly and watchful lest we fail to fulfil our calling as children of our Father who is in heaven by likeness to Him.

W. C.

Answer C.—In 1 John ii. 1 we read, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." Here the tense shows, not the *habit* of continually sinning, but the possibility of such a thing occurring, and may thus better be rendered, "If any man *should* sin," &c.

In 1 John iii. 9, we have the *habit* of sin dwelt on—*i.e.*, a willing continuance in the ways of sin. Such a course is incompatible and impossible with one born of God, whose seed abideth in him; he cannot go on in sinfulness of life, because he is born of God. With this 1 John v. 18 agrees.

A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—We give three of the replies received to this question, all taking a somewhat different view of the verse (1 John iii. 9).

That habitual sinning is incompatible with Christian character will be admitted by all. The presumption regarding such an one would be that he had not been born of God, and that whatever his profession he was yet "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." But it hardly seems to give due force to the words, "doth not commit sin" and "cannot sin," to reduce it to not practising sin habitually.

We incline to agree rather with answer A., which views the words as applying to the new man, the new creation, which is in the image of God.

Answer B. no doubt states an important truth which we do not see to be inconsistent with the view given in A.

The Editor is disappointed that only one reply has yet been sent in to the question regarding "Elder Sunday-school Children." Surely so important a subject demands a full discussion. We trust that many who are deeply interested in the question will no longer hesitate to help by communicating their thoughts.

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—PAPER VIII.

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND
PREDESTINATION.

By W. H. BENNET, of Yeovil.

THE Gospel comes to us as *lost sinners*, not as *elect saints*, and it carries with it the guarantee that every one who as a lost sinner will receive Christ the Saviour shall be received by Him, and having been received, shall in no wise be cast out (John vi. 37). Then, having through Him come to God, and being at home in his holy presence, we have both the desire and the ability to "behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." We have "the Holy Scriptures" (*lit.*, the *temple* Scriptures) for our instruction, and also a heavenly Teacher, even the Holy Spirit of God, whose delight it is to unfold to us "the things that are freely given to us of God."

One of the first lessons learnt in that temple is that our coming to Christ was the result of God's gracious drawing and teaching (John vi. 44, 45), and that these were the outcome of an eternal purpose of mercy towards us. We discover that God "hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace"; and as we enter into this great truth our hearts are bowed before Him who fills that temple, and breathe forth the song, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

In Romans viii., having expressed the assurance that all things work together for good to God's called ones, who love Him, the apostle adds, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (verse 29). Thus *foreknowledge* is distinguished from *predestination*. Peter speaks of believers as "*elect* according to the *foreknowledge* of God the Father." The effort to explain the word *foreknowledge* as simply meaning that God knew who would believe, is only a device to get rid of a truth that humbles the pride of man. Let us look at it in another connection. The Son of God was delivered up according to "the determinate counsel and *foreknowledge* of God" (Acts ii. 22), for as the Lamb of God He was "*foreknown* before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter i. 20, Gk.). Do these

statements mean nothing more than that God knew beforehand what men would do to Him? Do they not tell of God's gracious design to deliver up His Son for our redemption? Again, of Israel Paul declares, "God hath not cast away His people whom He *foreknew*" (Rom. xi. 2). That He knew beforehand what they would be is indeed true, as He says by Isaiah, "I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously" (Isa. xlvi. 8); but that could hardly be a reason for not casting them away. The whole argument of Romans xi. shows that because God *foreknew* them they must be blessed.

Thus the word is quite equivalent to *fore-ordained* as given in 1 Peter i. 20, and can denote nothing less than the sovereign choice of a people to life and glory. As distinguished from predestination, God's *foreknowledge* seems to express that gracious act by which He marked out a people for Himself, setting His heart upon them, and making them the objects of His love, in the outflow of which their eternal bliss is secured, while in their blessing His affection is gratified. This is beautifully illustrated in the words of Moses to Israel. He tells them that the Lord had chosen them to be a "*special* people unto Himself," and no reason could be found for this but the fact that the Lord loved them (Deut. vii. 7, 8). He further says, "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day" (Deut. x. 15). Here is the explanation of the words "*whom He foreknew*," and in each case this is pressed as an incentive to obedience and faithfulness on the part of Israel. So now, in the case of those who are "the elect of God, holy and beloved," this truth of God's having set His love upon them, and chosen them in His rich grace, and not because of any merit on their part, is ever set forth to move them to praise, and devotedness, and obedience.

Those whom God thus in His absolute and infinite grace *foreknew* "He also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son." God's *predestination* therefore has special reference to the *high estate* to which He purposes to raise those who, receiving the Gift of His love, even His own Son, are by that love for ever embraced as His chil-

dren (John i. 12). Thus we read in Eph. i. 5, "Having *predestinated* us unto *sonship* by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." In order to conform us to the image of His Son, God bestows *sonship* upon us; that is, brings us into the blessed relationship of sons to Himself, and this relationship is so great a reality that it necessitates such conformity. As the *Son of God* is distinguished from *all creatures* by the high and glorious title, "the only begotten Son," so in a sense no less real is the family of grace distinguished from *all other creatures* by the fact that they are begotten of God (John i. 13; 1 John ii. 29; iii. 9; v. 4, 18). On the ground of creation no creature has any right to address God as Father. The highest creature of God, who has served Him faithfully from the moment of his creation, is not able thus to address his Creator. The position of "the elect angels" is one of glory and dignity beyond our conception, but they are *servants*, not *sons*. By an act of *creation* God could surround Himself with these glorious beings; but, as we have before seen, it needed *redemption* to enable Him to bring creatures into the relationship of *sons*, and the marvel of His grace is seen in raising so high those who by sin have sunk so low.

Thus are we even now brought into fellowship with Him who is not ashamed to call us "brethren," and to use the wonderful words, "*My Father and your Father*"; and in due time this fellowship must be perfected by our being perfectly conformed to His image. This result is secured by the counsel of God and the grace that has already made us His children, so that we can say with confidence, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*," and again, "*We shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is." This fact we know; but all that it involves we do not know, for "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Not until we stand with Him in resurrection glory, and our eyes rest upon Himself, can we form any true estimate of what the high estate of *His brethren* must be. Then we shall with Him fully delight in the presence of the Father, and share his joy in seeing that Name which He revealed for ever hallowed. To glorify that Name will

still be *His* pleasure, and it will never cease to be *ours* also.

It will equally be the Father's delight and *ours* to "honour the Son." If God predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, it was "that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren"; and the difference between "the *FIRSTBORN*" and all others will never be forgotten. We shall never forget that it was *His graciousness or condescension* that made us great (Ps. xviii. 35); that to make us partakers of His glory, He once took our sin and shame, and for our sakes sank into the lowest depths. The fact that He joyfully owns us as brethren will never prevent our full and hearty response to the word, "*He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him*." We shall do this perfectly then. Oh, that we may do so in increasing measure while we "hope for that we see not," and "with patience wait for it"!

"DOCTRINE:"

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN SCRIPTURE?

By WILLIAM COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

"The people were astonished at His *doctrine*" (Matt. vii. 28).

"Teaching for *doctrines* the commandments of men" (Matt. xv. 9).

"He said unto them in His *doctrine*, Beware of the Scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the markets, and the chief seats in the synagogue, and the uppermost rooms at feasts; which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers" (Mark xii. 38-40).

"*Doctrines* of devils forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats" (1 Tim. iv. 1-3).

"The *doctrine* of Balaam . . . to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication" (Rev. ii. 14).

TIME and custom have taught us to regard the word "doctrine" as applying specifically to articles of faith, such as the doctrine of the Atonement or the doctrines of Grace; and "doctrinal" is thus habitually distinguished from "practical."

The above Scriptures show that it would be unsafe to assume this to be always implied by the term, and indicate the need of examining how far time and custom can be trusted to guide us in interpreting the language of the inspired Book.

Inaccuracy in the use of words may be of little consequence so long as they are taken

in the sense in which they are given. There may be no harm in employing them thus amongst ourselves, if that were all. We need not make a man an offender for a word, but when it leads to our reading a wrong meaning into the Scripture, the mistake may be serious. One of the saddest schisms of recent years derived its severity largely from the assumption that "the doctrine of Christ" in 2 John 9 means some point in question concerning His Divine Person. If it be found that it means the "teaching" (R.V.) of Christ, referred to in the former part of the epistle, "that we should love one another," how sad to think of the deadly mischief a wrong use of a word may produce!

THE WORD DEFINED.

It should be borne in mind that any difference between "doctrine" and "teaching" is purely conventional. Doctrine is simply the Latin form of our English word teaching. In English, "teach" embraces alike instruction of all kinds— theological, scientific, or practical. We teach astronomy, informing the mind; and we teach penmanship, training the hand. To apply doctrine (teaching) specially to matters theological as distinguished from the practical, is not proper to the language, though established by custom. Still less is it so with the original word. If it has any distinctive meaning, it is the contrary. In classic Greek, if we may take the examples given in Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, all these are of teaching *to do* something—as to ride, shoot, war, to rehearse the drama, or the like.

In the Septuagint, so constant is this application of it, that of some sixty texts looked up the only doubtful one met with is in the title of Psalm lx.

In the New Testament, though there are exceptions, the rule is found to be the same as in the texts cited above.*

Sometimes the word is used in a broader sense, as for example where Christ declares

* The reader should examine this for himself. Though for classical Greek scholarship is needed, and for the "LXX," it would not be easy in the absence of a Concordance, yet for the New Testament the reader may without difficulty examine for himself, by making a list of all the places he can find where "teach" or "doctrine" occur, then marking against each, where plainly shown by the context, to which class they refer, practical or otherwise. Best if with a Greek Concordance noting "*didasko*" and all its derivatives.

His mission from heaven (John vi. 59, vii. 35, viii. 28), or of His being David's Lord (Mark xii. 35), or showing His power over unclean spirits (Mark i. 27), or foretelling His death and resurrection (Mark viii. 31), what Paul was taught at his conversion from Judaism (Gal. i. 12), and some other texts, to be examined later.

But while these, not coming under the head of practical precept, may afford warrant for our use of the word in a general sense, they give no example of theological teaching to justify our applying it distinctively to matters of faith.

THE TEACHING OF THE LORD AND HIS APOSTLES.

The Lord's ministry consisted of two distinct parts—teaching, and preaching the Gospel. The latter was the setting forth of His own works and ways of grace, and was commonly associated with His mighty acts of saving power. The other, "teaching," or "doctrine," concerned our ways as His disciples. In the ministry of the apostles there were the same distinct lines. "They ceased not to teach, and to preach Jesus the Christ."

The teaching dealt not only with matters of moral conduct, but also of religious practice, which the Jews had so greatly falsified. See the following examples:

Matthew v. 2 has been already cited. "He opened His mouth and taught them... they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. vii. 28, 29). What more eminently and exclusively practical than the Sermon on the Mount?

Mark vii. 7: "Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men;" by the "doctrine" of "Corban" making the fifth commandment of none effect.

Mark iv. 2: What He taught in His doctrine was the need of diligence in hearing His words; x. 1 was of the law of marriage, xi. 17, 18 of preserving the sanctity of the temple, xii. 38 against the hypocrisy of the scribes.

In Acts xv. 1, and xxi. 21-28 the teaching related to the observance of Jewish practices, and so Colossians ii. 22.

Romans ii. 21 is of stealing and the like;

1 Corinthians iv. 17, of Paul's ways as an example; xi. 14, of covering the head in worship; Ephesians iv. 21 is of our conversation. In 1 Timothy i. 10 and Titus ii. "sound doctrine" is all about moral conduct; 1 Timothy iv. 3, of marriage and meats; vi. 1, 2, 3, of behaviour of servants; and in Revelation ii., see the doctrine of Balaam already cited.

These examples may show how widely the common use of the words "doctrine" and "doctrinal" differs from their more habitual sense in Scripture.

TEACHING—ITS PROMINENCE IN SCRIPTURE.

This becomes the more important when we note how much of the New Testament is occupied with the teachings of the Lord and His apostles. In the Gospels, exclusive of simple narrative, they take up *twice as much* as all the rest put together—evangelical preaching, miracles, and prophecy—the *largest* proportion being in Matthew, where it is four times as much. In the epistles too, from Romans to Jude, more than twice as much is devoted to practical teaching as to all the rest—Gospel truth and prophecy. And where these latter are present, they are always used as the occasion for teaching as to their practical outcome in the believer's walk, as in Romans xii.-xv., or Galatians v. When unfolding, in Ephesians, the revelation of the calling of the Church, the apostle makes it plain that his object is not merely to impart a knowledge of the mystery for its own sake, but rather to teach us how to walk worthy of the grace we thus receive. If, in Philippians ii., he refers to the humiliation of Christ, it is expressly to show from it how we should have the same mind that was in Him. The brief statement of the Lord's coming in 1 Thessalonians iv. is given for comfort to the bereaved, telling only so much on the subject as is needful to that end. And the second epistle, whatever may be its obscurity as to prophetic interpretation, plainly teaches the "patient waiting for Christ," and how, in the meantime, His Name should be glorified in us.

The rest of the epistles, Hebrews excepted, are devoted almost entirely to practical teaching. The portions of Gospel truth there found are introduced, so to speak, inci-

dentally, not as the subjects of the "teaching," but rather as *known* truths on which to found the teachings. What we read in 1 Timothy iii. 16 is the "Mystery—the secret power—of godliness." In 2 Timothy iii. the inspiration of the Scriptures is stated to show in what its profit specially consists, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." In Titus ii. 13 "that blessed hope" is alluded to as the motive to walk soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. The grace of God "teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts." In chapter iii. the mercy that has saved us from our former sinful state is adduced to show that we should not speak evil of any man.

In 1 Peter i., because the price of our redemption is incorruptible, such should be our conversation. If he mentions how Christ suffered for us (ch. ii. 21-24), it is not so much to provide a text to preach the Gospel from, but rather to show us how in suffering we should follow His steps. And in like manner (ch. iii. 18; iv. 1) that we should arm ourselves with the same mind, by ceasing from sin. In 2 Peter iii. the sure promise of His coming is to show us what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

No less practical is all John's first Epistle. Our fellowship with God is to consist not merely in the consciousness of His pardoning love, but in so loving one another (ch. i., ii.). And since "we know" that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, we are to seek to be like Him now.

Jude would have desired to dwell upon "the common salvation"; but he had something more urgent to write about, to expose the evils of a licentious walk in professors, and to exhort us to build up ourselves on "our most holy faith." The faith that does not bear fruit of holiness is not the "faith once delivered to the saints."

We may pause here to ask, How is it with us now in the ministry of the Word? If we would take note, during any given period, of the proportions devoted severally to these two classes, what should we find to be actually the case? Should not our practice in this be in accordance with the example of

the Holy Spirit in His Word? Is there less need of it in these last days, these "perilous times" of 2 Tim. iii.? For what are the perils he there warns us of? He is not speaking of the "down-grade" which consists in rejecting or undermining the truths of Revelation. These he has briefly, but solemnly, judged in the previous chapter, verses 17, 18. It is the evils in the character of professing Christians that make them perilous. It was against these his "doctrine" and "manner of life" bore witness, and the Holy Scriptures by their "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" are the safeguard.

(To be continued.)

THE ETERNAL FUTURE OF MEN.

PART I.

NEARLY all nations of men who have dwelt on all the face of the earth have longed for, thirsted after, and believed in some sort of existence after death. But the pictures they painted, the fears they entertained, and the theories they constructed were but the dreams and fancies of human imagination—unstable as water, changeful as the wind, and without a foundation to rest upon. In fact, we know nothing at all of the future of men, from the moment that death closes their present history, except what the Bible tells us—what God is pleased to reveal in His holy Word.

CONTINUITY OF BEING.

From a period of high antiquity God began to let some gleams of light fall upon the condition of men after death; but the sending forth of the full blaze of Divine light was reserved for Him who "abolished death, and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the Gospel." Enoch, the seventh from Adam, told out his terrible prediction of God's future dealing, "to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all that are ungodly." His solemn predictions were probably delivered in the lifetime of Adam, for Enoch was three hundred and eight years old when the venerable patriarch died. The translation of Enoch himself was a definite revelation that God had conditions

for men to live in other than those which were seen.

Jacob also said, "I will go down to *Sheol* to my son mourning." He manifestly did not mean the grave, for he believed his son's body was devoured—that is, eaten up—by an evil beast, and not in a grave at all. (See Genesis xxxvii.)

Job too, although very ancient, had definite knowledge of a future state, for he said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another". (Job xix. 25, 26).

GATHERED TO THEIR PEOPLE.

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah" (Gen. xxv. 8, 9). None of the bodies of Abraham's people could have been there. Sarah only had been buried in that cave. It was, therefore, certainly Abraham in his disembodied condition who was gathered to his disembodied people.

Exceedingly striking, also, is what the Lord said to Moses in the plains of Moab. He said: "Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people" (Deut. xxxii. 49, 50). Now, it assuredly was not the bodies of Moses and Aaron which were gathered unto their people, for Aaron was buried in Mount Hor, where none of his people had ever been buried, and the grave of Moses was both secret and solitary, for "the Lord buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Therefore it must have been Moses and Aaron in their unclothed condition who were gathered unto

their unclothed people. These are only specimens of a class of similar allusions.

TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS.

A much fuller light is cast upon the whole subject by the Lord Himself. One of His early utterances is made in Matthew x. 28, where He said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." There is therefore a life in man which neither the fury of the persecutor nor the weapons of the assassin can destroy or reach. A further light still is shed upon this subject by the Lord. When the Sadducees came to him with a hypothetical case of seven brethren who had one woman to wife, the Lord not only told them of the changed condition or relationship of the sexes in the resurrection, but also something of the condition of men after death and previous to the resurrection. He said: "As touching the dead that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye, therefore, do greatly err" (Mark xii. 26, 27). The Lord here reveals that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still living, and also that the fact of being alive in the disembodied condition makes sure the resurrection.

The disembodied man is a distinct personality—is, in fact, the personality which lives in the body as in a tabernacle; so Peter by the Spirit says: "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle" (2 Peter i. 14). He thus spoke of himself as the personality which was about to put off his body, as a tabernacle in which he had been sojourning. Then in the following verse he said: "I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease (going out) to have these things always in remembrance." Here the figure is varied a little; his body was looked at as a house, out of which he was soon to depart by his death.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER DEATH.

In the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, the Lord gives a wonderful revelation of the circumstances and conditions of

men immediately after death which had not been previously revealed. It is certainly a narrative. Nowhere is it spoken of as a parable. The Lord said, "There *was* a certain rich man; and He said, "There *was* a certain beggar named Lazarus." Who will venture to contradict the Lord and say there never were such persons?

Jesus Christ herein revealed that Abraham and Lazarus had at least nine distinct faculties or capabilities: 1, Abraham saw the rich man; 2, He spoke to the rich man; 3, He heard the rich man speaking to him; 4, He was capable of being informed, or of observing, for he knew that the rich man had his good things and Lazarus his evil things in their lifetime; 5, He understood and knew the importance of the books of Moses and the prophets; 6, He knew the fixed condition of the saved and of the lost—"There is a great gulf fixed"; 7, He reasoned and said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead"; 8, Abraham received Lazarus into his bosom; 9, Lazarus was comforted.

