

TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

(PART XI.)

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THE GAIN OF LEARNING OF CHRIST.

(MATT. XI. 16-30.)

WHAT I wanted to draw attention to in this passage is the change from one order or course of things to another. It would not, I think, be seen until pointed out, but the Lord points it out here. No one would otherwise have understood the two things which were going on together here, namely, on the one hand the testimony of grace, and on the other the Father's work. It is just these two things to which I wish to draw attention a little as coming before us in this passage. Although the change in position indicated by the Lord's words is not publicly seen, the truth comes out that there is nothing effective in man, nothing that abide for ever, except the work of the Father.

The first thing that the Lord shews in the passage is, that in place of the mighty works He had done, another order of things was to come in, and that based upon the revelation of the Father; in other words, Christianity was to take the place of His presence and power. It is a painful reflection, but only too true, that man has refused every testimony of God. The testi-

mony of Christ, when He was here, differed from all previous testimonies. It was not like the law—not that He set the law aside, for He had come to fulfil it—it was not like the prophets, nor like that of John the Baptist; it was entirely different and new. It was in the power of the world to come; and the Lord appeals to the works as that which the cities had seen, but they had not repented. I judge that the testimony of the Lord here was the testimony of the kingdom. I think that He came here in the mighty power of the kingdom, that is, in the power of grace, shewing forth those mighty works which relieved man of the pressure of evil. That testimony God addressed to man, and man refused it, did not respond to it. In the first part of the scripture that I read, we see how John the Baptist had come, but they did not answer to him. And then the Son of man came “eating and drinking, and they said, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber.” They no more responded to the testimony of grace presented in the Son of man than they had done to John’s testimony in righteousness.

It has to come home to us painfully that the heart of man refuses whatever testimony God is pleased to present to him, but none the less the testimony of grace goes on; God will cut it short, but it is still here. It is the form of God’s

outward dealings with man, the glad tidings are the glad tidings of the grace of God. The testimony of grace began with Christ, and continues in the mighty power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. But this does not alter the statement I made, that man does not respond to any testimony of God. Such testimony may produce a transitory effect, as in the case of Nineveh, but no lasting effect; for man, apart from a work of God in him, is not really affected by any testimony, hence the breach between God and man is complete.

This ought to come home to us. It is a point of the last moment, but one which we are very slow to accept. We sometimes imagine that we might affect others by the testimony of God's grace, but man is not really affected by the best testimony of God's grace; was not even by the ministry of Christ Himself, save where souls were drawn to Him by the Father; and surely no ministry can be better or greater than His. As we have seen, the testimony of Christ was quite distinct, and of another character from that of John the Baptist, yet neither found favour. The same was true of the testimony of Elijah and Elisha. The testimony of Elisha produced no more permanent effect than that of Elijah. I have said this much to pave the way for what I have before me.

I want to bring home to you that everything has to start from the Father, if there is to be anything at all for God. The Son came to carry out the will of the Father, and let me say as to the will of the Father, that you have to accept it and its sovereignty. Broad and wide as may be the testimony of grace, and it is like the sun in the heavens, you must come to the work of the Father; and the work of the Father is *sovereign*, or rather, the Father is sovereign and must be sovereign in His work. This is brought out by the Lord in the passage before us.

We read in verses 25-27 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Now there is hardly a passage in scripture that brings out the sovereignty of the Father more distinctly than this. The beginning is that the Father has "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes." The Father reveals to the babes, and the Son also speaks about revealing. He reveals the Father to the subjects

of the Father's work. Every one of us was a subject of the Father's work before we knew it. You see that in John vi., where this comes out unmistakably: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." The Father's work is that He draws to the Son, and the Son's work is that He raises up at the last day. A great deal may come between, but these are the two extreme points in the Christian's course. We are waiting for the last, but the first was the secret of our coming to Christ. Did you come to the Son of your own accord? I think not. It is an expression of the sovereignty of the Father that He draws to the Son, for He draws whom He will. Man in this light has nothing to say to it save to come when drawn. I quite admit that the testimony of grace is going on towards man, but it would be ineffective save for the work of the Father. Man does not come to Christ, for it is not his will to come.

There is not ability or power in man for the knowledge of divine persons. No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father if not revealed to him. We have no more power to know the Father than we have to know the Son. The Father was the subject of the Son's revelation; but as to knowledge, you no more know the Father than the Son.

We were the subjects of the Father's drawing before we knew the Father. Then the Son follows the Father's work, He reveals the Father and thus makes Him known. The Son is not looked at here as the subject of revelation. He was presented to man, and bore testimony as to who He was, but His work was revealing the Father. In His mind the Father was the source of everything, as we see in the most distinct way in John v., the Father's will and the Father's pleasure was His work down here. The Son revealed the Father to souls. There could be no knowledge of Him else. And here again comes in the point of sovereignty. No one knows the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. The Father hides from the wise and prudent and reveals to babes, and the Son reveals the Father to whom He will. Now, I refer to this because it is so important to be able to take account of ourselves as the subjects of the work of God. If I look at myself historically, I have come to know the grace of God. I was once unconverted, but by the grace of God was led to turn to God to receive remission of sins and the Holy Ghost; all that is the outward history but when we come to be a little intelligent in the things of God we can regard ourselves in another light, that is, in the light of the sovereign work of

God, and in that view whatever we have originated with God. The Son has revealed the Father to us; that is what He came to do, and but for that all would have been a blank for God.

Now the point I am coming to is this—in the presence of the Father and the Son we have another order of man. The first order of man has been tested in every variety of way in which God could approach man—law, prophets, John the Baptist, Christ, and even by the presence and testimony of the Holy Ghost—but man has failed, he does not respond to any testimony of God at all. Thus man's case is hopeless. God cannot touch him except in sovereign grace. Without God's sovereign work, in which man is born again, man's case would be hopeless. It is of all moment to accept this. But then by this fact you have a man of another order morally before God, and that must be the case if the first man is not to be touched by any testimony of God. All must begin with a divine work in his soul, as we find in John iii. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then in verse 5 you get a subsequent statement: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But first you have to see that he cannot accept any testimony addressed to him

by God. But in the presence of the Father you get a man of another order, and if you want to know what the character of it is, you get it here in the person of Christ Himself, for in the subsequent passage He speaks of Himself very evidently as man. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." One may venture to speak of the Lord as presenting Himself there as in the place of Man in the presence of the Father, and the character brought before us is "meek and lowly in heart." I think there could be nothing more remarkable than the Son describing Himself in that way. That is what a man is in the presence of the Father's love, that characterises him down here; but you never find that in man after the flesh. It was said of Moses, that he was the meekest man upon earth, but you must remember that this was after and the effect of a long course of divine discipline, and it was, I doubt not, in view of the One who here says, "I am meek and lowly in heart." If you find a man in the presence of the Father, I do not doubt he will be thus characterised. It is, I judge, in contrast to man in his assumption and self-confidence and pride. The first thing the Lord proposes is, "I will give you

rest." You get rest in the apprehension of the glory of God; there righteousness and love have been perfectly reconciled, for that is what I understand by the glory of God, when the question of sin has been raised. The Lord says in John xiii.: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. God has been glorified in the Son of man, righteousness and love perfectly reconciled in the place of sin. I believe it is in the apprehension of it that we get rest. While righteousness and love are opposed in regard of man, you cannot have rest. Righteousness is God's measure in regard of the creature, and it must be answered to. So if sin is in question, righteousness and love must of necessity be opposed; but when I see them reconciled, I get rest. All this was effected at the cross, and no one can now know God except as revealed in love and righteousness, and this we learn in the death of Christ. Then we have the admonition, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. You are to be subdued to Christ; Christ is now the starting-point morally. Every subject of grace has to take his character from Christ, and we can approach Christ from the very fact that He is meek and lowly in heart; He is approachable. That is the idea which the passage presents to me. You can venture to

approach one who is meek and lowly in heart, and He is the Man in the presence of the Father's love.

Now, in being brought to Christ, and learning of Him, you get wonderful instruction which you can derive only from Christ. We all seek to help, and to point out the lines to one another, and to direct each other's attention to the things of God. We can in this sense be as sign-posts to others, but each one of us has himself to learn of Christ. You cannot be impressed too much with the importance of that. Christ is the Teacher, He instructs us, and leads our hearts into the knowledge of the love of God. I think we learn every true lesson from Christ. Our hearts get instructed in divine love, and the love of God is the true source of our moral being. There is never a breath of real life in man except in response to the love of God. There may be an antecedent work in the soul, but until the love of God is apprehended, until we have learnt that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," we can hardly be said to be conscious of living. God began of His love, and the first breath of spiritual life was our response to that love. And the great expression of that love is beyond all controversy in the

death of Christ. God so loved us that He gave His Son for us. Every one of us has the spring of his moral being in the love of God. "Rooted and founded in love." Two great effects are produced in us by the love of God. One is holiness, and I think that is the point where man is naturally wholly unfitted for God. The holiness of God is unbearable to the natural man, though he has but little idea of it. The love of God is a holy love, and must be so, for God is holy; and the natural man cannot enter into the thought of holiness. It is really foreign to him. You can understand this. The fact is that we never reach holiness except by love, and as we drink into the love of God we appreciate holiness, and thus holiness is promoted. It is in this sense that holiness is progressive in the Christian.

Another great effect produced by the love of God is growth in intelligence. We come to the clear knowledge of the Son of God. The spring of intelligence is love. Thus the apostle speaks of it in Ephesians "Rooted and founded in love," that ye "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." And so in Colossians, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and unto

all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the clear knowledge of the mystery of God, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." There is evidently great gain in that in which Christ can instruct us, that is, the knowledge of the love of God; and indeed, Christ went to the cross to bring us into that love. It was to maintain God's glory and righteousness that He died; but with all that there was the purpose that in it might be expressed to us the perfect love of God. It is there Christ instructs us, and there is the secret and spring of the true moral being of the Christian. I am thoroughly convinced that as we advance in the knowledge of God, as our hearts are in the sunshine of His love, so holiness is promoted in us, and we grow in divinely-given intelligence. Holiness and knowledge are thus promoted in the Christian by learning of Christ.

I am sure that your experience must be the same as mine. I have studied scripture for a long time, and as much as most, but I have not grown in that way in the love of God. I had not the capability. Many study scripture beyond their capability. We learn from *a Person*. Scripture tells you what you are to learn, but the things presented in scripture are learned from a living Person. He encourages us to learn of Him—to sit at His feet and hear His

word. I could not express too strongly the thought that we do not learn of one another. We are privileged to suggest to one another, but I do not think that we really learn of one another. The force of this scripture is, that all originates, and must originate, in the sovereign will of the Father. The Father begins by revealing to babes, drawing to the Son, and the Son takes up the same line and reveals the Father. To that end He encourages us to come unto Himself to learn of Him.

F E. R.



THE FEASTS OF THE LORD.

(LEV. XXIII. 1-21.)

IF you look carefully at this scripture which I have read, you will find that it is divided into two portions, each portion beginning with the words, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." I think that these words always indicate a new subject or direction, and there is a point of great importance which marks the division between the two portions before us.

Before entering into the detail I would make another remark. What we have here are called the "Feasts of the *Lord*," that is also important in our consideration of this scripture; they are also called "holy convocations." What I gather from that is, they are not, so to speak, *our* feasts though we get our part in them, they are the *Lord's* feasts. It has often been remarked that in the Gospel of John, where some of these feasts are mentioned, that they are called "Feasts of the *Jews*," they had become that; but here they are regarded in their true character as "Feasts of the *Lord*." The idea contained in the terms "feasts"

and "holy convocations" seems to me to be expressive of the good pleasure and delight of God in gathering His people around Him. They were *His* feasts. His delights in convoking His people were expressed in them.

We get the idea of a feast in the New Testament. When the prodigal is brought into the house (Luke xv.), the father makes a feast. The father's delight is in having the returned prodigal as a son with him. The son's presence (now no longer the prodigal) was necessary for the joy of the house, as we sing sometimes—

" But 'tis the love that made us thine,
Fills all that house without alloy."

It is the Father's feast of love divine. Take another instance in the great supper of chapter xiv., "A certain man made a great supper." It was *his* supper, though he bade many. He would bring them into it, and make them happy—the poor, the halt, the maimed and the blind; others were compelled to come in and prove the joy of the feast, but it was *his* feast. Again, in Matthew xxii. we read, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son." Here is expressed the gladness provided by the Father for His Son. Many were invited to the feast, but it was made for His Son. From these passages we may gather the thought

connected with the feasts in our chapter, though I fully admit that we could not get all this brought out in the Old Testament types, but when the New Testament times commenced, we see God sending His own Son, the Lord Himself, who could tell us of God's way of making a feast, He Himself being the blessed vessel of grace. Grace is the activity of love coming down to us, and the great thought of love is through the exercise of grace to bring us into its own embrace, that we might rest and delight in love. The exceeding riches of His grace will express through eternal ages

“The love that gives with Christ a place.”