In this thrilling narrative it is revealed that the rich man in hell [~~trades~~] had also at least nine faculties or capabilities in his disembodied condition: 1, He moved—he lifted up his eyes; 2, He saw Abraham and Lazarus; 3, He spoke, and said, Father Abraham; 4, He heard Abraham speaking to him; 5, He felt, for he said, "I am tormented in this flame"; 6, He knew both Abraham and Lazarus; 7, He remembered about his five brethren; 8, He wished to prevent his brethren from coming into that terrible place; 9, He reasoned concerning the effect of a message by a messenger from the dead.

The revelation given here is very appalling. He died and was placed in a sepulchre (*ταφνη*), but in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and his own description of it is, "I am tormented in this flame."

THE SAVED IMMEDIATELY AFTER DEATH.

There is much sweetness in that word of the apostle, "At home with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8, R.V.). At home speaks of comfort, rest, freedom, and love. There is no journey of exploration like that in the hymn,

"When I soar to worlds unknown,"

neither is there any urging of a plea like this,

"And when I reach the pearly gates,

Then I'll put in this plea,"

but just to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Again, this being present with the Lord is described as "gain" (Phil. i. 21-23), and as "far better" than all that which can be enjoyed here and now.

We have now seen from the Word of God that a human being, as such, apart from his body and independent thereof, is a real entity, a distinct personality, which cannot be killed by human power nor by weapons of earth; that in this condition he has at least nine distinct faculties or capabilities; and that immediately after death he passes, in the exercise of all his powers and faculties, to be either at home with the Lord or else to be in Hades, until that solemn day when death and Hades shall deliver up the dead which are in them.

BEGUILING UNSTABLE SOULS.

These truths we have been considering are something like the preliminaries or outworks to the great body of revelation which God hath given concerning the future destiny and the great eternity of mankind. These outworks are almost uniformly the first to be assailed by the devil through his emissaries. They know well that if they can persuade any one that when a man ceases to breathe his whole being is defunct, and that when a man is buried his entire personality is shut into the grave, they have gained a tremendous victory. Their victim is then prepared to believe almost any falsehood that the father of lies may present to him concerning the future destiny of men, concerning the great Redeemer, concerning the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and concerning anything else.

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing." Therefore we would urge the exhortation of Scripture by the apostle: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 13).

J. S.

ABISHAI, ONE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.—PAPER III.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

WHEN the days of rejection had come to a close, and David reigned over all Israel, we find Abishai occupying an honoured position in the kingdom. Here we have a type of "things to come." "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." Abishai had suffered with David. He had, so to speak, counted all things but loss, so that he might be identified with Israel's rejected king; and now he was associated with that king in the glory of his reign. In the days of rejection Abishai had never displayed the slightest desire for personal advantage, or a lofty position in the king's army. He was quite willing to occupy a secondary place. Nor is it different now that the reigning time has come. We see this strikingly brought out in connection with the expedition against the children of Ammon (2 Sam. x.). To meet the opposing forces on that occasion, David sent out "Joab and all the host of the mighty men." Joab, with characteristic selfishness, proceeded to select all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians (verse 9), "and *the rest* of the people he committed unto the hand of Abishai his brother." History tells of a famous general who sneeringly said he observed that God was always on the side of the big battalions. Joab had a similar confidence in the arm of flesh. He made sure of having all the choice men of Israel under his own immediate banner. As for "the rest," Abishai could have them! Not only was he to have a second place, but he was to have a second-rate army with which to do the work—an army out of which all the choice men had been carefully selected by the wily Joab. Yet Abishai accepted the position, and did the work without a murmur. The king had given him a secondary place in the kingdom; and the faithful servant filled that position so well that he earned a place in the roll of the mighty.

What feuds and heart-burnings are associated with this very point in the history of the Lord's work! Many are to be found who are willing and ready to take a chief place, but who will not take a secondary position on any account whatever. You

sometimes hear the remark made: "There is *one* thing that brother So-and-so will never do—he will never play second part to any one. Unless he gets a position in which his will is supreme, he will do nothing."

In dealing with this point we feel we are on very delicate ground. If we contend that every man should be content to take a secondary place to some other person, we would find ourselves contending that the greater should be in subjection to the less. And if we contend that nobody should take a second place, we would be virtually advocating that all should be leaders. We must see, on the one hand, that we do not puff up would-be commanders with the idea that they are martyrs; and, on the other hand, we must see that we do not discourage those who are manifestly "sent" and gifted as leaders in the path of service. There are godly and gifted men who, like Abishai, are quite content to fill a secondary position in public service for God, although they are sometimes to be found "playing second" to men decidedly inferior to themselves. We do not know whether they perceive this. Possibly they do not see it. They may, like not a few gifted men, be lacking in the gift of discernment; or they may see more than they care to tell, and yet elect to take any position that offers—"content to fill a little space, if God be glorified." To their own Master they stand or fall in this matter. There will be more joyful service, however, when a man accepts a secondary position because he believes it is the position for which God has designed him, and when he feels that "the man above him" has been called of God to that place.

Doubtless there are men who *refuse* to occupy a second place. They cannot be condemned, however, simply on account of that refusal. What is the *reason* of their refusal? If it is simply a love of pre-eminence—an impatience with every way but their own way—then they are to be pitied. But if their refusal to take a second place is due to this, that they believe they are called to a special work, in individual responsibility to God, then all that can be said is, "Let them make full proof of their ministry." If God has fitted them for a leadership, and

called them to that position, the "unfolding of events" will make it clear that they are in their right place.

If, however, the sphere of our service is *the Church*, and it is a question of *fellowship one with another* in ruling and guiding its affairs, there must be a "considering one another." I must not conclude that the whole thing is "not of God" simply because I cannot get *my* will carried out in its entirety. I may even have to *submit* to some things in which I cannot *acquiesce*. They who in the domain of Church government *must* have their will carried out have never learned the first principles of "subjection one to another in the fear of God."

In the path of service a man of undoubted gift and administrative ability can hardly be expected to quietly take "second place" to men whom he feels to be his *inferiors* in divine equipment for the Lord's work. To go through the form of subjection in such circumstances would be only an exhibition of mock humility—a proceeding that would place all concerned in a false position. No man can take a second place unless he feels that the man in the foremost place has a right to be there. You may deal with him as to his supposed naughtiness of heart, as Eliab dealt with the shepherd lad from Bethlehem; you may give him a lecture on humility, and say unto him, "Thou art the man"; but, if he is an honest man, you will make nothing of him. If he is to be in subjection, he must know who he is to be in subjection to. If he is to be a "second" man, he must know who it is he is to be second to. In short, every man has "his measure"; and it is hopeless, as it would be mischievous, to attempt to put the greater into subjection to the less. Nor will you fare any better if you attempt to put all on the one dead level. God's gifts, and the variety in the measure of His gifts, will defy all man-made rules. It is for the Church to note and recognise those varieties, and to acknowledge what is manifestly from God. If it be true that "gift is subject to gift," we may expect each of these "gifts" to gravitate to its own proper place in relation to the rest. And we believe this will come about easily and naturally if grace is permitted to reign.

The CROWNED ONE and the CROWNS.

Rev. xix. 12.

BEHOLD those Crowns of Glory bright
Which rest upon His head *by right*,
Who once the Crown of Thorns sustained,
When He Heaven's glorious vict'ry gained.
Christ on the dreadful Cross, alone,
Won back the Kingdoms and the Throne.

2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. iii. 11, 14; 2 Tim. ii. 5.

Behold, those Crowns He offers now
To all who to His sceptre bow:
Who give Him rightful place as Lord,
And act according to His Word;
All such shall at the judgment-seat
Be crowned, as He shall count them meet.

1 Thess. ii. 19.

Those who lost, ruined souls have sought,
And to their Great Redeemer brought,
Shall find their work of love again
Enriched with everlasting gain.
Crown of rejoicing their's shall be
To wear for all eternity.

James i. 12; Rev. 2. 10.

The sorely tempted and the tried,
Who never have their Lord denied,
But faithful proved e'en to the last—
As they through fiery trial pass'd—
These shall the Crown of Life obtain,
Nor shall its lustre ever wane.

1 Cor. ix. 25.

Those who a ceaseless fight begin
With wretched self and inbred sin,
And by God's all-sufficient grace
Do keep the monster in his place,
A fadeless Crown is given them there
Which they for evermore shall wear.

2 Tim. iv. 8.

Those stedfast souls who keep God's Word,
And watch for their returning Lord,
Who ever since their heavenly birth
Have run th' appointed course on earth,
A Crown of Righteousness obtain,
And with their glorious Master reign.

1 Peter v. 4.

Those who now watch with tend'rest care
God's little flock—their burdens share—
Commissioned by their Risen Lord,
From Whom alone they seek reward,
The Chief of Shepherds gives to them
A Crown of Glory diadem.

Rev. iii. 11; 2 John 8; Rev. iv. 10.

How many of the sons of light
Will lose their Crown of Glory bright
Because the Cross they did not bear,
Nor in their Master's sufferings share;
But happy those with Crown complete
To cast before their Saviour's feet.

Little Sutton.

N. M.

CHRIST GLORIFIED.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "Because ye belong to Christ," "Things to Come," &c.

PART III.

READ Philippians ii. 5-11:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who . . . humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him," &c.

Observe here that the Lord Jesus is glorified on account of His obedience. Sin in its essence is simply disobedience to God. You see it clearly in the Garden of Eden. The sin of our first parents was simply disobeying God; and all the sorrow, and misery, the sickness and death, all the bloodshed, all the passions of men, all the evil in this world since, is the outcome of one principle, disobedience to God. It is a revolted world, a world of men and women who will not obey God. Into this scene came One—a holy, heavenly stranger—who obeyed God. He became obedient from the very first breath he drew till the very last that He breathed on the Cross. It was one complete act of obedience. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

In the case of heavenly beings—angels who hearken to His voice and do His will—obedience never costs them suffering. But in the path set before the Lord Jesus when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will," He knew that obedience meant suffering, shame, and death, "even the death of the Cross"; He knew it meant the bearing of the curse; He knew all that was to come upon Him. He came with one object, to do the will of His Father, and He accomplished it; He never failed. "Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished," knowing that there remained only one little thing yet to be fulfilled, said, "I thirst," and the sponge of vinegar was given unto Him. That was the

last thing written that remained to be fulfilled, and that being done He said, "It is finished," and breathed out His Spirit to God, "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

Now, God had determined that He who was obedient unto death is the Man that shall reign. The path to authority is obedience: there is no other way to power. The disobedient child will never be fit for authority—never! Young people! learn that the path to power, to influence, to blessing is the path of obedience, even of a child to its parents. The path of promotion to a servant is obedience. The path of promotion in the Church to one that wants to serve the Lord is to be subject, and if you have not learnt subjection you are not fit to rule. It was the Man who was subject, who became obedient unto death, that is put on the right hand of the Majesty on High.

And so to us in 1 Peter i. 14 it is written:

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."

He wants to have pleasure in us. You who have children know that the disobedient child is just as much your child as the obedient one, but you have not the same pleasure in it. So God has pleasure in obedient children, in every one who is seeking honestly to do His will. Obedience may cost something—it will not always be pleasant—but it will be found when the Lord comes and His kingdom appears that the obedient one is the one that God delights to honour.

* Turn to Hebrews v. 1-5:

"For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that He Himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee."

Notice here that in being called by God the Father to the office of High Priest, the Lord Jesus was invested with a new glory. "He glorified not Himself to be called a High Priest." You know that when God called

Aaron, and constituted him the high priest of His people Israel, God was putting Aaron in the place of the highest honour of any man on the face of the earth. Even the honour of being king was not equal to the honour of the priest. The priestly dignity, the privilege of going in to the immediate presence of God, and of serving God as the representative of His people, was the highest honour that God could put upon man, and connected with this priestly office that was bestowed upon Aaron, you remember that certain garments were to be made for him in which he was to minister, "garments of glory and of beauty" (Ex. xxviii. 2).

The Lord Jesus Christ personally was always perfectly glorious in the sight of God. Many years ago I read a book called "The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus."* I never read any book that gave such an opening up of the perfections of the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. It just seemed to set out the four Gospels in a new light. Now, the moral glories of the Lord Jesus could never increase or diminish, being always perfect or divine, but they were mostly brought out and made manifest to us through suffering, opposition, temptation; all that which in us would have developed irritation, fretfulness, insubjection, was only the bringing out of His moral glories.

But the glorifying of Christ, as we read of it in these other Scriptures, was different from that. It is His public, official acknowledgment, as worthy of all glory; and so we have Him here as the great Antitype of the high priest in Israel. When Aaron the high priest came forth robed in those garments of glory and of beauty, a crown of gold upon his head, with "Holiness to the Lord" engraved upon it, a breastplate upon his heart, with the names of the people, garments that were constructed with the skill and ingenuity that only the Spirit of God could impart; blue, and purple, and scarlet, and gold interwoven, what a glorious sight he presented! But that man was only a type of the risen Christ, of Him who is now in the presence of God, who is there in all the moral glories of His character, in all the perfection and value of His finished work as God's great

High Priest; there, as the representative of all His people, with the name of every one upon His breast. Such is the glorious Person who stands before the face of God for us.

Can such a High Priest become us? Yes, for we are the sons of God. Such a High Priest became us who was holy, "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," down here, higher than the heavens up there. That is the High Priest who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," who "has compassion on the ignorant and those who are out of the way." That is the High Priest I can come to, and to whom I can unburden my poor heart, and tell all my sorrows, my sins, and my fears.

Do you want to know who he is? Read the four Gospels. Do I want to know what His character is, and whether He is accessible to me, a poor, erring one? Read the four Gospels. Was He accessible? Did He ever cast out one who came in need? Did He ever turn away one poor sinner? Never! He is just the same to-day. I love that hymn, "The very same Jesus." There is no change in Him, and you and I can come to Him, for He is God's glorious High Priest, and He is there in the presence of God for us—FOR US. "He ever liveth," and therefore is "able to save unto the uttermost," able to save to-day, and to-morrow, and the next day—to the very end—"all," whatever their character, however low they may have fallen, "that come unto God by Him."

There is one other aspect before I close. Look at Hebrews ii. 5-8:

"For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come. But one in a certain place testified [that is David in the eighth Psalm], saying, What is man [*enosh*, frail, mortal man], that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man [*i.e.*, the son of Adam], that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet."

If you read the first chapter of Genesis you will see that God put everything in subjection to Adam. Again, we read in almost similar words that God put everything in subjection to Noah (Gen. ix.); and you find almost in the same language that God made Nebu-

chadnezzar, as it were, king of the whole world. With what result? Hebrews ii. 8:

"But now we see not yet all things put under him."

What do we see? We see man a total wreck, having lost all authority. We see the great Powers of the world in deadly struggle together. We see man a slave to sin, to Satan, to disease, corruption, and death! We do not see the fulfilment of God's promises at all. And what of the Man who was born to have dominion, who was presented to Israel as their King, over whose Cross was written, "The King of the Jews"? He has been rejected, and cast out of the world. Let us read verse 9:

"But we see Jesus, who was made [who became] a little lower than the angels for [because of] the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."

By faith we see Jesus on the right hand of the throne of God! Man has failed; Adam failed; Noah failed; Nebuchadnezzar failed; all men that God has entrusted with authority have failed, utterly failed; they have ruled for themselves and have not ruled for God. Aaron, as high priest, and all his successors proved a total failure.

Then, is God's purpose to be frustrated? Is not man to rule at all? Yes, yes; God will have His way. God's Man is on the throne up there. He is exalted as the second Man, the last Adam, the Lord from Heaven. He is there at the right hand of the Majesty on High, and in a little while He is coming again. Then will be seen the fulfilment of God's purpose, when all things are put under His feet. It is the Second Man that is to reign. We can only have turmoil, wars, and rumours of war. We can have no settled peace in this poor, sin-stricken world until He comes, who is the Prince of Peace, who has the right to reign. Well may we pray, "Thy kingdom come." "Even so; come, Lord Jesus!" (*To be followed by "Christ Coming."*)

IN winter men gird their clothes closely around them, but in summer allow them to hang loose. In the winter of adversity many a Christian girds his heart close to God and Christ, who in the summer of mercy hangs loose from all.

GOD'S LOVE GIVES EVERY GOOD THING.

GOD gives us *everything* that would be really good for us—*EVERYTHING*. He keeps nothing back (Psa. lxxxiv. 11). He grudges us *nothing*. For love, fervent love, never sets bounds to its manifest actions. If the beloved one can be benefited by *anything* that love CAN DO for it, then, no matter how great the trouble or the sacrifice may be, love will never scruple to undertake it. So works *human* love, and so too works *Divine*. Nay, if you point out to a man what his love sets him upon attempting to do is quite beyond his power, he will still try *his* BEST to do it; and he will actually do it, if the thing can be done at all. Now, how consoling it is to faith, when it is under trial, to look on the love of God in this light. What manner of love is it (1 John iii. 1)? What has it not done? What has it not further undertaken to do? What is it not continually occupied with doing for us? Oh, let us rejoice with a joy unspeakable in the faith of this, and let us seek to be filled, on our side, with a love to God that shall secure for Him the devoted trust and service of our whole lives.—JOHN DICKIE.

CHRISTIAN GIVING.—II.

Revised Notes of an Address by JAMES WRIGHT, Bristol.

THE MOTIVE FOR GIVING.

BUT now the *motive* brought before us in 2 Cor. viii. Paul says in verse 9: "For ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus." I have not to "do you to wit" of that. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." You don't know about this little rill that I discovered in my journey in Macedonia, but you know the Fountain that filled that little rill. Christ is the Fountain that filled that little Macedonian rill. What did He do? "For your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Out of His deep poverty abounded the riches of His liberality. Our riches are exactly in proportion to the depth of His poverty. Our exaltation is exactly in proportion to the depth of His humiliation. If you can fathom the depth of the poverty of Christ in His humiliation, then you can estimate the

riches that belong to us in Christ. You cannot do it. If you can fathom the depth of that unutterable stoop from glory to the very dust of death, then you can scale the height of glory to which we are raised in union with Christ.

What is the motive here? Conformity to Christ. What is the motive in 1 Cor. xvi.? The resurrection and the hope of reward at it. "O, that is a very mercenary motive," you say. But the Apostle Paul used that motive, and what was he doing when he did that? Only unfolding germs of truth which the Lord Jesus presented in His teaching, as recorded in the gospels, for example: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," and we must not be wiser than God in this matter. He creates every motive which is brought to bear on us, and this motive is a scriptural motive, and is brought to bear on this matter of giving. In 1 Cor. it is the hope of reward at the resurrection. But there is another motive here—to become like Christ. Be like Him, and however rich you are, voluntarily become poor for the blessing of others—that is, become more like Christ. Let that ambition possess us. And now in the light of these scriptures, can we not understand such an Old Testament word as this: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth"?

THE LUXURY OF GIVING.

Now look at the next, 2 Cor. ix. 7: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." Here is the other element in *liberal* giving. We have the element of proportion in two ways: (1) According to God's prospering and blessing, and (2) with reference to what is left; that is the element of proportion. But the other element in liberality is the giving—not grudgingly—freely; not like some who when they put their hands in their pockets for money it is like tearing the skin from the flesh, and that spoils the whole thing. God loves a *cheerful* giver. A gentleman who sent me a little sum of money from his son for the orphans wrote: "I delight in this, and I do hope my son will learn the *luxury* of giving." Wasn't that beautiful! Now, the moment you enter into the luxury

of giving, all thought of necessity and grudging goes. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Now as to the teaching of Scripture in sundry places about *the direction of the gifts*. The passages we have been considering refer especially to giving for the relief of poor saints; but there are other directions in which liberality is to be exercised.