That is to me the great idea of a feast. If the Lord gathers His people round Himself, He brings them into His own delights, and if we have a present sense of this good pleasure of God, we can trace His ways of carrying out His purpose as we find them in this chapter.

I dare say most here know that these feasts give a dispensational outline of the ways of God, from the time of the passover in Egypt until that time is reached which is typified by the feast of tabernacles. We have in the chapter three great epochs, but the verses I have read only speak of two, and, as I said, with a remarkable division between them. If we keep in mind that these

holy convocations expressed God's desire to gather His people round Himself, and that finally that purpose is fully reached, it will be easy to see that the gathering of Israel was first in view; then comes the gathering of the assembly, but the gathering of Israel was not into the same knowledge of Himself, as with us; that is clear. The passover and feast of unleavened bread formed the known ground of their being gathered. Then there was a certain system of ordinances and holy convocations arranged for them, but under law hence, whatever its typical import, they entirely failed in their response to this ritual. In the passover there was the maintenance of righteousness by the blood of the lamb, and holiness was demanded in the putting away of leaven from their houses. These first principles of gathering are good for us as for Israel, but as yet, though there was a way out from Egypt and from the hand of the Egyptian, there was no way open into the presence of God; hence, His delight and good pleasure could not fully come out, though He did gather the people around Himself on the above grounds.

But really the first point to notice in this passage is that the sabbath stands at the head of the feasts. The sabbath is not exactly one of the feasts, but it is the great end which God proposes to reach, and therefore it fitly stands at the head

of His feasts; and just as these are "Feasts of the Lord," so the first thought in the sabbath is that it is the rest of God. Man comes into it, but it is *God's* rest. What is ultimately before Him is that time when He will rest in His love, and bring all the redeemed into that rest of love. The sabbath is not, as I said, one of the dispensational ways in which God is pleased to act with a view to His purpose, but it indicates that purpose, and, therefore, it stands as the text for the instruction of the rest of the chapter. Then we have foreshadowed how God would bring His people into blessing round Himself, His ways of blessing being developed and finally carried out, until the purpose which forms the text at the head of the chapter is reached. There will be a fulfilment of the sabbath in a certain way in the millennium, but finally all goes on to the new heavens and earth when God will be all in all. Then will be the full rest of God, and you cannot conceive anything more blessed than that. It is then that the tabernacle of God is with *men*, and He will dwell with them; not with angels, but with *men*. Our hearts may well be touched with it. Man is the object of His grace, of His good pleasure; His Son has become a man. The outgoings of the love of God have been towards men. He takes a prodigal as a son into His house. Men are compelled to come to His feast.

We come to His feast, to the embrace of His love. When an Israelite came to the tabernacle, the first thing he would be conscious of was the sweet savour of the continual burnt sacrifice as it went up to God, so we come into the delight of God in the One who has done His will.

It is wonderful if you trace it, the blessed God coming out to gratify His own heart, in making a feast to which He brings the objects of His love. Man had fallen as low as the devil could make him fall—degraded, miserable, lost, and in enmity against the Son of God when He came, and yet the tabernacle of God will be with men. It is not merely that we can look abroad and see what men are, but we know what our own hearts are, and we have learned in ourselves that as to what man is, he will not do for God. Ah! but man in Christ *will do* for God. God has made a feast, and man has come in with the best robe on, and the joy of having men there fills that house, where He makes merry. It is His house and His feast, but we come in to His joy. There is nothing elating as we think of this, but a deep-toned joy, for you will find that the more you get under the shadow of Christ, the more broken and lowly you will be. "The tabernacle of God is with men"! Think of it. Is it not wonderful? Then will be the rest of God. The church will be that tabernacle of God in which He will dwell

with men, not with angels, though all created intelligences will then learn through the church the rest of God's love. We are learning it now as those who have come to Christ.

The first thing we get here in the ways of God, as He moved on in His way towards that rest, is the passover. He came down to deliver poor degraded slaves in the brick fields of Egypt. They were the people of His choice, but that was their condition, and if He took them up in grace, He must do it in righteousness. The love of God came down into death, for in death He settled for His own glory the question of righteousness. There is the beginning, but blessed be God it is not the finish. Everything rests upon the death of Christ. Accompanying this, as I said, is holiness, separation from evil, for in becoming subject to righteousness we have our fruit unto holiness; they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days.

Having settled the question of righteousness, God can now be with them as a Saviour God, and He brings them through the Red Sea into the wilderness. In the ways of God the death of Christ introduces us into the wilderness. I know it is through that death that we shall enter into all the blessing purposed for us, but the first present effect of knowing the death of Christ is, that it brings us into the wilderness. Now the

great difference between the two portions we have read lies in this, that the passover and the feast of unleavened bread could be observed in the wilderness; on the contrary, the feast of weeks could not be kept there, it did not belong to a wilderness condition, it could only be kept in the land. The wave sheaf could not be presented to God in the wilderness, it was the firstfruits of the corn of the land. It represents to us the heavenly Man in resurrection, Christ raised from the dead and living to God. Now this was an immense point in the ways of God. It is one thing for us to have God with us in the wilderness, and another for God to have us with Him in His land. "Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of *thine inheritance.*" The wave sheaf was the turning point in these ways, for as the feast of unleavened bread depended upon the passover, so the feast of weeks hung upon the offering of the wave sheaf. Resurrection brings into the purpose of God. We approach heavenly ground when we know Christ in resurrection.

Do you ever consider the immense gain and blessing which we have over Israel as gathered at this moment of God's ways in the power of Christ's resurrection? That is not the passover and feast of unleavened bread. Not that they are done away with, that we see in 1 Corinthians

v., but they were only the beginning of His way in bringing a people out of Egypt to Himself. No doubt God's power was displayed in resurrection, but that is hardly the thought here, but what is *for God* from His own land. The wave sheaf was presented to Him, then the two wave loaves were presented, but consequent on resurrection.