I. *The care of God's servants*—God's workmen. Now, that we have in Gal. vi. 6—"Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." I was a little amused at hearing of a comment on that text at a Bible reading among some wealthy Christians. One of them said: "That means, you know, that when I have in my private meditation on the Scriptures arrived at some clearer view of truth I must, when I get the opportunity, tell my pastor, because it says we are to 'communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things,' so that he may be the better fitted for his work." I thought the comment was partly the result of the surroundings of the commentator. But what it means is shown very clearly from Phil. iv. 15, 16, where Paul himself says: "Now ye Philipians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church *communicated* with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." They sent him some money, or some clothes, or some temporal, carnal things. That is what the apostle means in Gal. vi., helping with carnal things those who give themselves to the work of instructing the saints in spiritual things. This is the argument of the apostle in another passage: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. ix. 11.) "Communicating," then, is giving of our substance, helping by money or other temporal gifts the servants of God who are occupied in spiritual work. Now, the apostle in Gal. vi. puts it very strongly: "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth *in all good things*." The whole context shows that Paul regarded this direction of liberality as a most blessed sowing of seed which would bear a most

abundant harvest of spiritual fruit to those who addicted themselves to that kind of giving.

There is another scripture in which John speaks of the care of saints for evangelists—3 John 6: "Whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well."

Now, that is the thing which is emphasised in Phil. iv., and that is called "fellowship in the Gospel"; helping those who minister the Word and preach the Gospel—evangelists, missionaries; helping them with the means that are absolutely necessary to keep soul and body together, to provide for their families, to get clothing suitable for the climate, to pay the incidental charges in travelling which are inevitable in going out to far-distant regions—in these ways we may have fellowship in the Gospel, and for these we have some of the most clear directions.

II. Now, what shall I say about *the upkeep of our meeting-places*? I should rather be disposed to apply the words: "Doth not even nature itself teach you?" It is a blessed thing to give to the poor, it is a blessed thing to give to those who minister the Word, it is a blessed thing to give to missionaries, it is a more matter-of-fact thing to give for painting this hall. But take an honest man of the world, doesn't he think it his first duty to pay his rent? Doesn't he look upon it as his first great concern as affecting the welfare of his family? And doesn't he consider, if his house belongs to him, and still more if it belongs to someone else, that it is his duty to keep it in order? He must make this his first concern, and be "just before he is generous." So don't let us give grudgingly! We should have decent places to meet in, and we should feel that it is acting on strict scriptural principles not to incur any responsibility till the money is in hand to pay for it. God help us!

It is no trouble which does not touch some choice contentment. That storm is no storm which only blows off the leaves, but never hurts the fruit. Neither is that affliction which only reaches some remote enjoyment, but touches not a Joseph or a Benjamin.

BIBLE STUDIES.

BEHOLD.

I am vile—Ruin	-	-	Job xl. 4
The Lamb—Redemption	-	-	John i. 29
Now—Reception	-	-	2 Cor. vi. 2
I stand and knock—Rejection	-	-	Rev. iii. 20
I come quickly—Rapture	-	-	Rev. xxii. 12
I and the children—Review	-	-	Heb. ii. 13
The Lord cometh to judgment	-	-	
—Retribution	-	-	Jude 14 J. M. H.

FIVE PHASES OF REVIVAL.

Revive <i>me</i> —"Thou wilt revive me"	-	-	Psalm cxxxviii. 7
Revive <i>us</i> —"Wilt Thou not revive us again?"	-	-	Ps. lxxxv. 6
Revive Thy <i>work</i> —"O Lord, revive Thy work"	-	-	Hab. iii. 2
A revival of <i>sin</i> —"Sin revived, and I died"	-	-	Rom. vii. 9
A revival of <i>cave</i> —"Your care of me is revived"	-	-	Phil. iv. 10 (m.) T.B.

NOTES FROM A YOUNG MAN'S BIBLE.—XI.*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

Chap. xix. 30.

HE had taken upon Himself all human sin which has ever rent the air, or fouled the earth, or put the stars of night to the blush; and bearing the shame, the horror, the penalty during those dread hours which wrung from Him the cry of desolate forsakenness, *He put it away, and wiped it out for ever.*

Chap. xx. 1.—"Cometh Mary Magdalene early." How the sight of her, whose heart was aching at the absence of the Master, must have gladdened the Saviour's heart! He came not back from those three short days—so short yet so long, fraught with so much—without a welcome. She was there to meet Him where she had last seen Him. They were satisfied with the *evidences* of the resurrection. *She* wanted the Risen One. There was the sepulchre-stone rolled away, linen clothes lying, and napkin, everything in order, and "they went unto their own home." It is very easy to have a home here when concerned only about the abstract evidences of truth.

*E. H. B.—A young man of rare ability, spirituality, and promise, who departed to be with Christ after a very brief illness, 3rd February, 1892, aged 27.

Chap. xx. 14.—"She turned herself back." How often is it so. We are seeking our Lord with weeping eyes and longing hearts, and He is there just behind us; so near, yet unknown.

Watch on the tower, and listen by the gateway;
Fear not to wait alone.

Take thou thy spices, and some angel straightway
Shall roll away the stone.

Go to thy brethren; say thy Lord hath risen,
And risen but to save;

Tell of the might that breaks the captive's prison,
Of life beyond the grave.

Tell how He met thee, all His radiance shrouded,
How in thy sorrow came
His pitying voice, breathing, when faith was clouded,
Thine own familiar name.

So, at the grave's dark portal thou may'st linger,
And hymn thy happy strain:

The passing world may mock the feeble singer;
Heed not, but sing again.

Chap. xx. 19.—Double peace—"again." No bolts or bars can keep out the resurrection Jesus. Peace—it was His message from the conquered Cross. Not only all enmity of sin put away, but all enmity of will. "He shewed them," &c., &c. That was the path to His repeated peace. It is new visions of His dying love pleading with you to die with Him which prepares for the beautiful new instalment of peace. New peace leads to new service, for a quieted heart leads to quickened steps.

Chap. xxi. 1.—Fuller revelation of Himself. He comes to the old ground to work a new wonder, and He repeats the old miracle in the old place. Is not this what you love about Him? that He does not get tired of old places, or old faces, but He clings to the spots where He has worked before, and repeats His power there *again*. Can you not find out some "Galilee," some despised place in yourself, and invite Him there?

Chap. xxi. 16.—Has He ever asked for your love? Are you still impatient because the life of the Christian is full of "agains"; and you feel it would be so much more satisfactory and comfortable if it were all perfected at once? He knew what it was to have an "again" in temptation (Matt. iv. 7). He knew what it was to have an "again" in placing His will on His Father's side (Matt. xxvi. 42-44).

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayers that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

THE POSITION OF CONVERTED JEWS.—Is it obligatory upon all converted Jews to give up the observance of the Mosaic ceremonial, and to live as Christians of the Gentiles, and worship with them; or have they the option of continuing as Christians the observance of Jewish customs and ritual?

WHO ARE OVERCOMERS?

QUESTION 440.—Are all regenerate persons overcomers, as set forth in the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in Rev. ii. and iii.?

Answer A.—The overcomers in Revelation are those who stood the stress and difficulties of their times, and their rewards were not common to all believers, but suited to the circumstances of each particular case. Those in Smyrna needed faithfulness unto death, and had, if thus faithful, the assurance that they would not be hurt of the second death. To the first Church John says they *had lost* their first love, but does not say they *would* overcome. He indicates rather that *some* would. Overcoming is not merely final perseverance, or words would lose their meaning. It must be by strong faith, not merely preservation of original blessing. If all Christians were overcomers, why the repeated exhortations against worldliness, &c., in every epistle: why the state of languor in the Church: and why cannot many maintain a testimony in these quiet days, when even religion is popular? Alas! how many will be saved, and yet all their works will be burned up (1 Cor. iii. 15; 1 Cor. v. 5). J. H. H.

Answer B.—All regenerate persons are not necessarily overcomers. Only those are overcomers who give heed to and obey the commands of Him who sends the message to them. For example, those in the Church of Ephesus who "remember from whence they are fallen, and repent, and do the first works," are overcomers. Those who fail or neglect to remember, to repent, and to do, are not overcomers, although they are in the Church, which is represented by

a "golden candlestick." Again, those in the Church in Philadelphia, who hold that fast which they have, that no man take their crown, are overcomers. But if certain yield to the constant pressure of temptation and persecution, and so do not hold that fast which they have, they may lose their crown, and not be overcomers. Paul is an excellent illustration of the way and the object of an overcomer when he says: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into slavery: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved" (1 Cor. ix. 27). J. SCOTT.

Editor's Note.—"The Revelation" is a book of judgment. In the first chapter the Lord is presented as the Priestly Judge. Aaron was to "bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before Jehovah continually." So in chapters ii. and iii. the Lord is judging the condition and ways of the Churches, and apportioning to each its measure of censure or approval, of chastisement, or reward according to His perfect knowledge.

The question raised is, therefore, not as to eternal life or deliverance from the wrath to come, but rather an anticipation of the searching verdicts of the coming judgment-seat of Christ.

These chapters are designed to help us in discerning ourselves now, for "if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged"; there is no need that those should be judged who judge themselves. But those who fail to do so come under the chastening hand of the Lord here: "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten"; and incur in greater or less measure the suffering of loss (1 Cor. iii. 15)—eternal loss—at the tribunal of the Lord.

The "overcomer" is the approved servant who, amidst temptation, suffering, and loss, maintains his testimony to the end by faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4). "They overcame him (*i.e.*, Satan) by the Blood of the Lamb and by the Word of God" (Rev. xii. 11).

ELDER SUNDAY-SCHOOL SCHOLARS.

QUESTION 441.—What means should we adopt to retain under our care and teaching the young people of our Sunday-schools, who consider themselves too old to attend the ordinary Sunday-school classes? (2) How should classes for such be conducted? (3) What method of teaching would be most profitable?

Answer A.—It is difficult to retain such children after they reach a certain age without some attraction, which they can readily find in denominational circles. Parents and guardians should feel more responsibility towards such

members of their families. There is weakness in that sphere.

I think Bible classes, if made interesting, should meet the case, with a social meeting now and then, bright and cheery. We cannot put old heads on young shoulders, and should not attempt that. If suitable conductors of such classes could be found they might make them very profitable. Subjects taken up and followed out from Scripture—the teacher to open the subject and the scholars to bring forward passages bearing thereupon—appear to me best calculated to command attention. A short syllabus could be prepared from time to time, and all would know what was coming. J.S.

Answer B.—The great, the imperative necessity is that these elder ones should be born again. Our business is to cry to God, yea, to cry mightily, that He may find men "that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap" before God, that these young people may not be lost to God nor to His Church. No amount of "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons" nor any other clever human device will hold the youths and girls as they are passing out of their teens.

We give unfeigned thanks to our God for the numbers of Sunday-school scholars who are saved. But when we think of the hundreds who are passing out into the world unsaved, our hearts are sad. Let us cry without ceasing to God that each teacher in our schools may be one sent from God, whose absorbing object is to lead each scholar to the feet of Jesus. J. SCOTT.

Answer C.—Begin with the superintendent and the teachers, and see that punctuality, orderliness, and brevity characterise all the religious exercises. Avoid monotony, both in tone, manner, and matter. Let there be no wearisome repetition either in the class or from the superintendent's desk of commonplace phrases, but see that the Scripture lessons for the day are prayerfully and thoroughly prepared, and made clear, crisp, interesting, and profitable. Make friends and companions of the children, especially of the elder ones; invite them occasionally to your house, if this be possible, and arrange country walks with them on summer evenings or on Saturday afternoons. In these and other ways win their confidence and affection, and make them look forward to the hour on Sunday as one of the happiest and brightest in all the week.

Be what you teach, and draw rather than drive. Let those of the elder scholars who give good evidence of conversion to God be given some work to do for the Lord, such as marking the roll-book, looking out for absentees, or visiting the sick, thus giving them not only occupation but an interest in the general commonwealth.

Whilst ruling by love, be absolutely firm with downright "incorrigibles," and never be satisfied until you get, and hold, the fixed attention of all in the class or meeting. Occasionally use the blackboard, or printed cards, or any other objects which may help to illustrate, explain, and enforce the special scripture or truth with which you may be dealing.

Believe in, seek, work for, and *expect* the conversion of the children whilst they are young, "before the evil days come," and then get them into the company and fellowship of God's people, and teach them to love spiritual persons and spiritual pursuits, and thus to follow your steps and be better than you have ever been.

Gather all the teachers and workers together once a month for special conference and prayer about every matter of detail connected with the work, when reports should be given in by those who have visited the absentees during the previous month, and lists for the next month's visiting be given out.

Pray much, work hard, and lose no opportunity of cultivating and improving your own spiritual life and gift.

H. W. F.

Answer D.—Everyone must admit that this question is of very grave importance, and to a very large extent oversight brethren are morally responsible to deal with it and decide.

That many young people are saved while in the school is a cause for much thankfulness and praise to God. These are baptised and take their place in fellowship at the Lord's table, but, sad to say, in many instances no further provision is made for them apart from the ordinary adult meetings.

On the other hand, there are those who leave the school still unsaved, and, I apprehend, it is to this class the question especially refers.

I would suggest (1st) classes for young men and women of a conversational character, having an elder brother apt to teach for the young men, and likewise a sister for the young women; 2nd, Let the young Christians be perfectly free to speak or ask questions, this will keep up the interest of the meeting—I speak from experience—not only among the believers, but also among the unsaved; 3rd, The teaching I would suggest should be: (1) Foundation truths—never more needed than now; (2) Dispensational and positive and relative truths; (3) The principle of worship; (4) The Gospel—what it is, and how to set it forth to others. For while we have plenty of so-called evangelists, there are but very few who preach the Gospel according to the New Testament teaching, and many of our Gospel meetings are sparsely attended because of talk that is anything but the Gospel of Christ.

F. D.

THE WRECKAGE OF TESTIMONY

AND THE REMEDY FOR IT.

By THOMAS D. W. MUIR, Detroit, Michigan.

WE are living in days when it is common to hear and speak of the failure of the testimony as committed to the Church of God; and as the realisation of this failure produces different results among God's people, it might be well to consider what would be the godly way of meeting the condition. To some the ruin seems so complete that, losing heart, they throw up the hands, as it were, and exclaim, "It's all a wreck; what's the use of trying to maintain a testimony for God?" and thus, despairingly, they give up the contest.

But is this God's way? Is there not a more excellent way than this? We believe there is. Don't let us close our eyes to the ruin; don't let us ignore the weakness of the situation. Rather let us seek to take it in more fully; but while we do so, let us not forget that the resources of our God are by no means exhausted because His people have failed again and again. Like Israel of old we have destroyed ourselves, yet in God is our help (Hosea xiii. 9).

In 1st Samuel we have these two principles of action illustrated for us. The condition of Israel, as unfolded in the opening chapters of this book, was sad. The people were ignorant and idolatrous, the judges were a failure, and the priestly family a disgrace. Eli, the high priest, was a quiet, self-indulgent old man, having little control over his own house, and daily proving himself to be more and more incapacitated for ruling the people of God. Lawlessness and impiety were glaring in the lives of his sons, and doubtless reflected in the lives of the common people. It would seem as though matters could not be much worse; and to the eye of sense there was no remedy in sight. Indeed, by the majority possibly none was desired.

But God could not allow matters to go on thus without interfering in judgment. In 1 Samuel iv. we find how it fell on the nation, and especially on the house of Eli. The Ark of God that they had taken with them into the fight with the Philistines, in the hope that it might save them, was taken by the enemy. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and

Phinehas, were slain. Eli himself hearing of it, fell back from the seat on which he was, and being a heavy man, broke his neck. Phinehas' wife hearing of all this, "bowed herself and travailed," and gave birth to a son. It cost her her life, but ere she died she took in the whole condition of things, the wreck and ruin all around her, and she called the name of her boy "Ichabod," saying, "The glory is departed from Israel!"

It was the wail of despair—the utterance of one who *saw the wreck, but did not know the remedy*. She could pronounce the sentence of "Ichabod" on the whole nation, but knew of no way by which even a little of that glory might be brought back again.

In chapter i., however, we have another case. It antedates the other by several years, and presumably the condition of things was not quite as bad. Yet here is a woman who, we believe, saw how the testimony was gone, and could see that "Ichabod" was practically written over all; yet she knew the source from which the remedy must come, and was intelligent as to what that remedy must be. *God needed a man* who would serve as a link between Himself and His needy people, and that man must come from God.

But what could she do? She was but a woman—a poor, barren woman. She could not prophesy or preach. She could not do many a thing that seemed to be needed. There was but one thing left open for her—*she could pray*. And who will say that she did not render greater service to Israel in that way than had she been able to preach with stirring eloquence? Oh! ye dear women in the Church of God who, seeing the ruin of the present testimony, feel inclined to let the hands hang down in despair, God give you to see the possibilities of prayer!

Hannah was, as we have noted, a barren woman; and her distress over her own condition is accentuated by the provocation of her adversary, who reproached her. Is it any wonder, then, that she should be desirous to have the cause of this reproach lifted from her? Is it a matter of surprise that she cried unto the Lord to give her a man child? All this seems perfectly natural; but we lose the point if we see no deeper than that in these

intense utterances of dear Hannah. Her own condition was bad enough, but, after all, she was but a picture of the whole nation—they were all barren. There was this difference, however, between her and the nation: she owned her condition; they did not. She grasped the situation, and was in fellowship with God about it; with them it was not so. Her need as a woman is deep enough, but Israel's need is deeper; and her desire was not for self, but rather that God might have a man raised up for Him to meet the conditions that existed. She does not shout nor cry aloud; the prayer is coming from her heart, and God hears it.

In due time a son is born unto her, and she calls his name Samuel, which means "asked of God." God had granted her request. Does she then say to herself, "I have no other child; this is my very own," and as she lavishes upon him the wealth of a mother's heart, add, "I will not, I cannot part with him; he must not go from me"? No: she is in fellowship with God, so she says the first year, "I will not go up [to Shiloh] until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and *there abide for ever*" (1 Sam. i. 22). She had not "asked amiss," that she might consume it on her lusts (Jas. iv. 3). No; her desire was for God, and so she brought him in due time to the Tabernacle, and said to Eli, "O my lord, . . . I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord. *For this child I prayed*; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him; therefore I have returned him whom *I have obtained by petition* to the Lord; as long as he liveth he whom *I have obtained by petition* shall be returned to the Lord" (1 Sam. i. 26-28, marg.).

This is most beautiful! How she delights to emphasise the fact that she had obtained Samuel in answer to prayer! She was but using for God's glory that which He had given her; and chapter ii. shows how she went home with her heart filled with joy, and her mouth with the praises of the Lord. Surely this is not nature. Ah! no; it is the outcome of the grace of God in Hannah. And how far-seeing she is! "He shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn

of His Anointed" (verse 10). It was as much as saying, "My boy, whom I have left behind, shall serve for the time being, but God will never be satisfied till he has His own Anointed on the throne, with all His enemies under His feet."

In other words, Hannah was in fellowship with God about matters, and the great need there was of a man to rule for Him, so she goes right on with her song, until she speaks of God's Anointed on the throne; and God's Anointed is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

It now remains to us but to show how Samuel answered to this faith of his mother. Isaiah in his day said of Israel, "Yea, truth faileth; . . . and the Lord saw it. . . . And *He saw that there was no man*, and wondered there was *no intercessor*," &c. (Isa. lix. 15, 16). Or, as he said in chapter lxiv. 7, "There is *none that calleth upon Thy Name*, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee." Or, as in a later day priests and princes, prophets and people were all wrong, yet the extremity of the case is realised when God says, "*I sought for a man among them that should . . . stand in the gap before Me for the land . . . but I found none.*" (Read Ezek. xxii. 26-30.)

Somewhat parallel to this was the state of matters in the times we are considering. The spiritual condition of all was waxing worse and worse, and the need was for a man to stand in the gap before God. He must be a clean vessel, through whom God could minister to His Israel. He must be a man who could approach God on behalf of His needy people. This was what Hannah foresaw. To this end did she ask for Samuel. Does he answer to it? We believe he did.

In 1 Samuel iii. 1 we have the suggestive statement: "*The Word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.*" Alas! it was precious by reason of its very scarcity. There was none through whom God could send His Word to His people. Now, notice the contrast at the end of the chapter: "And Samuel grew, and *the Lord was with him*, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. . . . And *the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel*"

(1 Sam. iii. 19-21; iv. 1). How suggestively beautiful is this! For a long time there had been no open vision. The heavens were silent. Now, however, God has a man through whom He can speak, and He appeared again in Shiloh, and revealed Himself there to Samuel by the Word of the Lord. And that Word, through Samuel, reached *all Israel*! Once more communication between God and His people has been restored. God has a man among them in fellowship with Himself, whom He can use. Is this one thing not greatly needed now? We mourn the dearth of profitable ministry. Is there not a cause? And is this not the cause, that there is a lack of men in touch with God, through whom He can speak?

But there is another point. Samuel was a man who could pray, and get answers from God. In 1 Sam. vii. we find Israel putting away their idols, and seeking to get back to God. In this revival Samuel is a prominent figure. The Philistines, hearing of the movement, are stirred up to oppose, and Israel called on Samuel to pray for them. This he did in connection with his sacrifice of a sucking lamb. And the statement is made that "*Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him*" (verses 8 and 9). It is needless to add the enemy was defeated. This is but a sample of Samuel as an intercessor. Grace does not run in the blood, but in this case a godly, praying mother is followed by a praying son. Later on the Spirit of God speaks thus: "Moses and Aaron among His priests, and *Samuel among them that call upon His Name*; they called upon the Lord, and He answered them" (Psa. xcix. 6). Thus, both as God's mouth-piece to His people, and the people's intercessor with God, did Samuel answer to the desire of his mother, who, seeing the ruin and wreck of the testimony, did not despair, but rather laid hold on God, that He would raise up a man to be a link between Himself and His needy people. Samuel was such a man. Oh! for more of such in this our day. God grant it!

God is strangely honoured by His children's trust in His simple Word. Lash the promises together, and launch forth upon them.

CHRIST COMING AGAIN.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART I.

LET us begin by reading Titus ii. 11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts [or desires], we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed Hope, and 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."

Read also in 1 Thessalonians i. 9, 10:

"For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God: and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come."

Also in 1 Timothy, at the beginning:

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Hope."

In these three passages we have set before us the hope that God intends every believer to cherish, and to live in the power of.

Further, in Philippians iii. 20, 21 we read:

"For our conversation [and I may say here that the word "conversation" is not in this place the ordinary Greek word for conversation, which means our behaviour, but a word which signifies our *citizenship*]: For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body [the body of our humiliation], that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Bringing these Scriptures together, we have: "Looking for that blessed Hope," "Waiting for the Son of God from heaven," and "From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;" and in Timothy that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself "is our Hope." There is one thing characteristic of the New Testament, and that is, that salvation in all its aspects is summed up in a Person. It is not merely doctrine, not merely truth—though we highly value both—but doctrine and truth are really only of value as they lead us to the glorious Person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is our Saviour and our Hope.

In saying that the Lord Jesus is our Hope,

that does not mean that there are not many blessed and glorious things connected with His coming again included in that hope. There are, and we shall look at these shortly. But it means that the centre and the sum of all blessing, all gladness, and all glory is to be in His presence and to behold His glory. He is God's beloved Son; He is the One in whom God is well pleased. In the parable of the king that made a marriage for his son, everything was provided, and purposed, and planned with a view to the honour and delight of that son; so God's whole work is for the glory and delight of His own beloved Son.

Hence it is that He who is God's delight is our delight, for we are called to fellowship with God. What He loves we are called to love, what He hates we are called to hate. We are called to fellowship with the Father and the Son; and if God says of His Son, "This is My beloved Son," then the Church—the Bride—can say also, He is our beloved, and our delight.

I want you next to look at one or two passages where the Lord has very specially told us about His personal return. Look at Acts i. 9-11:

"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

I don't think words could be more explicit than these—the same Jesus coming in the same manner, and His people waiting His return. Then if you look at John xiv. 1-3:

"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."

We know from other Scriptures, and even from this very chapter, that there is a sense in which the Lord Jesus comes by His Spirit into the hearts of His people, so that the believer can say, "Christ liveth in me." It is by His Spirit that He lives in the be-

liever, but when He says, "I will come again," the word *again* limits the meaning. It is, "I, the very same personal Jesus, that am now telling you that I am going to leave you. I will come again, and it will be for this definite purpose, to receive you to Myself." That is a fixed and definite point in the future—a personal Saviour coming again for a definite purpose.

Will you look at the 9th of Hebrews. Let us read from the 24th verse:

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. . . . now once in the end of the world [or, age] hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Notice in this passage we have the Lord in three different, grand operations:

First, His coming to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Secondly, His appearing in the presence of God for us; and

Thirdly, His appearing the second time (which we call the Lord's second coming), apart from sin, for our complete salvation.

In each of these three it is a personal Saviour. It was the Person of the Lord Jesus Himself who appeared to put away our sin; it is the Person of the Lord Jesus Himself that is in the presence of God for us; and it is the same personal Saviour who is coming again—mark it—the *second time* (it has the same force as the word "again" in the 14th of John), without sin unto salvation.

It is sometimes supposed from this verse, "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,"

that *all* men, both saved and unsaved, must necessarily die. It is supposed to be the common lot of mankind, and so it is in a sense. Up till the New Testament revelation it was perfectly right and proper that a believer should use such language as this, "For we shall *all* die, and are as water spilt upon the ground." That is Old Testament language. But where in the New Testament do you get the thought, "We must all die?" Nay, we get the very opposite.

In the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians :

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

But note particularly this passage :

"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

There is my death, judicially, in the Person of Christ as a guilty sinner under the curse and condemnation of a Holy God. Christ has died for me, and I have died in Him, and when He appears the second time it is "without sin."

When He came the first time He came "for sin" (Rom. viii. 3). He came for the very purpose of dealing with the question of sin. By His death He settled it for ever for all who trust in Him. But when He appears "the second time" He comes apart from the question of sin—for that was settled at the Cross long before—He comes "without sin unto salvation." That is what we are waiting for. Oh! blessed, glorious prospect! Death has been called "the debt of nature"; but the man who has died in Christ has no debt of nature left unsettled—it is settled for him. It may be that God will call you, and me, and everyone of us (if the Lord does not come within a few years) to pass through death, and by that way, viz., death and resurrection, to enter the glory; but if the Lord comes to-night, there is no question unsettled, there is no debt unpaid, there is nothing to hinder Him in the plenitude of His redemption to take us, every one of us, to Himself without tasting death, even as He took Enoch and Elijah. So complete is the work of Christ, so perfectly glorifying to God is the great redemption price paid on Calvary, so perfectly has sin been settled, "purged," "put away," for all who believe in Him, that if He comes to-night He takes them all to His embrace, aye, without one living soul tasting death.

As a burning-glass focuses the rays of the sun until they come to a burning point, so the hope of the Lord's return is a focusing of every ray of gladness and of glory into one supremely blessed moment. No wonder it is called a "blessed hope."

There's a familiar saying among us that "there are none so deaf as those who don't

want to hear." Is it not plain that the doctrine of the hope of the Lord's coming is necessarily bound up together with the doctrine of the assurance of salvation. If I don't know whether I am saved or not, if I don't know whether my sins are forgiven or not, if I don't know whether His coming will be to waft me to His eternal glory or to leave me outside the door of salvation a wretched, hopeless Christ rejector—if I don't know which it is to be, how can I hope for it? Don't you see that wherever the doctrine is held, that a man cannot know in this life whether his sins are forgiven or not, it is of no avail to minister the truth about the hope of the personal return of Christ?

No man can receive it as a hope but the man who knows that when the Lord Jesus comes again, it is his best Friend in heaven or earth that is coming to take him to be with Himself. I think that fully accounts for the fact that the hope of the Lord's coming died out of existence almost, along with the obscuration of the simple gospel. Whenever the simple gospel was obscured, mixed up with works, with uncertainty, with the idea that nobody could ever know in this life whether his sins were forgiven or not, so long the hope of the Lord's coming must be out of sight, effectually barred out. But with the revival in these last years—these last fifty years especially—of a clear, definite, peace-giving gospel bringing souls into light, peace, liberty, and fellowship with God, along with that has come a revival of the blessed hope of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLE STUDIES.

GOOD WORKS IN EVIL DAYS.

Adorned with good works	-	1 Tim. ii. 10
Well reported for good works	1 Tim. v. 10	
Diligently following good works	1 Tim. v. 10	
Manifesting good works	-	1 Tim. v. 25
Rich in good works	-	1 Tim. vi. 18
Prepared unto every good work	2 Tim. ii. 21	
Perfected unto all good works	2 Tim. iii. 17	
God's salvation is not of good works	-	Eph. ii. 9
God's Christianity is full of good works	-	Acts ix. 36
Faith without works is dead	Jas. ii. 20	J.M.H.

THE ETERNAL FUTURE OF MEN.

PART II.

THERE SHALL BE A RESURRECTION.

HERE we are walking through the valley of the shadow of death. The death-shade casts unseemly shadows upon every thing. Plants die, trees die, birds and animals of all sorts die, and men die.

He who came into the world, "the Life" in the midst of death, "the Light" in the midst of darkness, said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 28, 29). Subsequent Scriptures, such as Acts xxiv. 15, declare the same great truth, where Paul said: "There shall be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust."

This shall be fulfilled in august majesty when the dead, small and great, from Cain onwards unto the last man that shall die, from every date, from every nation, and from every locality, shall stand before the Great White Throne in obedience to the mighty voice of the Son of God.

A RESURRECTION BY SOVEREIGN FAVOUR.

But there is a resurrection by special Sovereign favour, the subjects of which are described by the Lord Jesus. He said: "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again, at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 39, 40). Again, verse 44, the Lord describes the favoured persons as those whom the Father draws unto Jesus Christ, and yet again He says they are those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man.

Now as to the time of this resurrection by Sovereign favour. It is the "last day." The Lord Himself, and all the apostles who have written epistles—viz., Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude—have spoken of this dispensation as "the last time," or "the last days." The Lord in His parable of the hus-

bandmen and the vineyard, after speaking of a series of dealings with them in order to obtain of the fruit of the vineyard, said: "Last of all He sent unto them His Son" (Matt. xxi. 37). Also, in Heb. i. 1, we read: "God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." God had a long series of dealings with men, but the last of the series is His speaking by the Son. Thus also in 2 Peter iii. 3: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers." Whether we turn to James, or John, or Jude, the same thing is definitely taught, viz., that we are living in the last days, that the present administration of God on the earth is the last of a long series. On the last day of these last days this blessed resurrection by Sovereign favour will take place, when the dead in Christ shall be raised, and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. A glorious resurrection, a marvellous translation!

AFTER THE TRANSLATION.

The grand sequel to the translation is told in 1 Thess. iv. 17: "So shall we ever be with the Lord." This is a fresh and blessed revelation. The word rendered "ever" is *παντοτε*, which means that we shall be with Him in 'all circumstances, everywhere, and uninterruptedly. When He is at home as the Bridegroom, we shall be at home with Him as the bride. When He rides forth to battle on a white horse, we shall follow Him as the armies of heaven on white horses. When He comes to execute judgment and take vengeance, we shall come with Him. When He sits down to adjudicate the affairs of men and angels, we shall judge with Him. When He assumes the governance of the universe, we shall reign with Him amid the vastness of the works of God—He in all things ever having the pre-eminence.

Besides being ever with Him, we shall also be like Him. When the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, shall come from heaven, "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able, even, to subdue all things unto Him-

self" (Phil. iii. 21). By the same mighty power He will in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, raise the dead and change the living. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (see 1 Cor. xv). But although it has not yet been made manifest what we shall be, "we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him" (1 John iii. 2).

OUR ETERNAL FUTURE.

The eternal future of the believer is bound up with Jesus Christ, for He said: "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "Knowing this, that Christ being risen from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him" (Rom. vi. 9). He Himself also said: "I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen" (Rev. i. 18). The phrase rendered "for evermore" means absolute eternity, and everywhere else is translated "for ever and ever." It is sublimely beautiful, that the first time this phrase occurs in the New Testament, it is to tell of the eternal glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. It reads, "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Gal. i. 5). Thus also we read in Rev. i. 5, 6: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. . . . to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

We are bound up with Him who is our life, with Him who is alive for evermore; bound up with Him whose glory and whose dominion are for ever and ever. Being like Him in spirit, in soul, and in body, we shall be ever with Him. The last full view we get of those happy people is Rev. xxii. 4, 5: "And they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

"Glory, glory everlasting,
Be to Him who bore the cross;
Who redeemed our souls by tasting
Death, the death deserved by us.

Spread His Glory
Who redeemed His people thus." J. S.

"THY LAND, O EMMANUEL!"

O LAND, soon to shine in His glory,
Where Jesus once wandered and wept,
God's Word overflows with thy story—
Christ's bosom the record has kept.

Lone land of the seer and the prophet,
The altar, the priest, and the king,
Thy people have deemed thee forsaken,
Yet we thy redemption may sing.

Fierce nations have warred to possess thee
The Panther, the Leopard, the Bear
May unite once again to oppress thee—
Jehovah will make thee His care.

He will cast out thy foe. The avenger
Shall be stilled by His uplifted hand;
Then thy babes, without fear of the stranger,
Hosannahs shall shout through the land.

Thou land of the lily and myrtle,
The pomegranate, figtree, and vine,
O'er thy groves the soft voice of the turtle
Shall float. What a soothing is thine!

Bread-corn to the tops of thy mountains,
Abundance of fruit in each vale,
Life's river still filling thy fountains,
— Where plenty and praises prevail.

What a bright, what a beautiful morrow
O'er thy valleys and mountains shall shine.
Thy seed-time was anguish and sorrow,
But a harvest of gladness is thine.

Yet the deepest of joys still remaineth,
That both heaven and earth may share—
Not only the joy of Emmanuel's land,
But Emmanuel's joy to be there. J. J. P.

THE SCOPE OF SALVATION.—II.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

A SOUL-SALVATION, then, is what faith is entitled to appropriate at the present time. It is faith's present issue. To the Hebrew believers to whom Peter wrote this was of special importance, as their rabbis had educated them to expect a material deliverance from the promised Messiah. The spiritual nature of His Kingdom was but slowly perceived even by many who

were truly attached to Him when they saw "the King of Israel," as Nathaniel did, in "Jesus of Nazareth."

By this is not meant that *earth* does not fall within the bounds of the Kingdom committed to Christ. It verily does as well as heaven. Nor that in its final display material blessings will not accompany it for the weary nations of this sobbing, distracted *earth*. To be sure they will. War, slavery, corruption in high places, tyranny, those social inequalities which flow from might crushing right, these and kindred abuses which cause even "civilised" society to groan to-day, will be put an end to. "The meek shall inherit *the earth*" yet, when the perfection of meekness—the Lamb slain—shall be upon the throne.

But these are not the great things of the Kingdom. God begins with the inside of the platter. The real essence and substance of the Kingdom can only be perceived by that opening of the eye which accompanies the new birth. To be outwardly in the enjoyment of the results of the Kingdom, and to be inwardly, experimentally "translated" into it (Col. i. 13), are two different things. And this last is what believers already have.

Peter predicates three things of the "saved" soul. How often one hears the word, "My soul is saved!" Certainly in one sense not *too* often. But is there not a danger of Scripture terms being taken up without the reality and substance of the things spoken of being possessed? And when was there greater danger than to-day? In thousands upon thousands of tracts and "good" books, from numberless "gospel hall" platforms, &c., people are encouraged to call themselves "saved" because "the Bible says so," though the heart has never been broken under the hammer of the living Word. The result is "letter-made saints," whose religion consists in talking *about* things they admire, instead of feeding upon that which they possess; whose faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in *the power of God*; who are soulish only, not having the Spirit.*

What, then, is a saved soul according to

the Apostle Peter? A soul of whom the three things spoken of in verse 8 of chap. i. are true in some measure: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; *receiving* the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." That is, that unseen Saviour is the object of my confidence, the object, also, of my love; and, thirdly, the fountain of my joy.

One might have clear views of the work of Christ; be able to define the scriptural teaching of His atonement; have orthodox conceptions of the plan of salvation, of justification, sanctification, election, regeneration, &c. A man thus furnished might become a learned theologian: but a Christian, a believer, a saved soul, he is not if that is all he has.

How did Peter become a saved soul? Flesh and blood did not communicate it to him; it was by the revelation of the Father. And one thus drawn, thus illuminated, he has *Christ*, he has *life*, he has a spark of that eternal *love* which the Father has to Christ, being born of the Father, born of God, who is "love," and in some measure that blessed Christ, though, because unseen, an object of faith, is the source of his happiness. He is never more happy than when absorbed with Him.

And let none say this makes the salvation of the soul very difficult to reach. All is of *grace*, and therefore man's natural conception, his flesh and blood religious ideas, though logically true, will not save. Grace involves the creature's silence, that God might speak, and the creature's passivity, that God might act.

The Christianity of the apostles was a miracle. It was a stone cut out without hands, which proved itself superior to the combined forces of darkness. It overcame the world. Without prestige, honour, influence, ecclesiastical permits, or patronage, ignorant fishermen and a Jew of Tarsus, who purposely hid his learning, attacked and triumphed over the Roman empire at the height of its development. Sword, nakedness, hunger, death could not stop them. In all these things they were more

* Jude 19: *Psykhikos*—soulish.

than conquerors through Him who loved them. Their faith was triumphant, imperishable, invincible—because *supernatural*.

And is our twentieth-century Christianity supernatural? Or does it consist too often in pious phrases, orthodox confessions, a round of religious duties, careful walking, contention for "points," such as "ordinances," or "views," such as "prophecy," "typology," "Church truth," "holiness," instead of the outward expression of an inward principle, the life divine rising into dominion within us, a Christianity whose faith, hope, and love is divine in its character, celestial in its source, and supernatural in its communication?

The kind of conversions which are constantly being produced by the easy-going evangelism of the day, which might have taken place whether there be any Holy Ghost or no; and *the counterfeit holiness* which is satisfying the cravings of such, who still feel there is something wrong—a holiness which consists in walking on high religious stilts, instead of a lowly, self-judging knowledge of Christ, inwardly revealed by the illumination of the Father—are preparing Christendom for the reign of the false Christ as surely as Ritualism and Rationalism in the countries which are the heirs of the glorious heritage of the Reformation.