There is another point of difference. In Deuteronomy xvi. the unleavened bread is called the bread of affliction, and so when brought into the land, they must roast and eat the passover in the place which the Lord shall choose, and turn in the morning and go to *their tents*. That is a different experience from rejoicing before the Lord, as in the feast of weeks. To eat the bread of affliction is to deny myself, but that is the man who is actually down here. It is Christ we feed on, the pure unleavened bread of God, but I have to exclude all that would gratify the flesh, and that is not pleasant to the flesh. The very idea of unleavened bread means the putting away of the evil found in men down here. As actually down here in the wilderness I have to deny myself at every point. I have to keep my heart with all diligence, I must not let it out down here. I need to guard every avenue. I cannot let my eyes run about in this world, I have to let them

look right on, and my eyelids straight before me. But in the feast of weeks they were in the land, themselves, so to speak, of it, and they were to rejoice before the Lord. There we can let our hearts out, we need not be afraid there; what we want there is to have our hearts enlarged, to have heart enough to enjoy the Lord according as He has blessed us. See what a difference the wave sheaf made, though in one way nothing can exceed the blessing of Christ having come down into death to make known God's love and take us out of Egypt; but resurrection brings us into the scene where Christ is appreciated. Resurrection is the keynote of Paul's doctrine in 2 Corinthians, and he leads the Corinthians to behold the glory of the Lord; but that is not only man after another order, but in another state and in another scene. So in the wave sheaf we have Christ in resurrection, the firstfruits of the land.

Now we come to the two wave loaves, they are of the corn of the land. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." It is clear that the company figured the wave loaves belongs to heaven. The wave sheaf, the place of Christ in resurrection before God, determines the place of the gathered company now. God has now a people with Him in the land. They have crossed Jordan, it is no

longer the wilderness, and the constant sense of the need of deliverance. The difficulty for us in realising this is, that actually we are in a wilderness scene, and on that line we have to keep the feast of unleavened bread and deny ourselves, and to realise continually the deliverance which has been effected for us in Christ. But though the death and resurrection of Christ become to us the way of deliverance, yet in the wave sheaf we are not looking at the way of deliverance, but at Christ in resurrection as presented to God. "In that he liveth, he liveth unto God." When we get to that side, we reach God's feast in His own land, there we have the place of sons. We give thanks to the Father, who has made us meet to share the portion of the saints in light. The wave sheaf is the heavenly Man, and brings in the heavenly company. On that side we can let our hearts out, only perhaps feeling how narrow our hearts are, and how little we take in the blessedness of such a company gathered to the feast of the Lord. Then, too, the wilderness pathway assumes another character to us. It is not only the place of discipline for our good, but where we learn God Himself, as well as His grace and tenderness and care in a thousand ways, while we accept the needed discipline of His hand. We all need it more or less, and God judges the flesh for us if we do not judge it,

but I am sure of this, that the Lord takes in hand the vessel in order that Christ may be magnified in the body. We sometimes see a suffering saint, and wonder why is this and why is that allowed? It is that Christ may be magnified in that saint, and when we think of the utter incongruity of the flesh in a saint to Christ, it is wonderful that the Lord should be able so to discipline us that He is magnified in our bodies. We may not see it, but others can see it. Besides this we get the discipline of the Father's hand in the midst of the circumstances of the way, and are confirmed in His love to us, and our hearts get turned towards the rest of God, and tell of His mercies till we reach that scene of rest.

But what we have seen in the wave sheaf is, that the resurrection of Christ puts the gathered company, that is, the church, on a new line. The two wave loaves presented before the Lord, give us the church as in this new place of privilege, and if we follow out the thought of a feast as enlarged to us in the New Testament, it is as sons in the Father's house that we enjoy the feast. I wish we all knew the enjoyment of it better. But what a portion we have in the Father's house! It is not eating the bread of affliction there. There we enter into what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

things which have not entered into the heart of man, which God has prepared for them that love Him.

I add one more point, that while in the other feasts there is only a general direction to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, in this Pentecostal feast all the offerings are mentioned in detail. The assembly gathered before the Lord on resurrection ground is in the full sense of all the value of the offering of Christ as set forth in the various sacrifices. So far as the figure can take us, the worship in the sense of the perfections of Christ was very full and blessed.

But my object in saying a word on this subject was to indicate the blessing we are brought into as of the assembly, knowing Christ in resurrection. What I have sought to impress on you is the difference in the position and blessing of the gathered company occasioned by the offering of the wave sheaf. What had transpired between the two great feasts was that they had crossed Jordan. We at this feast of weeks, so to speak, have reached Christ in resurrection, and our enjoyment of God's feast is in the scene of divine love which belongs to the Father's house. The same love which began with us has drawn us in, as presented before the Lord. It is not now to keep the feast and turn in

the morning and go to our tents, but to rejoice before the Lord as He has blessed us. While we learn to deny ourselves as actually down here, and disciplined in the wilderness for our profit, may we know more and more God's own joy in having us with Himself in that scene of rest into which He is leading us, and which we enter into now in Christ.

“In Him we stand, a heavenly band,
Where He Himself is gone.”

T. H. R.



THE PUTTING ON OF THE NEW MAN.

READINGS ON EPHESIANS IV. 20; v. 1, 2.

F. E. R. I did not quite catch your thought in reading this scripture.

A. P. I thought this scripture had reference to what was before us this morning. The Ephesians were a company who had learned Christ. I want to know how we learn from Christ, and how we put on the character of Christ.

F. H. B. What we had this morning, namely, that we cannot teach each other, is very important. Only the Lord can teach us, and we must get to the Lord to be taught.

QUES. Is there any difference between having learned *of* Christ, and having learned Christ?

F. E. R. In verse 21 you get both, you have been taught by Him "as the truth is in Jesus."

F. H. B. Are the two things here—the learning Him, and being taught by Him—the same?

F. E. R. They are closely connected, that is evident. "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him."

GEO. C. Is not He the Teacher and the lesson also ?

F. E. R. I think so.

G. H. E. Learn *from* Him, is it not ?

F. H. B. If the truth is in Jesus, He must be the lesson as well as the Teacher.

F. E. R. The principle of teaching is, You have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. All effective teaching is from Christ.

F. H. B. We have often thought we could teach one another.

T. H. R. It is all right to seek to help one another, but the question is, what do we address in one another, the natural man or the spiritual man—what is formed of God ? The danger is in supposing that man's natural capacity can understand the things of God, and to address it in any way.

QUES. What is "as the truth is in Jesus" ?

T. H. R. What was true in Him, what is set forth in Him personally. "The Christ" is a very large expression, because the church now takes down here the place of "the Christ." What we have now is the mystery of Christ—Christ mysteriously in the body. You would say that ?

F. E. R. Yes.

T. H. R. Christ is now hidden in the heavens,

and now what we have down here is set forth in the body.