Thankfully does one own *all* that has its roots in "God's workmanship" in modern evangelistic activity. We bless God for every "*sent*" preacher. There have been, and are still, not a few. Such ever carry souls in their bosom. They travail in birth that Christ may be formed in them. These remarks do not for one moment apply to such, but to their imitators. One is rather anxious to press the importance of John i. 13, that those who are "born of God" are not such by "blood," *i.e.*, by natural descent, nor by "the will of the flesh," *i.e.*, by their own efforts, nor by "the will of man," *i.e.*, by the efforts of another, but "*OF GOD*," without forgetting that God has His chosen instruments, whom He uses *as* and *when* it pleases Him. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—PAPER IX.

CALLED AND JUSTIFIED.

By W. H. BENNET.

IT has been well said that in Romans viii. 29, 30 we have a "golden chain," each link of which is very precious. Having dwelt upon that link which relates to the *past*, we now take up the two which describe the action of God's grace in the present: "Whom He did predestinate, them He also *called*; and whom He called, them He also *justified*."

The utterance of wisdom (Prov. viii. 4), "Unto you, O men, *I call*; and my voice is to the sons of men," well befits the Gospel which the same Speaker commanded to be preached "to every creature." It is by that Gospel that God calls to salvation and glory (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14), and as, when He was upon earth, the Lord said, "I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners*," so now it is to *sinners* that the Gospel comes from God, and its first declaration is that of "the forgiveness of sins." No sinner in any nation under heaven ever responded to the call of God's Gospel without proving to the satisfaction and joy of his soul that all its rich blessings were intended for him, and no one ever can come to God as a hungry and needy sinner and be sent empty away. If a man does not welcome the Gospel it is because he does not feel his need of it. He either disregards the claims of God his Creator, or refuses to believe that he is altogether "without strength," as well as "guilty before God," and therefore unable to make himself or his works acceptable to God.

But whilst a sense of sin and need makes us glad to turn to Christ and trust Him as the Saviour of the lost, it is only when we have been brought into the light that we discern how dense our darkness was. We then see that had we been left to ourselves we should still have gone on without Christ, and though we might have desired to escape the *consequences* of sin when they really come before us, we should never have loathed sin itself, or had any true thirst for the Living God. We learn that if we have sought and found Christ, it is because He sought and found us, as He said when Zacchæus had *received* Him, "The Son of

Man is come to *seek* and *save* that which was *lost*."

The words of our Lord in John vi. show us that while this is the expression of the grace of His own heart; it is also a carrying out of the will of the Father who sent Him. It is because lost ones are given to Him by the Father that He seeks them; it is because they are drawn to Him by the Father that He receives them. Thus words which stir the pride of the natural heart, and even become an occasion of stumbling to unbelievers, are found by the renewed soul to be full of consolation. When "taught of God" we acknowledge that we were so sinful and helpless that we could not have come to Christ had we not been drawn by the Father.

But this *drawing* and this *teaching* are the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, and that which is set forth by these words is expressed in the Epistles by the word "*called*." Careful examination shows that in the Epistles this word is never used of one who has not responded to the call of God, but always of those have been inwardly and efficaciously called, and have obeyed from the heart the Gospel that has reached them. (See especially 1 Cor. i. 23, 24; Rom. ix. 23, 24.) So in Rom. i. 6 believers are described as "*the called of Jesus Christ*," which seems to mean *the called ones belonging to Jesus Christ*, the act of calling being generally traced to God the Father.

The frequent use of the words *called* and *calling* seems designed to keep prominently before us the fact that it is God who makes us to differ from those who are still content to be without Him. We can take no praise to ourselves, but can only own that the same grace which made full provision for our salvation constrained us to come to Him in whom alone it is found. Thus all ground of human boasting is removed and God secures to Himself the full glory of the salvation of His people. And the more we know of that grace the more shall we seek to respond in every way to the claims of Him who has called us to be His, and to yield ourselves and all that we have to Him and to His service.

Those whom God calls He *justifies*, and as "peace with God" can be the portion only of those who are justified, any who would

have settled and abiding peace in their souls must enter into the reality of this justification. The meaning of the word *justify* should be carefully pondered. It expresses the sentence of a judge, and signifies *to acquit* or *to pronounce righteous*. That *to justify* is exactly the opposite of *to condemn* is clear from Deut. xxv. 1 and Prov. xvii. 15. If an earthly judge pronounced a wicked man righteous it would be an abomination to God and man; but God is perfectly just when, through the sacrifice of "His own Son," He declares the ungodly, *on their believing in Jesus*, to be free from any charge of guilt (Rom. iii. 26; iv. 5).

Justification is more than forgiveness. In an earthly court the judge can only justify when the accused is proved clear of that with which he is charged; one who needs forgiveness can never be justified, and one who is justified, *i.e.*, acquitted of the charge brought against him, needs no forgiveness. In the heavenly court, "God, the Judge of all," both forgives and justifies, for in this matter He has to do with those who own themselves guilty, and whose eyes are turned from themselves to find in their accepted Surety the ground both of forgiveness and justification. Pardon discharges us from punishment and delivers from the consequences of sin, while justification bestows upon us that title to glory which could be given only through the precious blood and perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

No sinner can ever show a *title* to be *justified* or declared righteous; therefore if we are thus blessed we are "justified freely [*i.e.*, *gratuitously*, or *without cause*, as the word is rendered in John xv. 25] by His grace"; but the righteous God can never pronounce an unrighteous sentence, and therefore, while the justification springs from His infinite grace, it reaches us "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24), even "by His blood" (verse 9) that has atoned for, and for ever put away, the guilt from which the just God pronounces us free. The believer is also said to be "justified by faith" (verse 1), because, owning himself to be both guilty and helpless, he *relies* solely on the Lord Jesus Christ and the value of His precious sacrifice for acceptance in the presence of God.

It is important to keep clearly before us the exact meaning of the word *justify*, as shown above, because Romish teachers assert that it signifies *to make righteous*, and lead the sinner to look into himself, or to his "good works," for the ground of justification, the natural conclusion being that no one can be justified till death, or some time after. Such teaching is necessary to the maintenance of any system of human priesthood; for if it be taught that a sinner, being justified and accepted as absolutely righteous in Christ, has free access to the holy presence of God, and an assured standing there, a human priesthood is instantly seen to be an imposture.

That those who are justified are also *made righteous* is indeed a blessed truth, for by the renewing grace of the Spirit of God, the new man "is created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. iv. 24); but, however inseparable from justification is the gracious act of regeneration, it must not be confounded with it. God does not justify a sinner because he is regenerated, or because of anything in himself, but solely on the ground of the atoning death of His Son.

It may be well also to add that while a man is "justified by faith" alone, the faith that justifies is not a barren faith, but "*faith which worketh by love*," and purifieth the heart (Gal. v. 6; Acts xv. 9). James, expounding, so to speak, the words just quoted, shows that "faith, if it hath not works, is dead." The faith that does not show itself by its results is not "the faith of God's elect," inwrought by the Holy Spirit; but a counterfeit that brings no blessing to man and no glory to God.

"DOCTRINE:"

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN SCRIPTURE?

By WILLIAM COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

PART II.

FOUNDATION TRUTHS.

WHILE thus affirming the prominence given in Scripture to practical teaching, need it be said that the great truths of the Gospel—salvation by grace, justification by faith—abide in all their fundamental importance? The two are but parts of the same building of God to fit for Himself a

habitation in His people; one, the true foundation; the other, the proper superstructure. God has joined these together. We may not sunder them, either, as some do, by setting up the ethics of Christianity while denying Christ Himself in His essential Deity or His atoning work; or as, on the other hand, in the reaction from this we may be prone to do, by being so engrossed with the foundation as to neglect the building thereon. While for justification and eternal life the atoning work of Christ is all-sufficient, and must stand alone, the Lord has yet another purpose in our redemption. He "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." We are to be witnesses for Him, by bearing His likeness. "Ye are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Some take alarm at the mention of good works, as if these were subversive of the grand truth of justification by faith. But there is all the difference between "works of righteousness" (as in Titus iii., that is, *as a ground* of righteousness, disallowed when put in the place of faith) and "*good works*" as opposed to *bad*—the fruit of faith, everywhere commended and commanded. "By grace ye are saved through faith . . . not of works," but "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them." Our sanctification is twofold—the one wrought by Christ *for us* through His atoning Blood, cleansing us so as to fit us for God's acceptance as worshippers and children, a sanctification thus perfected in Him; yet we further need the sanctification of the Spirit working *in us*, the "washing of water by the Word" (Eph. v. 26), fitting us to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, and to fulfil our calling as His witnesses and lights in the world.

THE BUILDING.

To this great end, to "furnish the man of God unto all good works," all Scripture is profitable, and is needful. The foundation of Gospel truth, essential though it be, is not all. The edifice has to be reared thereon.

It is not as though it may be left to rise of itself. We are to "build up ourselves on our most holy faith."

It is often said that what we need for this is a whole-hearted consecration—to be filled with the Spirit—to have Christ dwelling in us; or, as otherwise expressed, "abiding in Christ," and personal love to Him. This is most true. Such conditions lie at the root of all acceptable walk; and it is well to be reminded of the need of them. Only not well when it is thereby implied, or tends to foster the thought, that such conditions meet the need, and render the precepts the less necessary. There is serious danger in thus assuming what is not warranted by Scripture, or by fact. Doubtless where there is walking with God there will be conformity to His ways. The indwelling Spirit will produce His own fruits in the life. But only if these conditions are real. Too often it is otherwise. What of some who have seemed to be so full of the Spirit as to be the brightest lights of devotion and usefulness in their day, and have become as beacon-fires to warn us of the depths into which those may fall who, under the plea of guidance of the Spirit, have neglected the Word?

Apart from such solemn warnings of danger, there may be in the religious ideal much that is artificial, forged on the anvil of human influence, or cast in the mould of man's teaching and association. History shows how wide of the mark may have been the views of Christian character in men whose love to the Lord admits of no doubt. Not to speak of asceticism in some, and in others the sword, how much bitterness in word and action many of the most eminent of their time have thought to be due to His service; how in their zeal for what they held as truth they practically lost all sight of that by which He said they were to be known as His disciples. Well would it have been if this were only matter of history, a thing of the past!

It is possible, alas! to be specially notable for devotion to the Person of the Lord, and to be by no means so conspicuous for that which, according to Phil. ii. 2, marks His mind, or in Ephes. iv. 2, is the proper outcome of being filled with His love. The spiritual instinct, it is true, may go a long

way towards guiding to godliness of walk. Yet Peter in his epistles, so far from supposing that this will suffice even for those who are "partakers of the Divine nature," calls on them to give all diligence to add to their faith virtue, and all the rest that he enumerates in detail, to make their calling and election sure.

Besides devotedness, we need "the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" and for this we have to go diligently to His Word. Such is human infirmity, that while aiming at one good thing we are prone to forget another and a better—to insist on some points we have specially learned as being "the weightier matters." It is not by walking according to our conscience that we can cleanse our way, though we may cleanse our conscience thereby. Paul had a good conscience, thinking he was doing God service when killing His saints.

So far from assuming a spiritual state such as should render the precepts unnecessary, the Spirit in the Word acts on the contrary, See Romans xii., where, after the glorious setting forth of Gospel grace, leading up to the climax in chapter xi., instead of regarding that as sufficient, the apostle then begins thereby to beseech us to present our bodies a living sacrifice. Nor is that enough; he has further to show in detail how this is to be done. Here come the most comprehensive and particular directions to be found in his writings. Surely these chapters need our study as much as ever.

We shall be wronging the words of the Lord Jesus if we take them to mean that the keeping of His commandments consists in loving Him (John xiv. 23). However true it be that these are inseparable, yet, as the context shows, He meant that loving Him consists in keeping His commandments, as we have it in 1 John v. 1: "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." The commandment here specially enforced is, not that we should love Him as He has loved us, but that we should *love one another*. He claims our love, but not that it should be all spent on Himself; it is none the less truly love to Him, or spent on Him, if it finds its expression or outcome in keep-

ing His commandments, especially this one commandment of loving one another. That we should love Him would go without saying. Very little is said about this in the New Testament. In one of the most notable passages apparently to that effect (1 John iv. 19), the Revised Version points out a radical correction by omitting "Him," so that it would read "we love (one another) because He first loved us." And this agrees with all the teaching of the context. How different as to the command that we should love one another! This required to be, and still requires to be, constantly reiterated, even to the extent of the strong language of 1 John ii. 4 or iv. 20: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." Peter's one idea of love to his Master was devotion to His Person. He did not take in the truth that it meant the obeying His commandments, the lesson which the Lord was labouring to teach them, both by His previous action and in His succeeding discourse. Peter's way of showing his devotion proved how fallacious such devotion is in the absence of diligent attention to his Master's teaching. When in John xxi. the Lord put to him the thrice-repeated question, it was not to elicit from him stronger protestations of his love, but to teach him how He would have him exercise it, by caring for His sheep and His lambs.

CHRIST IN THE SCRIPTURES.

The Scriptures abound in testimony to Christ. We have His own bidding thus to search them. Only we have to be careful lest, being thus occupied, we fail to give its due place to that other great purpose for which they are written. Christ is indeed there, in every page. All bear witness to Him. All converge in Him as the only-begotten Son of God, the perfect Servant, the sin-bearing Saviour, the coming King. We delight to trace Him thus throughout. And well we may! We cannot have too much of Him, except as our exclusive occupation therewith leads to neglect of the precepts. Fattening food without the due proportion of that which makes bone and muscle will not result in a healthy body. The child will thrive on "sincere milk," but will starve if fed on the cream alone. And

the spiritual health must suffer if we choose only the sweetest and richest, rather than the plain food such as Paul in Titus ii. 1 calls "sound doctrine," in literal English, "wholesome teaching." If in reading the Bible it is to find "Jesus only," we may be misapplying our precious watchword, and missing one of the great aims which the Spirit sets before us therein. While adoring Him (blessed occupation! and it will employ eternity), we must not forget that it is for *ourselves* and our obedience God's laws were given. What we see of the Lord Jesus in Philippians ii. or 1 Peter ii. 23, or Romans xv. 3, are written not only for us to contemplate and admire, but to follow and imitate. When we read of His love, it is not only that we should be happy in the knowledge of it, but that we should show such love to others. Thus it is our joy is to be full.

It is not of Himself but of His disciples He speaks in Matthew v. 19: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Imperfect at best as our doing of these may and will be, they are given *for us* to do, not for Him to fulfil for us in such sort that we should the less fulfil them.

Does this mean bondage? Surely not, if we love our Master, and long to be like Him!

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

LETTER TO ASSEMBLIES CONCERNING GOSPEL WORK ABROAD.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

OF recent years, through various European and American agencies, certain young men and women, unproved in the work at home, and with little aptitude for foreign work, have been sent abroad as "missionaries," and Christians with whom we are directly associated have not been free from like blame. For the zeal of many we are thankful, while we deplore the lack of wisdom shown in such cases.

If the men and women here in view made up in godliness and spiritual power what is otherwise lacking, their going forth might be justified, but this is not usually found to be the case.

Two ideas seem to prevail widely among

Christians who have at heart the spread of the Gospel in foreign lands. I. That the mere multiplication of individuals called "missionaries" will further the object in view. II. That almost any man or woman who has been converted to God is fitted for this service. We are persuaded that both of these ideas are out of harmony with the teaching of Scripture, and therefore radically and wholly unsound. Doubtless they have been created and fostered by the statements and appeals of missionaries returned from other lands, who, deeply impressed by the appalling need, have allowed their feelings to run away with their judgment. We are convinced, however, that experience on the field has amply supported the teaching of Scripture.

Pastors and teachers among us should insist on the necessity for a call from God before one takes up such a solemn and responsible position as that of a preacher of the Gospel in other lands, and in dealing with those minded to go forth should satisfy themselves of the reality of such call before giving encouragement to the would-be missionary.

The Apostle Paul is the pattern for those who would give themselves wholly to the ministry of the Word and all who aspire to be missionaries, and the advisers of such may well ponder some of his sayings, such as 1 Cor. iv., 1, 9, 16; Gal. i. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 4, &c.

Since what so many insist on, viz., human authority in calling and training for the ministry, is denied among us, is it not incumbent on us to make clear to the minds of the spiritual that we have been called of the Lord to any special work to which we may put our hands? And, generally speaking, such a call will be readily discerned and thankfully acknowledged by the godly.

In no matter is it more important for elder brethren to heed the injunction to "lay hands suddenly on no man," than in this of service in other lands. A solemn obligation rests upon them thereanent. Commending for Christian fellowship is one thing, commending for service in the Gospel is quite another; yet to some of us it is clear that not a few leading Christians have failed to recognise this simple distinction.

Brethren and fathers in Christ, permit us to suggest to you that only proved men and women are likely to be of service in the Gospel abroad. First, there are spiritual and moral qualifications. Have those desiring to go forth given undoubted evidence of having been born again? Are they of unimpeachable character in the things of the world, having a good report of them that are without? (1 Tim. iii. 7). Have they shown steadfastness of purpose in a secular calling? Are they lovers of the Scriptures and of prayer? Among those of their own age, are they eminent for faith, zeal, and holiness? Are

they unselfish? Do they work well with fellow-labourers at home? Unless these questions can be answered unhesitatingly in the affirmative, in our judgment the time has not come for such to leave their present calling to go abroad as missionaries, and in this we believe most experienced and godly men will agree, and will feel responsible to act accordingly.

Christian character and soundness in the faith are of much importance. Most mission fields have seen sad instances of men and women who have made shipwreck of faith or morals. In this connection it may be said, fittingly, "Let these first be proved," and then encouraged to go forth. Then there are mental and physical qualifications to be considered. Is the brother or sister of average mental powers? Has he or she had an average education? Has he power of application of mind sufficient to enable him to work for many hours daily for many months to acquire a difficult language? Is there a clear and definite grasp of the facts and doctrines of Scripture? Is the brother or sister (for what we say applies to both) instructed in Church ordinances and order? (Matt. xxviii. 20). The foreign field is not the place to become established in doctrine. Can he, in an interesting and convincing way, impart the knowledge he possesses? Be it remembered that such seek to go forth not as Christians only, but more, as recognised teachers of Christianity.

And lastly, as to physical fitness. Are their bodily ailments such as would probably be accentuated by a trying climate and coarse and ill-cooked food? Should not all who contemplate service abroad seek medical advice as to their probable physical fitness? We do not lose sight of the fact that it is not always possible even for the wisest and most experienced man to say how certain constitutions may bear a strange climate. All that we plead for is the use of sanctified common-sense and a willingness to shoulder responsibility. Give time in thought and prayer to these great questions alone and in fellowship with others, and while encouraging any who give evidence of a call, and fitness for the work, do not hesitate to discourage the others. If this responsibility were generally recognised and acted upon among us, the hands of those who are already engaged in the preaching of the Gospel in other lands would be greatly strengthened.

Suffer, brethren, this word of exhortation. Consider what we say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

[The foregoing gives the matured judgment of several esteemed and experienced brethren labouring in the Gospel in foreign parts. Further correspondence on the subject is invited, and will be duly considered.—ED.]

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

THE CAUSE OF LACK OF POWER.—How is the lack of power and solemnity, and the fewness of conversions in present-day Gospel meetings, to be accounted for?

REGENERATION AND RENEWING.—What is "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost?" (Titus iii. 5). Is it a change of the old nature, or the implantation of something new, while the old remains unchanged and unchangeable?

GOD AS AUTHOR OF EVIL.—Will you kindly explain in *The Witness*, Isa. xlv. 7, In what sense does God create evil?

THE POSITION OF CONVERTED JEWS.

QUESTION 442.—Is it obligatory upon all converted Jews to give up the observance of the Mosaic ceremonial, and to live as Christians of the Gentiles, and worship with them; or have they the option of continuing as Christians the observance of Jewish customs and ritual?

Answer A.—It is necessary to notice that many of the present customs and ritual of the Jews are not synonymous with the true Mosaic ceremonial. This has been altered, added to, and modified by the Rabbis to make it correspond to altered circumstances. Even in our Lord's time, He had to say, "For laying aside the commandment of God ye hold the traditions of men" (see the whole portion of Mark vii. 1-23, also Matt. xv. 1-20); this state of things has become worse in the intervening 1900 years, and a converted Jew would scarcely continue in the laboured ritual which is certainly not the commandment of God.

Further, the true Mosaic ceremonial cannot now be carried out, as it stands in the closest connection with a Priesthood, an Altar, and a visible Temple, which were to be found only "in the place which the Lord God chose out of all the tribes to put His name there" (Deut. xii. 4, 11, 14, 18, 21, and 26); and since "the King has sent forth His armies and burned up the city" (Matt. xxii. 7), He has also, at the same time, made it impossible for Jews, converted or not, to observe the true Mosaic ceremonial. If, on the other hand, a converted Jew is led to do as Paul did, "become as a Jew unto the Jews, that he might gain the Jews" (1 Cor. ix. 20), who would forbid him? But there are limits in becoming as a Jew unto the Jews, and Peter—through fear—overstepping these limits at Antioch, brought upon himself a public and

necessary rebuke from Paul (Gal. ii. 2); thus it would seem to be not a matter of option, but rather of obedience to Scriptural principle. F.B.

Answer B.—It is not easy for us Gentiles to lay down the rule for converted Jews. Nor is it our business. It is laid down plainly for ourselves, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing" (Galatians v. 2). Of Mosaic ceremonial, it was settled in Acts xv. and xxi. 25, "that we observe no such thing;" and in Romans xiv., that we are not to judge our fellow-servants who do observe them.

Three distinct points are involved in the question:

First—Of Mosaic customs and ceremonies. Is it obligatory on all converted Jews to give up the observance of such? Romans xiv. makes it plain that this is not to be required in the case of such customs as are represented by abstinence from meats or the keeping of days. And even as to circumcision, the Apostle of the Gentiles saw it to be right to circumcise a Jewish convert, and also to take upon himself the Nazarite vow. Not that he did this as a matter of conscience toward God, for he well knew his liberty in Christ. But they were lawful to him, being a Jew, as part of God's law to Jews, and which had not formally been revoked; so that he could rightly do those for the sake of his brethren, who, not knowing their liberty, still thought them binding, and to whom his acting otherwise would be a stumbling-block.

Secondly—Of the ritual sacrifices. Here it was otherwise. Not only is there no longer the altar or place, but the Epistle to the Hebrews shows that to continue in these is virtually to deny the perfection and efficacy of the one sacrifice of Christ, the better thing to which they pointed as being yet to come.

Thirdly—As to worshipping with Christians of the Gentiles, Scripture is equally plain. Ephesians ii., iii. shows that the two are one in Christ, that in Him there is neither Jew nor Gentile, circumcision nor uncircumcision; and Romans xiv. teaches that any difference in their customs is not to be a barrier to their receiving one another. They are all members of one Body, partakers of the one Bread. There is no provision for a Church of Jews and a Church of Gentiles. There is no room for such things in God's order. Whatever is essential is common to all (Ephesians iii. 4, 6), and the differing customs call for the forbearing one another in love, whether on the part of Jew or Gentile (Romans xiv. 21). And this rule is enjoined on all who are fellow-servants of the same Lord to this day. w. c.

Editor's Note.—One of the objects for which Christ died was to gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Not "into one" locally, but in a deeper sense (Jno. xi. 52). "Other sheep," *i.e.*, not of the Jewish fold, were to be brought, and there was to be "one flock and one Shepherd" (Jno. x. 16). For this unity both in fact and in manifestation the Lord prayed (Jno. xvii. 11, 21), that the world may believe, &c. (ver. 21). In 1 Cor. xii. 13, we read of its accomplishment by the power of the Holy Spirit. All made "one body" whether Jew or Gentile. In this new creation standing there is neither "Greek nor Jew" (Col. iii. 11)—"as many as have been baptised into Jesus Christ have put on Christ; there is neither Jew nor Greek—ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 27, 28).

"He is our Peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, to make in Himself of twain one new Man" (Eph. ii. 14-18).

This great truth of the oneness of all believers by the indwelling Holy Spirit was virtually denied by Peter's action at Antioch. Hence Paul's censure, for it was "not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel." The question was as to *eating* with the Gentiles. To withdraw and no longer eat with them was building again the separate Jewish position, and contrary to the cardinal truth of this dispensation, *viz.*, "one in Christ." Three places are specially named in Acts, *viz.*, Jerusalem, Cesarea, Antioch. At Jerusalem the Word was to Jews only; at Cesarea, to Gentiles, and the fact that the grace which saved the Jews was free to save Gentiles also, was there set forth, the witness being a fresh and separate descent of the Holy Spirit. But at Antioch new conditions arose, and Paul is sent for as the fit vessel to deal with them. The result was a Church formed for the first time of Jews and Gentiles, meeting, worshipping, and eating together, upon equality of standing, as new creatures in Christ Jesus. To withdraw from this unity was a serious perversion of the truth recently revealed through Paul.

So drastic a change was not brought about at once. At Jerusalem it was probably not understood or acted upon; nor was it the Lord's mind that it should be pressed upon them, where, practically all being Jews, there was no occasion for it.

But, from internal evidence, it may be gathered that there were both Jews and Gentiles in all the Churches addressed in the Epistles, and to introduce an element that would have rendered it impossible to observe the Lord's Supper together, would have been "contrary to the truth of the Gospel." (See 1 Cor. x. 16, 20), "We, many, are one bread (loaf), one body, for

we are all partakers of that one bread." Thus the oneness of the Body of Christ is shown in eating together the Lord's Supper. In Rom. xiv. liberty is asserted as to individual matters. A Jew may observe the Law as to not eating unclean beasts, but this would not affect the expression of oneness in worship. Or he may observe the seventh day if he sees it fit, provided it does not interfere with his presence in the assembly on the first day of the week. On all points affecting individual action only it is asserted that one is not to judge another or to despise another.

It is a question of *knowledge*, whether as to Gentiles in matters relating to idol worship, or in Jews as to observance of ordinances. One in the full knowledge of the new dispensation will be *free* as to both (see 1 Cor. viii. 4-9 and Rom. xiv. 14). This knowledge is not to be forced upon the weak; but it is quite another thing to recognise a position which leaves no room for advance in the knowledge that would bring all into closer and happier fellowship in the Spirit.

As to circumcision, Paul's circumcision of Timothy was purely a matter of expediency, that he might have access to Jews as such. But his view of the matter is that the ordinance of circumcision is virtually an acceptance of obligation to keep the whole Law! A very serious position to take up, and theoretically implying a departure from standing on grace to standing on legal ground (Gal. v. 1-4).

Some argue from the course pursued by Paul in Acts xxi. that he thought it right to abide by the Jewish ritual, and to teach nothing contrary to the Law; but, without going into evidence as to whether Paul's journey to Jerusalem on that occasion, and his taking of the vow, were of the Lord, it is well to remember that it is the Apostolic *teachings* that are inspired and not their *actings*, though they were holy men of God.

But it is in the Epistle to the Hebrews that the final stroke is given to Jewish ordinances. In 2 Corinthians iii. 11 the whole Mosaic ceremonial is said to be "done away," and Hebrews shows that the shadow disappears because the substance has come. With the abolition of the temple, the altar, the sacrifice, the priesthood is no longer required—his work is done. The *whole ceremonial* goes as a thing superseded by what excels in glory. Circumcision is of the heart (Rom. ii. 29), purifying is of the conscience (Heb. ix. 14); all is now seen to be in the spirit and no longer in the letter. To settle down in subjection to even a portion of the ceremonial typical observances, as though they were compatible with the full light of the new dispensation, seems to me to be deplorable. It will be found to be putting new wine into old bottles—the new wine will be *lost*.

A LIVING SACRIFICE.

Notes of an Address by Dr. NEATBY at Inverurie Conference.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans xii. 1).

IT is not a legal commandment that we have here. God has a right to command, absolutely, imperatively; but here He beseeches—beseeches us by the "mercies of God," and these in the Epistle to the Romans are neither few nor far between. This verse follows immediately after the parenthesis of three chapters, and therefore is linked on to the eighth as well as to the eleventh. What mercies are in the eighth chapter! "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" is the beginning. A place in Christ before God! How little any of us has apprehended it! The only way we can apprehend it is by keeping close to Christ in our experience, by walking in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such mercies are not even felt apart from a living communion with the person of Christ. The believer lost his former place *in* and *like* Adam—a rebellious creature of God turned out of a garden of delights. I, one of his race, was *in* Adam. Is it now a fact that I am in Christ? An entire change, root and branch—in Christ, and in Christ before God, not for one thing, but for all things! It is pure grace, mercy unspeakable, one of "the mercies of God." We seek the cause of it in the heart of God; it was His blessed will to give us that place in Christ. God sees us there, and nowhere else. If that is not a mercy by which God may beseech, where shall we find one? And God beseeches by such a mercy as this, that we should present our bodies a living sacrifice, that we should give all over into the hands of God, that we should be content that God do all for us, that God should give us poverty or riches as He sees fit. If He gives me poverty I shall accept it from Him, and be content to say with the apostle, "I have all things, and abound." "I have learned in whatsoever state therewith to be content." If He gives me riches, it is to use them all for Him. It would not be such an idol to some of us as it

is if it were all used for Him. You have not a penny of your own; it is all "another man's," as we are taught in the Gospel by Luke (chap. xvi. 11, 12). It is your Master's, it is your Lord's, and the day is coming when you will have to account for all the pennies and the pounds. Perhaps we, my friends, do not like this giving account, but it will come. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," and we cannot appear by proxy there. All will be seen just as it is, and as God sees it now. Do not suppose that because Christ has stood in the judgment for us, that the judgment-seat of Christ means nothing. It means something intensely real. All God's ways will be justified before the judgment-seat. All your course as a Christian, all your use of what God has committed to you—all will be manifested.

About presenting the body: In the 6th chapter the members of the body are spoken of. Verse 13: "Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." "Yield" in Greek is the same word as "present." You are exhorted to yield your members—eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, to God for His use, to serve His ends—to yield them all individually. Here in the 12th chapter it is "Present your *bodies*—the whole man—a living sacrifice." It implies the whole being in our course down here; yet it is worthy of remark the word "present" is in the aorist tense which signifies a definite act. If I have not presented my body I am exhorted to do it once for all. I *may* not be faithful, alas! I may go back, and "defile the head of" my consecration. If I do I need to do it again, but *it is a definite act*—presenting it definitely to God. If you have never once presented yourself bodily to God a living sacrifice, by His grace do it now. Never use your tongue any more to insinuate anything about your brother to his disadvantage but to your own advantage. Never speak in such a way as, if the Lord were to walk into the room, you would be ashamed of what you were saying. I think I hear some one say, "That seems rather

irksome!" Irksome! It is heaven on earth. If you do not like it, think twice about going to heaven. It is His will they do in heaven, "hearkening to the voice of His word." Ah! I know a little, a very little, in my own experience, that it is Beulah land, heaven upon earth, to know Him *near*, to do everything as in *His sight*; to write a letter or read a book as if He were looking over the shoulder and seeing what is written—what is read!

Present your bodies. Roll it all over upon God. Let Him act, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. You are responsible—yes, indeed, you are!—but it is God who worketh in us. "It is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father." This is of those going through persecution, but let *me* avail myself of it! Oh! if God will but speak now to all our hearts it will be the inner sanctuary, the holy of holies!

We are all cleansed lepers here. I am. If any of you is not a cleansed leper, then in very deed you are "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." The Saviour calls you out to taste His love in cleansing from all sin. A part of the cleansing of the leper was the placing of the blood of the trespass offering on the right ear, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the great toe of the right foot. What a beautiful type it is of God's grace!—the whole man taken possession of by the blood of the trespass offering. The blood of Christ is put where the communications of God enter to control the whole man. The Word having got entrance by the ear, the ear is now marked by the blood of the trespass offering. The whole man is claimed by the blood of Christ, but over the blood there was the oil. The foundation is the death of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit seals that. He is the energy—the power by which it is all made good in the ear, the hand, and the foot. The inner man, the activities of life, and the walk are all consecrated to God by the blood of Christ and the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

We have nothing to do, then, but receive. God fashions and I am fashioned. God gives and I receive. That is faith. What a

rich field is before us if we are prepared to present our bodies a living sacrifice! What rare fruits! No more care. Cares are put with the unclean birds that steal away the Word. Be careful for nothing. Anxiety is an awful sin against a Father's love. Is God Father? Is it a mere idea, or is it a fact? Has God the feelings—infinite and perfect—that belong to the relationship of a Father? I know how I feel towards my children, and by that feeling He makes us know His holy and infinite love to His children. He, who does not let the sparrow fall to the ground without His care, numbers the hairs of the head of His children. *He is a real Father.* When I was a child I put my hand into my father's and allowed him to take me where he thought fit. He took care of everything, and I never grieved my father by putting my hand into my pocket to pay for any expenses. What a happy thing it is to walk for a day without care—caring only to please God and do His will—no anxiety about the future, thank God. Present the body, and every member of it—I would too—holy, acceptable unto God, our reasonable service.

THE ETERNAL FUTURE OF MEN.

PART III.

By JOHN SCOTT, Shrewsbury.

THE FUTURE OF REPROBATE MEN AND REBELS.

WE must not reason about this exceedingly solemn and awful subject. God alone knows, and He has told us in His holy Word. Unto this we are bound to listen, and to this alone, if we desire to know the truth.

The great Creator proclaimed from the throne on which He sits, "Behold, I make all things new . . . I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." Then He immediately says: "But (simultaneously with this scene of eternal glory and blessing) the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, have their part

in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." The lake of fire is the final and eternal prison and place of punishment for the devil, and fallen angels, and reprobate men.

THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION.

Throughout this marvellous book we see, in the visions of God, a panorama of prophetic history wherein things are wrought out to their ultimate issues. False religion is seen culminating in the great whore, self-will and irreligion resulting in the antichrist, and spiritualism ripening up to the false prophet, with his astounding Satanic miracles. Then we see in the Revelation the whole affairs of the earth righteously adjudicated, wound up, settled off, and finally finished by the Judge of all the earth who doeth right.

In order that we may be able to grasp the full meaning of the words our God uses, in relation to the final settlement of the matters of earth, He is careful that we may understand the terms He uses, and the infinitude of the future into which the history of this earth leads. There is a phrase in the Greek New Testament, of frequent occurrence in the Revelation, marking definitely the infinitude of the future of men. The words are: "ἐἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων." This phrase of five Greek words is almost uniformly translated by the four English words, "For ever and ever," both in the Authorised and in the Revised Versions. These words are used by God to describe or measure His own unending life.

First, Rev. iv. 9: "And when those living creatures (τὰ ζῶα) give glory, and honour, and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth *for ever and ever*."

Second, Rev. iv. 10: "The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth *for ever and ever*."

Third, Rev. x. 5, 6: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth *for ever and ever*, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein."

Fourth, Rev. xv. 7: "And one of the four living creatures (ζῶον) gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth *for ever and ever*." This phrase, given four times as the measure of the duration of the infinite, unending life of God, must manifestly mean absolute eternity.

THE ETERNITY OF TORMENT.

In Rev. xiv. 9-11 we read: "If any man worship the beast [θηριον, beast of prey] and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*," or as long as God lives. Having settled the appalling doom of the millions who receive the antichrist, the Lord our God proceeds to judge the false professions of Christianity throughout professing Christendom. The record of this is found in Rev. xix. 1-3: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are His judgments; for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up *for ever and ever*."

A third commitment to eternal torment is recorded. Rev. xx. 10: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast (θηριον) and the false prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*"—that is, as long as God lives. The sinners who are placed on the left hand of the Son of Man, in Matthew xxv., are sent away to this great prison of the devil and his angels, more than a thousand years before he himself is cast in there. We read their awful sentence in verse 41 of that chapter: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Κολασιν, torment)—Matt. xxv. 46).

A GREAT WHITE THRONE.

This is the great assize of the dead, and is the last august scene in the winding up of earth's matters. It takes place at the extreme limit of the duration of "the heavens and the earth which are now." This session, which must necessarily continue for a long period, will be held in the interval between the present economy and the manifestation of the new heavens and the new earth which are seen in the opening verses of the next chapter.

It is a great throne, for its adjudications and decisions are for eternity, and there is no appeal from its solemn and weighty awards. It is so great that its authority extends over all generations of men, from Cain unto the last man who died on the earth. It is so universal in its jurisdiction that it embraces all ranks, all races, and all nations and languages of men on all the face of the earth.

It is a white throne, for not one unjust sentence will ever proceed from it to dim its holy lustre. So white is it that not one failure will mark its entire administration, nor one spot mar its history. There will be no missing links in the evidence; the opened books will reveal every relevant fact in the life of each individual, and the very motives which brought about the works which make up the history of each man and woman will be clearly seen in the brightness of the light which emanates from the throne.

A VAST ASSEMBLING.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. xx. 12). Nimrod, the mighty hunter, and the little man whose name is never heard, will be there. Pharaoh and his miserable minions who murdered the little babes will be there; Jezebel, and those wretched perjurers who helped to bring about the judicial murder of Naboth; Herodias, and her gay daughter—all, all are there.

The judgment will be most searching and most discriminating, for twice over the solemn narrative says: "They were judged

every one according to their works." "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (*ᾅδης*) delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. xx. 13. "Death," here, no doubt means where the bodies lie in the stillness and silence of death the churchyards, the cemeteries, the battlefields, and all places where the dead are. Hades also, the temporary prison of disembodied, reprobate men, delivers up those who are in it. The rich man of Luke xvi. will certainly be delivered up, and will be judged at this last great assize.

THE APPALLING DOOM.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). The Scripture does not tell us how many or how few were found written in the book of life in that immense assembly, but it does tell us that whosoever was not found written there was cast into the lake of fire. This is a final testimony that not one, from Adam to the end of the world, is saved on the ground of his works—the book of life is the book of the Lamb slain.

The lake of fire is *for ever and ever*. From it there is no exit. When the devil is cast into this prison, we read the terrible sentence pronounced over him, and all those with him, in that hopeless place. "They shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*"—that is, as long as God lives.

In this dismal prison the whole of the reprobates of this earth, and the devil and his angels, and the angels that sinned who were cast down to Tartarus, and are now there in chains, reserved unto the judgment of the great day, only whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, will be eternally immured.

Outside the boundaries of this terrible lake unto the remotest part of creation the benign light and the blessed sway of our Lord Jesus Christ, and those He has redeemed by His blood, shall shine and prevail, without a discordant sound or an adverse thought, *FOR EVER AND EVER*, and "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

LORD, give a larger heart and a holier to me.—A. BONAR.

CHRIST COMING AGAIN.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL, Author of "God's Chosen People," "Because ye Belong to Christ," &c.

PART II.

IN connection with an incomplete Gospel, and in order to put some meaning upon the many Scriptures that speak of the Lord's coming, another theory had to be invented, which has been, and is still, very generally held, viz., that the Lord comes at death to each believer—that, practically, to you and me the Lord's coming will be at death.