F. H. B. Is that what you mean by learning the Christ?

T. H. R. You may bring in that idea, the new man is set forth in the saints.

F. H. B. Then the "new man" is the church?

F. E. R. The idea of "new man" is a man of a new order; it is a short term to express a new order of man.

A. P—R. As "the truth is in Jesus"—is it not putting off the old man and putting on the new?

F. E. R. Yes, the having done so.

QUES. Where is the putting off in Jesus?

F. E. R. The real putting off the old man was vicariously in the death of Christ, and only there. We have been pretty much accustomed to speak of the end of the old man in the cross, and I suppose justly. The defect has been in failing to see that the principle that brings in the new man comes out in the cross.

QUES. How is that so?

F. E. R. The new man is what is formed by the expression of divine love in the cross. The source and spring of the new man is the love revealed in the death of Christ. The old man was brought to an end in righteousness in the cross. Then the love of God revealed there was the principle from which the new man sprang.

The new man is created after God, after God as revealed in love.

QUES. What is the difference between *having* put off and putting off?

F. E. R. In the former the truth is accepted; being renewed in the spirit of your mind, the truth as in Jesus is accepted. It is not exactly practical, but the foundation of practice; the mind has accepted it, you have been taught it.

T. H. R. It is looked at in an experimental way.

G. G. Is the "old man" a collective thought?

F. E. R. Well, the "old man" is one order of man, and the "new man" is another order of man, a different order of man. You may get the idea of what is collective or corporate in the expression: "To make in himself of twain one new man."

D. L. H. Then it is a new kind of man?

F. E. R. Yes.

D. L. H. Do you limit the new man in that way to the cross? Does it not come out in His person, though fully demonstrated at the cross?

F. E. R. We only get at the heavenly through the cross. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly," but this is only through what is revealed in the cross. It was not enough for God to close up the one man in death. The point was, what was to be formed after the

ending of that man; and in the very place where the old man was ended, there the formative principle of the new appears.

T. H. R. Do you look at the perfect devotedness in the cross of Christ as bringing out the new man?

F. E. R. I meant rather that the divine love brought out at the cross is the formative principle of the new man.

T. H. R. That forms the new man?

QUES. Does the new man come out in the death of Christ, or in resurrection?

F. E. R. The new man must be formed on the ground of resurrection.

QUES. You see at the cross the elements which make up the new man?

F. E. R. Yes, the love of God; and then the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given to us. That is the first allusion to the love of God in Romans. Then the apostle puts the two men in contrast, Adam and Christ.

F. H. B. Would you say the new man is begotten by the testimony to the love of God which we get in the cross?

F. E. R. Yes, you are rooted and founded in love.

W. B. Where is the new man produced?

F. H. B. In us, I thought.

W. J. Does it not come out in Philipians ii.

F. E. R. That is personal to Christ. I should not take up the new man in that way. The point of that passage is Christ's perfect obedience.

QUES. Is the new man a different thought from the second man ?

F. E. R. I think the one is moral and the other historical. The second man is out of heaven, that is the new man morally.

QUES. Would you apply the term new man to Christ ? Should it not be the second man ?

F. E. R. No, I should not ; it should be the second man.

A. H. Is the thought of the new man that the life of God is expressed in man ?

F. E. R. Yes, in a moral sense.

F. H. B. You could not rightly speak of the new man in Christ, because there was no old man there.

F. E. R. There was the revelation of what would form the new man, the love of God.

F. H. B. We are formed in the new man in the measure in which we apprehend the love of God ?

F. E. R. Yes, I think so. Do you not find it so in yourself ?

QUES. When we have the word "in Jesus," is He not alone ?

F. E. R. Yes.

E. W. I suppose you would say the moral traits of the new man came out in Christ personally ?

F. E. R. Yes, but more. All the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Him. He was not merely *after* God, but He *was* God. Now the new man is *after* God. You would hardly speak of Christ as being after God because He was God.

QUES. Is "being renewed in knowledge after the image," &c., the putting on of the new man ?

F. E. R. The point in Colossians in regard to the new man is knowledge. The new man is said to be renewed unto clear knowledge, "after the image of him that created him."

W. J. What is the difference between the use of the term new man in Colossians and in Ephesians ?

F. E. R. You do not get the full idea of the the new man in Colossians, you must, I think, go to Ephesians for that. In Ephesians it is "created in righteousness and true holiness." In Colossians it is "Renewed unto knowledge, after the image of him that created him."

REMARKED. You said some time ago, the new man comes out down here.

F. E. R. It must be so. The expression "new man" would have no force in regard to heaven.

QUES. You would say it came out in Christ down here?

F. E. R. The point is rather that it comes out in the saints.

F. H. B. It would not exclude the fact that all that was morally perfect in man came out in Him.

F. E. R. He is the beginning.

QUES. Do I understand that in the death of Jesus the old man was ended, and that what was revealed of God there is the formative power of the new man.

F. E. R. Yes, that presentation of God is the formative power of the new man.

QUES. What do you mean by the formative power of the new man?

F. E. R. The new man is formed by the revelation of God's love.

F. H. B. In that way the new man becomes the image of God?

F. E. R. Yes; you could not get a stronger expression than we get here. It is created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth.

W. B. What is the force of having put on?

F. E. R. The truth of it is accepted in mind. Thus you have put it on. It becomes the foundation of practice, but all is learned in the cross. I think we have hardly paid enough attention to the cross. You learn every divine lesson in

the cross. You can never get to the end of what is seen there; and the more you consider it, the more profound you see it to be, and the more the practical power of it. The cross is increasingly wonderful to me.

T. H. R. The more what flows from the cross is apprehended, the more your soul is deepened and formed on the foundation of the cross.

F. E. R. When people come to the cross in the first instance it is the question of their responsibility that affects them, and how that has been met. We did not come to it at first to learn the great moral lessons revealed there, nor could we learn these until we receive the Holy Ghost.

REMARKED. The first was relief and the second revelation.

F. H. B. Then the putting off the old man, and the putting on of the new is the result of divine teaching?

F. E. R. I think so. It is essentially teaching in love. You get as you go on a deeper sense of the love of God. The more you become acquainted with that love the more you respond to it. The wonderful thing is that by it you get everything that is given in the way of holiness and intelligence.

QUES. In what way do we get holiness?

F. E. R. If you become acquainted with the

love you are conscious that it is a holy love, you find there is nothing in the flesh to answer to the holiness of God, and indeed the holiness of God is repugnant to the flesh. Then if you learn that, you see the necessity of being free from the flesh.

D. L. H. You get in Thessalonians, "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

F. E. R. Yes, that establishes the connection between love and holiness. Every Christian would admit God's love is a holy love, the cross is the proof of that; and as you become acquainted with a holy love that must promote holiness; and the more holiness is promoted in you, the more you shun unholiness.

QUES. Would you say it is thus formed?

F. E. R. Yes, the new man is created after God in righteousness, and holiness of truth. That is, you are in the full light of God's love and being in that light you get a judgment of things which is really after God; that is, in righteousness and holiness.

QUES. Is the discipline of the Father in love in Hebrews xii. to this end?

F. E. R. It is all confirming it. He speaks to

you as to children, that is, in the language of affectionate interest. He promotes holiness by chastening.

W. J. What is "quicken'd together with Christ"

F. E. R. It is that we are made to live together with Christ in the presence of divine love. The secret and spring of it in God is, His great love wherewith he loved us." The source is divine love, and the object of the quickening is the satisfaction of that love. I do not understand how love can be satisfied if we do not answer to it; we should be perfectly responsive to the love. The source of all God's dealings with us is His love, and the end that we may be perfectly responsive to it in His own habitation.

D. L. H. Are we to take it that this instruction is not given to the saints in general? Could what is here said to the Ephesians be said of the saints generally?

F. E. R. I think a great many saints would not be prepared for it. The apostle does not address this to others because they were not prepared for it. I do not think he would throw it broadcast before everybody. He could not speak wisdom to the Corinthians.

F. H. B. That divine teaching had not gone on with all?

F. E. R. No. The apostle addressed saints

according to their capacity for receiving the truth. *They* were able to receive the teaching. He was divinely instructed in his teaching.

W. B. We can hardly suppose that the apostle would have addressed that to the Galatians?

F. E. R. It would have been no use except to content them with their bad state.

D. L. H. But it was there for them if they were prepared for it?

F. E. R. But the great bulk of Christians in Christendom are not prepared for it.

QUES. You would say he was here speaking wisdom to them?

F. E. R. Yes, he said to the Corinthians in contrast to that, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual."

W. B. You said the other day that the great bulk of Christians do not know even the forgiveness of sins.

F. E. R. I do not think I said that.

D. L. H. I think what was said was misunderstood. What was spoken of was the *consciousness* of forgiveness rather in contrast to the knowledge of forgiveness by faith. It was said the bulk are not in the consciousness of forgiveness.

F. E. R. I know there are those who have forgiveness of sins by faith. They accept scrip-

ture as the word of God and rest their faith on that, but the consciousness of forgiveness is another thing. You get the consciousness of forgiveness in the presence of divine love.

W. B. "Perfect love casteth out fear." There is a great difference between believing things because they are written in the Bible and believing them as coming from the mouth of God.

F. E. R. Yes; but I am supposing genuine faith which brings justification; but besides that, we should have the consciousness of forgiveness in divine love. We should have the consciousness that it is absolutely impossible that God who loves us perfectly and is forming us by His love can impute sin to us. He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. In Ephesians i. after speaking of predestination and acceptance in the Beloved, it says, "In whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins," that is the consciousness of it.

QUES. Would the reception of the prodigal be an instance?

F. E. R. Yes, I think so.

T. H. R. I often say in preaching, do you *enjoy* the forgiveness of sins?

QUES. Is learning Christ a progressive thing

F. E. R. I do not think it is put in that way

here. You are supposed to have done it. "If so be you *have*." The teaching is supposed to have been accepted.

G. J. S. What is being renewed in the spirit of your mind ?

F. E. R. That is a point of the greatest importance because it is through the mind you take in everything of God. But to enter into things entirely outside the range of thought of the natural man, you must have the renewing of the mind, else you would have no faculty.

QUES. Is it done once, or is it continuous ?

F. E. R. I could not tell you. It is characteristic.

D. L. H. Is it not that your mind is introduced into a wholly new order of things ?

F. E. R. I think you have the mind of Christ, a complete and radical change in the power of apprehension ; in the thinking part of your being. I think the faculty is there, but the faculty is renewed.

G. G. Does that mean the faculty is the mind taught by the Spirit ?

F. E. R. No ; it is more than that. The mind of man even subject to the Spirit, could not take in divine things.

QUES. Is it in contrast to the natural man in Corinthians ?

F. E. R. Yes ; he that is *spiritual*, not he

that *has the Spirit*, discerns all things. For discernment you want the man characteristically spiritual. Then we have the mind of Christ.

P. That would be progressive. You go on learning from Him.

F. E. R. Yes.

QUES. How is the new mind connected with the new moral being ?

F. E. R. I think the mind is the eye of the heart. The mind is the eye by which all is taken in. There must be the faculty that understands to take things in, so that you can appropriate and assimilate them, or they could not form a part of yourself. For this you must have the mind.

QUES. How does the conscience stand in relation to that ?

F. E. R. Conscience is not mind, but conscience would keep you consistent according to your intelligence. Conscience will always keep pace with divinely-given intelligence, otherwise you would fail to be consistent with it.

G. J. S. Why do you think that expression, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind," comes in between the putting off the old man and the putting on of the new ?

F. E. R. Because you cannot take in the new things except by the renewed mind.

G. G. Is the new mind the new moral being ?

F. E. R. Hardly. By the new mind the new moral being is illuminated. The moral elements of the new being are really of God—love, holiness and righteousness.

G. J. S. What do you understand by *having* put on the new man?

F. E. R. It is stated abstractly, "as the truth is in Jesus."

QUES. Is the truth as in Jesus what God has effected in Jesus for Himself?

T. H. R. What has been effected in Jesus is the putting off the old and putting on the new. It is objective in Him, but in you it is subjective. What is so beautiful to me in the renewing of the mind, is, that it produces perpetual juvenescence—it never grows old. It is the word "new" that signifies what is always in freshness and bloom.

F. E. R. I have no doubt it is the outcome of new birth. New man and old man are objective terms. The renewing of the mind is subjective, and follows on new birth.

QUES. Would verse 23 be a kind of parenthesis explaining how we take it in?

T. H. R. You must have the capacity to take it in. You would say here, would you not, that it supposes one beyond the new birth, and having the Holy Spirit?

F. E. R. Yes, quite so.

T. H. R. It goes on the line of the new birth or subjective work.

E. W. Would you say the foundation of the new man in the saints is new birth?

F. E. R. I do not apprehend it that way. I think the foundation of *apprehension* is the new birth, but as to the new man you must entertain the thought as an abstract idea. I cannot find the idea in the concrete shape. You cannot speak of Christ as created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth.