I would like, once for all, to explode that theory. To begin with, nowhere in Scripture is death called His coming: death is called the believer's departure "to be with Christ." We are not told much about it. There are not many Scriptures that give us any information about the intermediate state of the believer between death and the resurrection; but there are two leading ones. Philippians i. 23:

"To depart, and to be with Christ, which is [very] far better;"

and the other in 2 Corinthians v. Read verse 4:

"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

You see the point there? The one reason why the apostle does not wish instantly to die is that death is not victory, therefore he rather desires the resurrection moment, when death shall be swallowed up of life.

Verses 5 and 6:

"Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God. . . . Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."

There is a play upon the word "home" here that does not come out in our translation. It might read:

"Whilst we are *at home* in the body, we are *from home* from the Lord."

"We are confident and willing rather to be from home from the body and to be at home with the Lord, wherefore we labour that whether at home or from home we may be 'well-pleasing unto Him'."

Thus you see it is distinctly taught that the believer "absent from the body is at home with the Lord." If you were asked

to-night to sleep at Windsor Castle in the Royal residence, and when you got there were shown into a beautifully-furnished room, with everything very comfortable for your reception. "Oh," you would say, "it is all very nice and pretty, and very comfortable, but I am not at home here." But new-born spirits, begotten of God, in the surroundings of the Father's house, will be at home at once.

"There no stranger God shall meet thee—
Stranger thou in courts above.
He who to His rest shall greet thee,
Greets thee with a well-known love."

The moment a believer closes his eyes in death, he is at home with the Lord. Said a mother to her dying girl once: "Jeannie, you'll soon be in the dark valley." "Na, na, mother, I'll soon be past it." She knew that all the darkness was here. The well-known Dr. Cumming of London once said: "Away in the far north there is a region where the beams of the rising sun of the morning meet and mingle with the beams of the setting sun of evening." And many a time on the death-bed of a believer the very brightness of the glory that he was entering shone in before the brightness of his testimony here had died out.

It is a reality that death is abolished and life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel. Blessed Gospel! Is there anything like it under the sun? The *Vedas*, the *Korans*, and all the so-called sacred books of men, have they ever shed one ray of light into the darkness of the tomb? No; nothing but the blessed Gospel of a crucified Christ; a risen Christ: an almighty Christ in the presence of God: and a coming Christ with resurrection power, can lighten up the darkness of the tomb. When He comes death shall be finally and eternally abolished as regards all who are His, for He is the resurrection and the life.

I have often stood by the grave and helped to lower the mortal remains of loved ones into their last resting-place, and one thought has ever come in upon my soul and comforted me, and it is this, as I hear the cold clod falling on the coffin lid, this is the last that sin and Satan can possibly do. There is nothing more. The next is the shout

that shall call them from the grave to the glory of the Lord. I want to dwell a little on that. Look with me to 1st Corinthians xv. 47-51:

"The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery."

We might paraphrase it, "Behold, I tell you a secret." That is about the sense of it. It means, "Behold, I am going to show you something that has never been spoken of before." You say, "Is that so?" Yes, it is just so. There is an aspect of the hope of the Lord's coming spoken of minutely by the Apostle Paul that is not to be found in any other part of Scripture.

"Behold, I show you a mystery." This was not what he had learned by studying the Old Testament Scriptures: it was what had been revealed to him by the Lord Jesus Himself. Verses 51 and 52:

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

A *change*, mark you, that is equivalent to death and resurrection. Because flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of God, therefore the necessity for this change.

"In a *moment*." Oh, a moment! That is too long. "In the *twinkling of an eye*." That is less than a moment. I asked an electrical engineer once how long it took the electric current to bring a message from Australia. He thought a moment or two and then said, "About three-sixteenths of a second!" About three-sixteenths of a second! Well, you go out to Australia, and you travel in one of the fastest vessels that plough the ocean, and you take six weeks to go, and you begin to think what rate a current can travel at so as to give you intelligently a message over all these thousands of miles in three-sixteenths of a second, and you say you cannot understand it—you can hardly take it in: yet we know it is a fact of every-day experience.

That shows us what rapidity there is in God's actings. With Him "a thousand

years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years." He is a patient and a long-suffering God. He has waited thousands of years, not willing that any should perish. But, oh! when God's moment comes, "in the twinkling of an eye," from the right hand of the throne will He descend who is "the Resurrection and the Life," and the dead in Christ shall be raised and the living shall be changed. What a marvellous change! And all caught up, one glorified company, to meet the Lord in the air, and to be for ever with Himself. He does not say, "I will come again and take you to heaven," that is true, but that is not all; nor is it, "I will come again and take you where you will be free from all evil, and sorrow, and pain." That, also, is true, but that is not all; it is, "I will receive you to MYSELF." It is to be with Himself. It is to see Him as He is; it is to gaze on that Face, "which was so marred, more than any man's"; it is to see that Brow, which was crowned with thorns; it is to look on those Hands, that were nailed to Calvary's cross; it is to see Him as He is; it is to be with Him in blessed companionship, and that for ever; and it is to be perfected in His likeness, so that every one of us shall fully reflect His image. This is "the blessed Hope."

I once heard about three brethren who were conversing together about the coming of the Lord, and the question was asked, "What do you think is the brightest and most blessed part of the prospect?" One said, "Well, I think it is that we shall *see Him as He is*." Another said, "I think it is that we shall be *with Him*"; and the third said, "I think it is that we shall be *like Him*." Now, there's a puzzle: Which is the most blessed? But, oh! when we put them all together, and consider that they are to happen in one blessed "moment," "in the twinkling of an eye," then who shall say that this is not the "blessed Hope"!

Oh! how is it that any earthly hope, or any earthly ambition, can claim our hearts for five minutes with such a hope as that before us. We walk as if we were befogged in unbelief—we don't half believe it. But, oh! if we were waiting, watching, looking,

expecting the Son from heaven, the glory of that Hope would dim every earthly pleasure and prospect. May God open our eyes to behold that glorious prospect! May God reveal to us that blessed Son, and reveal Him *in us*, so that our hearts may be set on the coming glory!

Let us look again at this 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, verses 52 and 53:

"For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

What is the difference? Those that are dead are corrupting; those that are living are mortal; those that are in their graves, the corruptible, put on incorruption; those that are alive, and mortal, put on immortality, so that the whole redeemed resurrection company are incorruptible and immortal. Sin, death, mortality, corruption can never lay a finger upon us again. Thus is mortality swallowed up of life. We have life—eternal life—and it is our privilege not only to have it, but to have it "more abundantly." Who shall say we have this eternal life in us as abundantly as we ought to have? But though we had it ever so abundantly, it could not be said that mortality was swallowed up of life. Nay, it would make me groan all the more, because of the presence of a body of sin and death. But when the Lord comes, and speaks that quickening word, death is swallowed up in victory, and mortality is swallowed up of life. When a thing is swallowed up you see no more of it. Thank God! That is the end of it for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I can quite understand a man who has suffered much—a man whose sufferings have been long continued, weakness of body, or great temptation and trial, one suffering great reproach and distress—I can understand a person under such circumstances hoping for death as a deliverer: but it is not natural to man to set death before him as a hope. Death is "the last enemy," and it is an enemy to the last. Death is not a friend, though poets may picture it so. Death is an enemy, whose worst can be turned into blessing to us.

If I saw a snake, a deadly viper, coming

up that passage there, making straight for me, I would loathe it, I would hate it even though I knew assuredly that its fangs were drawn. Our whole nature shrinks from and abhors death. It cannot be otherwise; and when a dear one dies, even when we know that they are happier far, still we weep, we groan, and we cannot help it. No, death was never meant to be a hope.

Paul undoubtedly was a great sufferer, perhaps the greatest sufferer of all the Lord's servants. He says: "I am in a strait betwixt two. I have a desire to depart." Ninety-nine out of a hundred cannot, and do not, say this. But the coming of the Lord is the blessed Hope.

There are three instances in the Gospel where the Lord Jesus raised the dead. One was the daughter of Jairus, a little girl twelve years of age, who had just died. Another was the widow's son, a young man who was being carried on a bier and on the way to the grave. The third was Lazarus, who had been four days dead, and whose body, according to nature, was stinking. These are three degrees, and they are not without meaning. One was a child, the other a young man, and the third probably a middle-aged man, showing that the resurrection power of the Lord Jesus Christ can meet death in all its stages and under all its aspects.

But what I specially refer to this for is to point out to you that when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus He delivered the child to her parents and withdrew, saying, "Give her to eat." When He raised the widow's son He delivered him to his mother and withdrew. When He raised up Lazarus the next place we see him is seated at the table with his two sisters, and the Lord Jesus eating and drinking with them. What does that tell us? If anyone has a doubt about mutual recognition in resurrection, send your doubts to the winds. It was the very joy of the Lord Jesus to behold their joy as He restored the links that death had severed. That is His recompense, that is His delight. Oh! why didn't He take that young man to His embrace? Because He knew the widow's heart, and He knew the joy that it would give her to embrace her son again. That is the joy of the Lord

Jesus when He comes. What a joyful coming! What a greeting! What a re-union! What blessed, eternal intercourse about the way He has led us! How he provided for the widow and the orphan! How He came in and helped and cared for us, and all will be to the glory of Him who loved us unto death, and who exercises all His infinite Godhead power now and for ever on our behalf.

I heard a story about a son who had been long away abroad. I don't know how or why, but he came back without giving any intimation of his coming. He had left as a young lad; he returned as a full-grown man with moustache and beard. When he entered into his mother's house he knew her perfectly well, for there was not much change on her, but she did not recognise him in the least. He stood still and allowed her to look at him, but she could not make it out. "Don't you know your son?" Instantly she recognised him, and her arms were round about him. I am quite sure of this, that many of us will be much changed for the better in resurrection. All the wrinkles will, somehow, be smoothed out, and all the lamenesses and deformities will be gone for ever, for the work of the Lord Jesus will be perfect work, and there will neither be "spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," when He comes.

There will be great changes, but we will not be unrecognisable; we will know one another, and will sit down with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob; and, as it has been said,

"The saints will be there, both the great and the small,

And I shall shake hands with the blessed St. Paul."

But, oh! the more blessed part of it will be that every eye will first be turned on Him who is the "chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely."

In the First Epistle of Paul to the Thesalonians, chapter iv., verse 8, we read:

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

The Holy Spirit is called the Comforter, and I do seek, above all things, that any ministry God permits me to exercise may be to comfort. There are some men whose

ministry makes you sore:—they never heal. But this is a *comforting* Hope, and not only so, but the Lord says:

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with Me."

It is an *encouraging* Hope—encouraging us to serve, and to serve diligently; to go on in patience, waiting in the power of that blessed Hope for His coming again. It is also a *sanctifying* Hope, for it is written:

"He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as Christ is pure."

Mark, it does not say he *ought* to purify himself, but it says he *does* purify himself. If I am not purifying myself, if I am not seeking to grow in grace and in holiness, then it proves that this hope is not in power in my soul. But if I am waiting, looking, expecting, longing for the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I may see Him, and be with Him, and be like Him, then my life will tell it. It will be an unworldly, unselfish life, lived for Him for whom in patience I am waiting.

To be followed by "Christ Reigning," also a series of papers on "Inspiration," "Atonement," and other Foundation Truths.

TAKE ME BY THE ARMS.

"I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms" (Hosea xi. 3).

○ TENDER Father, take me by the arms—
"Teach me to go."

I am a little child—fears and alarms

Distress me so.

Uphold me, and direct my tottering feet,

For I am weak,

Willful, and wayward, full of vain conceit—

Can't walk or speak.

O take me by the arms; the waves I see,

Boist'rous and wild,

Like him of old who sought to walk to Thee—

A faithless child.

I've ventured on the waters, and I quake;

Shield me from harms.

Teach me to go, my Father dear, and take

Me by the arms.

Let me not wander from the narrow way,

But keep me still

Close to Thyself, seeking from day to day

To do Thy will.

O may I ne'er to this vain world go back,

With all its charms;

"Teach me to go" in Faith's unwavering track,

Held by Thy arms.

MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS VIII.—PAPER X.

G L O R I F I E D.

By W. H. BENNET.

THOSE whom God justifies He *glorifies*. So unquestionable is this, that in Romans viii. 30 the past tense is used, as of a thing already accomplished—"Whom He justified, them He also glorified." The purpose of God being unchangeable, He can call things which are not as though they were. Each of the comprehensive words of this verse is a golden link of a chain that can never be broken—a chain that stretches from the eternal past into the eternal future, everlasting to everlasting upon them that "The lovingkindness of the Lord is from fear him" (Psa. ciii. 17)—*from* everlasting in purpose and design, *to* everlasting in rich fruit of blessing to His redeemed and glory to Himself. He sees the end from the beginning, takes into account all that can ever come to pass, and fully provides for the carrying out of His holy will.

Dr. Handley Moule well remarks: "It seems difficult, without violence to both the letter and spirit of this passage, to deny that it represents the salvation of 'the children of God' as a line drawn from eternity to eternity: first, a sovereign choice of souls; then the call of the chosen, resulting in their Faith and their acceptance; then the final entrance on heavenly bliss of these same called ones; and also their note and characteristic now—love of God."

God who has glorified "His own Son" will with Him glorify those whom He owns as His brethren. The prayer of the Lord, "*Father, glorify Thy Son,*" was answered by His being raised from the dead and exalted to God's right hand, and the glorifying of "the many sons" involves their being brought into the same resurrection state, either by being *changed* or *raised from the dead* (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). Of "every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on Him," and who thus eats His flesh and drinks His blood, and receives eternal life, the Lord says, "I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 40, 54). The apostle Paul, like his Master, dwelt much on resurrection. He declared that God who raised up the Lord "will also raise up us by His own power," and earnestly

enforced the blessed truth when some denied it (1 Cor. vi., xv.; see also 2 Cor. iv., v.).

Long after Paul's course was finished the apostle John wrote: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be"; but we know that "we shall be like Him." That also is the "hope" which the apostle Paul specially cherished: "As we have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*"; and again he tells us that the Lord, as SAVIOUR, "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, *that it may be conformed to the body of His glory*" (Phil. iii. 21).

Though we cannot take in what this means till we "see Him as He is," we may note some unquestionable features of our future blessedness. In the resurrection body will be found no memorial of the havoc wrought by sin. Every trace of the mortal and corruptible will be banished—mortality will be swallowed up of life; incorruption will take the place of what is corruptible. The "*natural* body," which, even in its sinless state, was only suited to an *earthly* paradise, will give place to a "*spiritual* body" fitted for that "kingdom of God" which "flesh and blood cannot inherit." A body with no trace of weakness, and a mind that shall never become weary, will be subservient to a heart that shall never fail in its full response to infinite love and its perfect devotedness to Him who has redeemed us for Himself. Ignorance, too, will be numbered amongst the things that have "passed away," for "then shall I know, even as also I am known." We shall know God, and our knowledge will beget lowliness and worship. We shall *know*, and we shall be *learning*, and surely our chief subject of adoring contemplation will be the CROSS, and the LOVE therein expressed. It will still be the Holy Spirit's delight to unfold the Father and the Son to willing learners, and thus to deepen that fellowship which through His renewing grace is already ours (1 John i. 3).

We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," and of that glory grace is the pledge, for he who receives *grace* will obtain *glory* too (Psalm lxxxiv. 11). We cannot scrutinise the counsels of God, but we can know whether the grace that bringeth salvation is dear to our hearts, and whether He

by whom that grace came is the object of our trust, and love, and devotion. Grace is the bud of which glory is the full-blown flower, and so Peter speaks of the very glory as "the *grace* that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ," and Jude exhorts believers to be "looking for the *mercy* of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Those who are "prepared unto glory" are "vessels of *mercy*," and this they gratefully own. Christ could say of Paul, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me"; Paul's account of Himself was that He "obtained *mercy*." The sense of the riches of God's mercy which will be ours, when we first behold our Lord and shine in His image, will far surpass the present experience of the most advanced saint of God. Beautifully is this expressed in the verse,

"How shall I meet those eyes?
Mine on Himself I cast,
And own myself the Saviour's prize—
Mercy from first to last!"

"The Lord will *give* grace and glory." The glory will be as truly a gift as the grace. He does not bestow grace and leave us to earn glory. The Lord Jesus said, "The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them." Of that gift He was worthy; the grace that makes *us* worthy to shine in His glory is all of Himself. So in the words of the risen Lord to the Churches we have the word *give* several times. To the overcomer He will "give to eat of the tree of life," will "give to eat of the hidden manna," will "give the crown of life," will "give a white stone," will "give power over the nations," and, finally, "to him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." It is indeed those who overcome that receive these gifts; but *gifts* they are nevertheless to those who will never allow the thought that they have merited anything.

May we, while cherishing the hope of glory, have an ever-deepening sense of the grace that is already ours, and prove its power so to discipline our hearts as to lead us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," and thus "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"!

ABISHAI, ONE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

PAPER IV.

THE faithfulness of Abishai is now to be subjected to a new test. He had been with David in rejection, and with David reigning in Hebron. But the throne itself is now to be assailed, and the enemies of king David are in such overwhelming numbers that David resolves on a precipitate flight from Jerusalem. "The people increased continually with Absalom" (2 Sam. xv. 12). How would all this affect Abishai? Which side would he take? The question does not seem to have given him any trouble. It was a time of crisis in Israel. Great issues might depend on what attitude a leader such as Abishai would assume. The undecided are always more or less swayed by the determined action of men who have convictions, and who have the courage to act in accordance with those convictions. Abishai at once took his stand with the Lord's anointed. With him it was no matter of counting up the opposing forces. The people might increase with Absalom until, in the language of Hushai, they could be compared to the sand that is by the sea for multitude (chap. xvii. 11). But the question of numbers had no weight whatever with Abishai. His path was perfectly simple. Wherever David was, there would Abishai be.

In a critical time the first thing for a leader among God's people is to settle in the presence of God *what is the right thing to do*. He is not called upon to sit down and estimate the strength of the opposing forces, and then shape his course accordingly. To act in that way would be merely carnal policy—a very different thing from the leading of God. In the history of the Lord's people and of assembly life there have been times of panic and alarm—times, it may be, in which the saints were called upon to support some new religious movement, or some new ecclesiastical system. The "sheep" were perplexed, and naturally looked for some definite lead from those whom they acknowledged as "shepherds" of the flock. Very much depended on the action and example of those

shepherding ones. We all know how a wrong step by some determined leader has been the means of leading many into a yoke of bondage. But we also know, and rejoice to know, how the quiet Abishai-like steadfastness of leading brethren has been owned of God in preserving many from the snare of the fowler. They perceived—what “the many” failed to perceive—that the new system was bound up with untold dangers, and would inevitably substitute the will of man for the will of God. A large number of believers have proved all this in the sad school of experience; but a much larger number have learned it through “the guides”—those who weighed the new system in the balances of Scripture, and found it wanting. Let our prayer be that our God will bless His heritage more abundantly with “guides” who shall always be ready to act with a single eye for Him—men who, in periods of difficulty, shall have “understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chron. xii. 32).’