QUES. Are not the Gentiles brought in here in contrast, "in the vanity of their mind having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God" ?

F. E. R. They are renewed in the spirit of their mind. You have, in regard to the new man, to entertain a new idea.

QUES. You cannot actually point to the man?

F. E. R. No; you have to apprehend the thought abstractly.

T. H. R. Then, being renewed enables you to entertain it?

F. E. R. You must have the new birth to get at the apprehension.

D. L. H. Would you say it is what the Lord did when He "opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures." (Luke xxiv.)

F. E. R. I think the Lord began the work of the Spirit, but there had been a good deal effected in the disciples before the Lord gave them understanding. In that chapter the Lord, to a great extent, takes the place of the Holy Ghost ?

QUES. Why does it not say "new men," and not "a new man" ?

F. E. R. Because it is a new order of man ; new men would be an entirely different thought, and then the difficulty would be to find them.

E. D. Would the new man be the same as the life of Jesus in 2 Corinthians iv.

F. E. R. That is what came out in Christ down here.

QUES. What is the difference between the having put on the new man, and putting on the characteristics of the new man.

F. E. R. The having put on is an act of mind. You have reached that point. There are a great many points which God has reached in fact, which we have to reach in mind ; for instance, "crucified with Christ." We are not actually crucified with Christ, but we have in mind to accept it. The same in regard to the new man. As a matter of fact, the new man has no absolute existence ; it is an abstract idea, but you have to reach it in mind, to put it on before you can carry it out in practice.

QUES. You mean to carry it out in practice in detail ?

F. E. R. Yes.

F. H. B. Therefore, having put off is a subjective thought ?

F. E. R. The having put off is a subjective thought—but the new man is objective. If the new man is not seen as an objective thought you would confound it with the flesh.

T. H. R. You look at it abstractly, but subjectively as to what has become new in you. It is always fresh.

QUES. Our "having put off" what is that ?

F. E. R. That is the mental apprehension—you have reached it in your mind.

QUES. Is that the result of having learned Christ ?

F. E. R. Yes.

QUES. You see the truth exemplified in the death of Christ, and then you grasp that in your own soul. That is putting on the new, is it not ?

F. E. R. What is true in the cross is true *for* every Christian, but not always true *to* him.

F. H. B. That is, that every Christian has not come to it in the spirit of his mind ?

F. E. R. Just so.

F. H. B. Then when he has come to it, it is the effect of divine teaching, not something learned in scripture ?

F. E. R. All depends upon the subjective state. It is only thus you can understand it. An unconverted man could not understand it at all. It is only in virtue of the subjective work of God in the soul that you could understand the thought of the new man. It is outside the whole range of human experience, that is certain.

QUES. Would it be right to say you get the exemplification of the new man in Christ?

F. E. R. No; it is making too little of Christ. He was more than man. All the fulness of the Godhead was there in the complete setting forth of God. All the qualities of the new man came out in Him. Morally, everything in Christ was new; but I do not like applying the term "new man" in any sense to Him. It tends to obscure the great truth of what He was here. I could not say He was "after God," for He was God.

QUES. But if I want the exemplification I find it in Christ?

F. E. R. Why say it? There was a great deal more in Christ. There was the exemplification of God in Him. The new man does not come out until the old man is ended. You must see all connected with the flesh gone judicially.

T. M. In what way do we learn Christ, where it says, "If so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus?"

F. E. R. I think it is *the Christ*. I suppose

He has His own way of teaching. What is learnt the basis of practice. As regards Christian walk, neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but new creation. New creation is the rule to govern practice down here.

W. A. W. You said our apprehension of the love of God is the start of everything ?

F. E. R. Yes, but I do not say there is not something in us antecedent to that. New birth is so. But I am certain that the first real breath of life is the heart's response to the love of God.

D. L. H. You are not now speaking of new birth when you speak of life ?

F. E. R. No. New birth is not identical in scripture with life. If it were you would connect life with the subjective state of the believer instead of with Christ.

F. H. B. It is necessary to make this clear because people speak of a person when he is just born again as having life.

F. E. R. The mischief in that case is, you are more or less connecting the thought of life with the subjective state and losing the sense of its being in another Man. Every blessing characteristic of Christianity is connected with another Man, and you have to pass over in experience to that Man if you are to enjoy anything of real Christianity. That was the difficulty four or five years ago. Many never apprehended the idea

of eternal life being objective. They took it to be subjective, and hence they never got away from the first man at all; and if they had carried their point as to eternal life being a state in the soul, all would have been gone. We should have lost the truth of eternal life altogether.

QUES. Will you please explain that again?

F. E. R. I say the thought of eternal life was taken up as a subjective idea—something in you. J. B. S. said the question raised was whether we were in eternal life, or eternal life was in us. The statement of scripture is,

God has given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Thus we see eternal life is in another Man, and if you enter into it and what is properly christian, it is because you have passed over to that Man. If you talk of its being *in* you, you have lost the whole thing, for it is not so presented.

E. H. C. It was putting life into a man not yet out of death.

F. E. R. Yes, quite so.

QUES. Does the apostle take up the special characteristics of the old man here (ver. 25)?

F. E. R. He takes up two or three features—lying, for instance. In this country we are free to a certain extent of this vice, but in other places, eastern countries especially, lying

is as natural as truth is to us. It is perfectly natural to the old man.

W. J. The old man is a lie.

F. E. R. Yes; but speaking truth is more than "putting away lying." When it says, "Speak every man truth with his neighbour," it does not refer simply to speaking true *things*, but speaking "*truth*."

D. L. H. Let us say a little about the positive side. Truth is really the setting forth of God.

F. E. R. We are bound to profit one another. We are rather guilty, I think, in failing to speak truth to one another.

QUES. Is that the "good to the use of edifying?"

F. E. R. Yes; I see my responsibility to speak truth, but often fail to carry it out. To speak truth one to another, that is for edification.

W. W. Would not that limit conversation a good deal?

F. E. R. Yes; but there would not be much harm in that.

REMARKED. It would quiet unholy talking.

F. E. R. But you feel that you cannot suddenly break into it, you are often not enough in the truth yourself. If your soul were in the good of the truth, it would not be so difficult to speak of it to another.

REMARKED. "They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another."