In the flight from Jerusalem Abishai comes somewhat prominently before us in an incident that occurred at a place called Bahurim (2 Sam. xvi. 5). At that spot a man named Shimei suddenly appeared, and cursed David with a grievous cursing. We never hear of Shimei before this time. He seems to be a type of those in the present day whose voice is never heard except when a company of God’s people are in the throes of a revolution of one kind or another. *Then* their chance comes. It is their “hour,” and also, we fear, “the power of darkness.” They were “nobody” during all the time that David reigned. They did not dare to utter what was in their heart. But they will be “somebody” now. The *rejection* of God’s anointed gives them their chance, if not to reign, at least to curse—although they may call it “delivering their soul as those who are called to be faithful.” But little did Shimei think how near he was to death while he thus cast his reproaches at David, and that he was indebted for his own life to the forbearance of the man he was slandering. Israel’s king might be cast down, but he was not forsaken; for we read, even as the cursing proceeded, that “all the mighty men were on his right hand and on

his left” (chap. xvi. 6). Abishai, one of these mighty men, saw no reason why this cursing should continue. He accordingly addresses David: “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.” This was no idle boast. The man who in a later day delivered David himself in a moment of peril, by slaying a Philistine giant (chapter xxi. 17), could easily have made good his words concerning the cursing Shimei. The king did not doubt the ability of his trusted captain to cut short the reproaches of “this Benjamite.” But David, in closer touch with God, seemed instinctively to feel that Abishai’s proposal was a counsel of carnal wisdom—a taking of the case out of God’s hand, instead of receiving even the cursings of Shimei as a rod of divine chastisement. We may here see that the zeal even of a good man is not always according to knowledge. Abishai, with all his courage and devotion, was lacking in that fineness of perception which was characteristic of David. He submitted to the king’s decision to let Shimei alone. We have no reason, however, to believe that he saw it to be the more excellent way, for on David’s victorious return Abishai proposes that the sword of judgment should now fall on the man who cursed the Lord’s anointed. But it is a day of victory, and the vengeance suggested by Abishai is ruled more out of season than ever. There are those to-day who are valiant for God, but who, nevertheless, are not to be depended on in a matter requiring *delicate spiritual perception*. Great men are not always wise. A believer may be reckoned great in the gift of utterance, and be acknowledged as one who is effective in ministry, and yet be sadly deficient in perceiving the mind of God in a trying hour. “Discernment” in the things of God seems to be a special gift. Perhaps, like wisdom, it is with the lowly.

The Absalom rebellion, which was of very short duration, served this purpose at least—it tested the professed followers of David. Abishai, when he was tried, came forth as gold. His faithfulness was duly acknowledged; for, in the battle of the wood of Ephraim, he had a separate command, consisting of a third part of David’s army. We

know how "the stars in their courses" fought against Absalom. The servants of David were victors on that stricken field, where Absalom was no more. As he had been slain by Joab in direct violation of the king's commandment, we are not surprised to find that David contemplated the appointment of a new captain of the host instead of Joab. We need not follow the successive commanders. We simply pause to point out that Abishai was not promoted to the chief position. Why was this? No disparagement of Abishai is involved in our answer. Every man has his measure, and it is nothing to a man's discredit if certain things are beyond that measure. Abishai had his limitations. Within these limitations he could act, yea, and do valiantly for David and for the cities of his God. To have placed him in a position that was beyond the measure of his ability could only have proved disastrous to himself and to all concerned. Perhaps no one knew this better than David. It may be that Abishai knew it himself. This much is certain, that he appears always to have served cheerfully within the limitations imposed upon him by the king.

In the sphere of public service for Christ happy are they who know their own limitations. It is said of a great musician who died not long ago, that the secret of his uniform success lay in this—he knew his limitations, and never attempted work that lay beyond his "boundary line." If this salutary rule—this scriptural principle—were more generally acted upon in the domain of the Lord's work, we are convinced there would be more effective service and more "signs following." w. s.

DOUBTFUL THINGS.

In this country the prisoner gets the benefit of the doubt, and is dismissed. This is God's arrangement in regard to doubtful things. If you are "not sure whether there is harm in this," God's Word says, have nothing to do with it—in other words, give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt and dismiss him at once. Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. Let every man be fully persuaded.

THE SCOPE OF SALVATION.—III.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

"Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation, if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet. ii. 2, 3, R.V.)

WE now come to the third aspect of salvation, as seen in the First Epistle of Peter, and I beg the reader's careful attention to the reading from the Revised Version, quoted above, which is attested in this particular by many others who are competent to speak on points of criticism. There is then a present growing up unto salvation, and this growth is produced by the taking in of nourishment which is here called "the spiritual milk which is without guile."

What that "salvation" is, I take it, is unfolded in the rest of the chapter. It involves separation from the whole course of things down here—moral detachment from those principles which make up that system of evil called "the world." It means a going out to Christ, and becoming *with Him* a rejected stone, disallowed indeed of men, content to have the sweet assurance that *with Him* we too "are chosen of God and precious." It means a being built up in that character a spiritual house, where we can exercise collectively the privileges of a holy priesthood, and be strengthened to go out—to go back into the world, where we are now "strangers and pilgrims"—to exercise the responsibilities of "the royal priesthood"—that is, to show forth the *virtues* (margin) of Him who has called out of darkness into His marvellous light.

"Salvation," then, in this character, is a present answer to the purposes of God in His saints, that they might be *for Him* in this scene, a people for His possession, not in sentiment, but in reality and truth.

The opening verses show how this is reached. They were to get the teaching of God, to draw the Divine nourishment *direct* out of the breast—drinking out of the "Fountain," and not merely out of "cups." And this is the grand secret of growth. John pursues the same method, commending babes to the Anointing which abides in the saints, that they might be taught thereby;

surely not to set aside oral instruction, through Divinely qualified teachers. His epistle is evidence to the contrary. But then, the great end of outward teaching is to lead the saints to that teaching which is inward. When people begin to worship the teacher, the principle of "system" is already introduced. Thus, in Eph. iv., the outward edification through gifted men, who are Christ's love-gifts to His Body, is to put the whole body in a state to "edify *itself* in love."

There may be too much ministry as well as too little. If saints were in a healthy state, they would need to break to each other only a little of the heavenly bread for their mutual refreshment when they come together. The great Melchizedek Himself is in our midst, the Minister of the Sanctuary, to feed us with that Bread and Wine of the Kingdom which ministers strength and gladness to the soul (Matt. xviii. 20; Heb. viii. 2).

There is no sight more beautiful on earth than a company of believers sitting in reverential silence under the canopy of the over-shadowing Spirit, each one spiritually occupied with the Lord, each heart making melody to the Father, having fellowship one with another in the light that is too pure for mortal eyes, and where the beauty of the Lord is the feast of the soul (Ps. xxvii. 4; John iv. 23, 24; Heb. x. 19, 20; 1 John i. 7).

Alas, alas! how has Christendom fallen! How has the creature been exalted, how have men been seen as trees walking, how have "words" been the food sought after, instead of that "*spiritual* milk that is without guile," that teaching that is only then known when all flesh is silent within us, when all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings are hushed by the consciousness of the presence of God! (2 Sam. vii. 18; Hab. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 16).

And if thus taught, we shall be qualified to teach others. Let us hear our apostle again: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 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" (iv. 10, 11).

This kind of ministry is very costly. It has cost soul-labour, and its fruits are its best credentials.

The salvation Peter wants us to grow into is a complete deliverance from the maxims of the flesh and the principles of the world, that each believer may be the perpetuation in some measure of Christ down here. We are to follow His steps. His beauty is to be upon us. His virtues are to be *shown* forth (not merely preached about) by us. Christ has died, that through death and resurrection He might *multiply* Himself in His saints, in whom He lives, not in sentiment, but in fact, spiritually present in His life imparted; and the beauty of that calm, meek, lowly, and gentle life, shedding the same fragrance all around in His saints, as it did—and that to perfection—in Him, in the days of His holy, though suffering, flesh (1 Pet. ii. 9-11, 21-25).

THE "DUE SEASON" TO COME.

"Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. vi. 9.

TO a greater or less degree we all need, at some time or other, to have our eyes directed to the truth contained in this verse; sooner or later there come trials of our faith and patience in connection with our service; therefore we need to see that we do not lose sight of the positive promise He has made to all engaged in any way in labour and service for the Lord. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," whatever our work may be, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Remember, "in due season"; not at the time you would think the best and the most suitable, but at the Lord's time, which is always the best time. That is the due season, and in the due season we shall reap, if we faint not. And our business is to give ourselves to prayer, in order that we may be kept from fainting. And patiently, believingly, we should go on in the Lord's service, for in God's time, most assuredly, the due season will come.—GEORGE MULLER.

BIBLE STUDIES.

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE
OF GOD.

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|-----|------------|----------------|
| 1. DISCIPLES | - | - | - | Acts xx. 7 |
| In the same school | - | One | Master | |
| 2. CHILDREN | - | - | - | John xi. 52 |
| In the same family | - | One | Father | |
| 3. SHEEP | - | - | - | John x. 16 |
| In the same flock | - | One | Shepherd | |
| 4. SAINTS | - | - | - | Rom. i. 7 |
| In the same covenant | - | One | rank | |
| 5. STONES | - | - | - | 1 Peter ii. 5 |
| In the same house | - | One | foundation | |
| 6. MEMBERS | - | - | - | Rom. xii. 5 |
| In the same body | - | One | Head | |
| 7. THE BRIDE | - | - | - | Rev. xxi. 2, 9 |
| In the same glory | - | One | Bridegroom | |

1. All believers are alike disciples, though some have not made the same progress as others.

2. All are alike children, sharing the same life, though some of them are mere babes, others young men or fathers in growth.

3. All are like sheep, though some follow the Shepherd more closely, listening to His voice.

4. All are alike saints by calling, though some are more practically holy in their walk and conversation than others.

5. All are alike living stones upon one foundation, though some are more prominent in the building than others.

6. All are alike members of the body, though some have a more honourable place and office than others.

7. All will be together in the same glory, though some will suffer loss through unfaithfulness while on earth.

M. I. R.

that we are called to be saintly in character. That we should be so none can doubt, but the calling referred to speaks of what we *are*, not what we ought to be. Again, it does not imply any special call to or fitness for service. It is the effect of what has been done for us by our Lord Jesus Christ. "We are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. x. 10). In this use of the Word sanctified there can be no differences amongst us. The offering has done for one and all the same work, which can never be repeated, lessened, increased, or changed.

II. CALLED AN APOSTLE (Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1 and xv. 9). This was individual and distinctive, yet not according to the merits of Paul, for he says in the last of the three passages: "I am not meet to be called an apostle." He had asked at his conversion, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and in due time the answer was given, "It shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts ix. 6). Now, whilst none of us are called apostles, I believe that every Christian should ask the question which Paul did, and wait for a definite answer. God has many ways of making known His will; in fact, I suppose if several who have been called evangelists, pastors, teachers, Sunday-school teachers, house visitors, tract distributors, &c., were to relate their personal experiences no two would exactly correspond. The great essential is that it is a transaction between the master and the servant. "I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal. i. 16) may be needful in its due place, however necessary it may be for the servant to be afterwards recognised by others. The appointment, the call, and the commission must be from the Lord alone.

III. CALLED TO DEFINITE WORK. "The Holy Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 2). It is not sufficient for the *workman* to be chosen, but the sphere, scope, and other details of the service must have divine guidance, which should precede human sanction and approval. Here, again, no two will have entirely the same experience, though, like those joined together in the text, there may be fellowship. In Acts

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SERVICE.

By Dr. OWLES, Woking.

I SUBMIT a few thoughts on the important subject to which you invite contributions (see "Letter to Assemblies," page 177), and of the many ways in which it may be dealt with. I propose to write briefly on three calls:

I. CALLED SAINTS (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2). This is common to all believers, and does not mean, as it is often misunderstood to do,

xx. 24 Paul speaks of the "ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus." In Col. iv. 7 he writes to say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it," and other Scriptures might be quoted.

I have avoided writing definitely of work in distant lands, because these principles are needed *everywhere*, and departure from them is hindering testimony in various ways and in many places. Square pegs will not fit round holes, but God's sent servants will always to some extent be adapted for *their* service, although continued walking with God will be necessary to maintain efficiency and to give full proof of their ministry (2 Tim. iv. 5). I think that perhaps our eyes should be less on the need of men and money, as God only knows what are His purposes, but that there should be more constant waiting on the Lord, that He may give according to His will, and that we may receive all whom He has given, and thus be "fellow-helpers to the truth" (3 John 8).

Correspondence.

PERSECUTION IN SPAIN.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

Re the "petty persecution" of our poor brethren in Spain (*Echoes of Service*, Sept., 2nd half) and other places, do you not think, I should say believe, that the Lord allows these annoyances or petty persecutions to bless not only the persecuted but us also in opening our hearts and stirring up our "bowels of compassion"? Is it not our duty to assist our poor brethren? Do we not come short in this grace? Should there not be deep heart-searching with us in regard to these things. Do we not more frequently say, "Go, be filled and be warmed"? and instead of assisting, do we not pity? "An ounce of help is worth a pound of pity" is very true. Also, with those who go forth taking nothing of the Gentiles, is it not the same? Oh, my brethren, we have a living God, a living Christ, who so loved us that He gave Himself for us. Let us be living Christians, and manifest our love toward our brethren in a Christ-like manner, and may the grace of God be with you.

Sheffield.

H. C. S.

Report of a Missionary Journey to reach the Jews in Italy by I. I. Aschkenasi is held over till our next.

J. R. C.

Questions and Answers.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

NAMES OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE.—Can we infer from Rev. iii. 5 that it is possible for a believer's name to be blotted out of the Book of Life? Light on this verse would be much valued by many young Christians.

THE DIFFERENT "HOUSES" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.—Please explain the difference between the "Spiritual House" of 1 Peter ii. 5; the "House of God" of Heb. x. 21; the "House" of Heb. iii. 6; the "House of God" of 1 Tim. iii. 15.

ORDINATION TO ETERNAL LIFE.—Acts xiii. 48: "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." Would the above statement exclude the possibility of others believing? Or, could none but those ordained to eternal life, believe?

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.—Please explain 1 Cor. xv. 28, especially with regard to the Son delivering up the kingdom to God, and being subject to Him, that God may be all in all, while Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27, and many other Scriptures, state that His kingdom and reign are for ever and ever.

WHO IS "THE PORTER"?—Please explain John x. 3: "To him the porter openeth." Who is the porter?

THE CAUSE OF LACK OF POWER.—How is the lack of power and solemnity, and the fewness of conversions in present-day Gospel meetings, to be accounted for?

REGENERATION AND RENEWING.—What is "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost?" (Titus iii. 5). Is it a change of the old nature, or the implantation of something new, while the old remains unchanged and unchangeable?

GOD AS AUTHOR OF EVIL.

QUESTION 443.—Will you kindly explain Isa. xlv. 7, In what sense does God create evil?

Answer A.—"For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man" (James i. 13). "Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6). To my mind these two quotations are an answer to this question. Then the verse from which the question is taken explains itself. "I make peace, and create evil; I the LORD do all these things." It is not *moral* evil which is the thought in this passage, but *judgments*, such as wars, or famines, or pestilence, &c. God cannot create moral evil, in the sense in which He "cannot lie" (Titus i. 2).

G. A.

Answer B.—Evil, in the sense of sin or wickedness, is absolutely abhorrent to the infinitely holy nature of God. It is therefore impossible that such a thing could emanate from Him, or that He can be said, in any true sense, to have created it. But the context shows that the word "evil" in Isaiah xlv. 7 does not mean "sin," but simply "calamity" or "trouble." Notice the structure of the verse, "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Here light and peace are in antithesis to darkness and evil. In other words, God can make light and its opposite, and He can make peace and its opposite. This last must be evil in the sense of "trouble" for "evil," in the sense of "wickedness," is not the antithesis of "peace" but of "goodness" or "holiness." It is true that the Hebrew word translated "evil" is constantly used as meaning "wickedness," in such phrases as "he did evil in the sight of the Lord," but it also frequently occurs in the sense of trouble, adversity, calamity, &c., and is often so translated; as, for instance, in Ps. xli. 1, "The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble;" Ps. xxxiv. 19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;" Ps. xcix. 13, "That Thou mightest give him rest in the days of adversity;" Ps. cxli. 3, "Yet My prayer shall be in their calamities, &c., &c. Even when the word is translated "evil" it is constantly used in the same sense, as, for instance, in Jeremiah iv. 6, vi. 19, xix. 3, &c., where God warns Israel of the evil He is about to bring on them. Compare also Amos iii. 6, which has been a puzzle to some, where "evil" appears simply to mean "act of judgment." When, therefore, we read that "God creates evil," we

are to understand that He it is who has the sovereign right and power to disturb the peace of men, and bring deserved calamity upon them.

W. H.

Answer C.—"Evil" in Scripture has at least three cardinal meanings, each differing widely from the other.

(First) MORAL EVIL.—This is rebellion against God—lawlessness, sin, wrong-doing. For example, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5).

(Second) PHYSICAL EVIL.—This is harm, hurt, injury, such as, "Look to it, for evil is before you" (Ex. x. 10); or such as, "If when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine" (2 Chron. xx. 9).

(Third) PENAL EVIL.—This is an infliction of punishment for sin or wrong-doing (see Ex. xxxii., and specially verse 14), "And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people." Such, again, as Isa. xxxi. 2, "Yet He also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words." So also, Jer. xi. 11, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon them which they shall not be able to escape." Of this character is our Scripture (Isa. xlv. 7), where He raised up Cyrus to subdue nations before Him, and to loose the loins of kings.

In this penal sense God is continually creating and bringing about evil; and He alone has the proper right to do so, for He says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Rom. xii. 19), and Scripture abounds with such statements, both in the Old Testament and in the New.

J. S.

THE THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF "THE WITNESS."

IN continuing the issue of *The Witness* for 1902, we purpose (D.V.) adhering to the object for which it was begun **thirty-one years ago**, viz., to present the Truth, in its variety and breadth, with definiteness and moderation, keeping back nothing that we deem to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as to give no unnecessary offence. We would again record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed in the past, and for blessing given through the truth ministered in the pages of *The Witness*, of which many of the Lord's people in various lands have communicated their testimony and thanks, to our joy and encouragement. During 1902, amongst many others, we hope to have the following papers:

Foundations of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints—a series of papers on ATONEMENT, REGENERATION, INSPIRATION, and other fundamental truths, by the Editor.

Continuation of Papers on ROMANS VIII. by W. H. Bennet; CHRIST REIGNING, by J. R. Caldwell; DOCTRINES (Types and their Teachings, &c.), by Wm. Collingwood; THE SCOPE OF SALVATION, by M. I. Reich; A YOUNG MAN'S NOTES (Acts), &c.

Shorthand Notes of Addresses by Dr. Neatby, Messrs. James Wright, Robert C. Chapman, Alex. Stewart, Max Isaac Reich, and of addresses by several of our departed friends, the mention of

whose names recalls occasions of joy and profit under their ministry—such as: Messrs. Henry Heath, George Müller, Thomas Newberry, F. C. Bland, &c.

Articles on Subjects of Interest by Messrs. W. H. Bennet, Wm. Collingwood, J. Scott, F. S. Arnot, Dr. Case, G. Adam, Wm. Shaw, Max Isaac Reich, Franklin Ferguson, and many others.

Answers to Questions on a variety of interesting and helpful subjects, **Intelligence** from all parts, **Missionary Reports**, **Correspondence**, as well as **Bible Studies**, **Original Poems**, **Reviews of Profitable Books**, **Gems of Truth**, &c.

We desire the continued assistance of those competent to write on Scripture subjects, and of those who send in Answers to Questions, and shall be thankful for the prayers of all who love the Lord Jesus, for wisdom and grace to continue this service, and for increased blessing thereon.

J. R. C.