F. E. R. Yes.

E. H. C. When it says, "Speak every man truth with his neighbour," to whom does it refer?

F. E. R. Your neighbour is the person next to you.

QUES. Is it the thought that there you expose yourself most?

F. E. R. It may be so. It is the person you come in contact with.

QUES. Must it be necessarily a saint?

F. E. R. Yes, you are neighbours, members one of another.

A. P. It is not merely responsibility that would do it, but love?

F. E. R. Yes; there again I feel it brings you back to the death and resurrection of Christ. I know no truth that is not expressed there.

REMARKED. Please explain that a little.

F. E. R. All truth is set forth there. The death and resurrection of Christ is the full revelation of God, and the expression of His will in regard to man. You get the full light of God in the cross, and in the resurrection the full expression of His pleasure is found in regard to man.

E. C. I was thinking of Zechariah viii. in

reference to the neighbour. It says in verse 16, "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates." And then he says, "I will change your fast days into feast day."

F. E. R. The expression in Ephesians is evidently a quotation from that.

QUE Do not we often accept as truth what we are not in a position to say we are in?

F. E. R. Very often, I think. Ephesians is a wonderful epistle from beginning to end, and the prominent feature is the setting forth of God in the saints down here; that is the great thought in it. To illustrate this, you will find the great point in the prayer in chapter iii. is that we might be filled unto all the fulness of God. The idea of the church is that it is peculiarly the vessel for the setting forth of God in intelligence and love. Then there is the same thought of the setting forth of the life of God in the new man. The new man is after God, and for God, that the life of God may come out in him. Then in chapter vi. the saints come out against the powers of evil, in the armour of God, in the characteristics of Christ, when He comes out as the Word, and in the power of God to deal with the forces of evil. He comes forth with the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness and the sword of His mouth. Now the

saints come out in the armour of God to deal with what is hostile to God down here. Thus the point of the epistle all through is the presentation of God in the saints.

REMARKED. That is, all is to be to His pleasure.

F. E. R. It all shews the greatness of the place the church would have had if it had kept its first estate.

QUES. "The ages to come"—is that down here?

F. E. R. No; the truth reaches on to that. A point in the epistle is, that you cannot come out to be for God here unless you have first gone in to God. It is thus in regard to the heavenly city. The saints have first gone into heaven and then come out as the city.

QUES. Does not the assembly meet the conflict in heavenly places?

T. H. R. It is the influences down here of the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.

D. L. H. With regard to "image," what is the difference between Adam created in the image of God and what we have in Colossians, "after the image of him that created him

T. H. R. Christ is the image there, I take it. In Genesis it is, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It does not say He made Christ so. But it says, "Who is the image of the

invisible God." Then we have the new man which is created "after the image of him that created him," which is Christ.

D. L. H. But in man being made in the image and likeness of God, what is the difference of signification between the two words?

F. E. R. I think there is a double meaning in the word image. It conveys the idea of what is representative in the way of authority, and what is representative morally. Adam was not made in God's likeness merely, but was set here the centre of reverence and authority.

D. L. H. Thus God was represented in that man down here?

F. E. R. Yes. All creation had to look up to Adam as the representative of God down here, but the thought of image in the New Testament is more moral.

T. H. R. If it is a *true* image it must be a likeness; though it may not be so. Take for instance the image of the queen on a sovereign.

F. E. R. Image is sometimes, however, a stronger word than likeness when used morally.

T. H. R. Then it is because it is like the thing. In Ephesians it is "likeness" and in Colossians "image."

F. E. R. Adam was not made after God in righteousness and holiness of truth, he knew little or nothing about the love of God. He

knew a gracious, beneficent Creator, but God did not come out in the revelation of His love. For us it is, As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." You are so like Christ, you bear His image.

D. L. H. Image, I think, means very exactly alike.

F. E. R. I think so sometimes. It is the intensification of likeness. J. N. D. used to refer to the saying in regard of a picture, "that is the very image of my mother."



HOW GOD REACHES HIS REST.

(NUM. xv. 1-16.)

I HAVE two thoughts before my mind, and will express them as briefly as I can. One is the way in which man after the flesh is exposed in scripture; and the other, the way in which the delight of God in Christ is disclosed to us. These things ought to affect us, as they are presented to us by God in scripture. One cannot read these ten chapters in this book (xi. to xx.) without feeling what a terrible creature man is. There was not a thing God proposed to His people Israel but was opposed by them. Everything God proposed for their blessing was resisted; they despised Moses and the law, they despised the pleasant land, they despised God and all that God presented to them. This shews us what man after the flesh is. If we accept this exposure we cannot think for a moment of God committing Himself to that man in order to accomplish anything. This very chapter shews us one that despised Moses' law, as in the previous chapter we see the pleasant land was despised. Thus we see how God's rest was despised; a man taking up sticks on the sabbath day, preferring his own

little bit of comfort to the rest of God. What is so solemn as regards man after the flesh is, he has no consciousness in the smallest degree that he has to do with God ; and hence all that God proposes is despised and set at naught. There can therefore be only judgment for that man, as we find in the previous chapter the Lord so solemnly pronounced on those who despised the pleasant land ; they had to wander in the desert until they all fell. So in this chapter the one who despised Moses' law by gathering sticks on the sabbath day was to be stoned. There can be only judgment for that man : that man can never enter into God's rest. Could we suppose for a moment that he could be placed in it by power, how could we think of *such* a heart being in the rest of God ? He has no appreciation of it. Therefore there can be only judgment for that man.

But the striking feature in this chapter is, that after God had pronounced sentence on those who had despised the pleasant land, and spoken of their falling in the desert, yet he says "When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you," &c. It has been often said, and I do not shrink from repeating it, that it is impossible that God should be diverted from His purpose, and the impossibility lies in the fact that it is *love* which has purposed. God is

absolutely sovereign in love. His purpose is the purpose of love, and He will not be diverted from that purpose. If Israel despised the pleasant land, God will find means to carry out His own purpose in perfect consistency with Himself, and this is deeply blessed. So here He say, "When ye be come into the land of your habitations which I give unto you." They were all to die in the wilderness, but their children, who they said should be a prey, them God would bring in, and they should know the land which their fathers had despised. God takes up that which is perfect feebleness in itself, so that it may be perfectly manifest that it is entirely of Himself in infinite grace.

But the most striking point in the beginning of this chapter is *the way* in which God does this; He turns to that which is in figure another Man, speaking of the burnt offering which they will offer as a sweet savour to Him. And He speaks of this, not as commanding them to bring such an offering, but as counting upon their desire to do so; "and *will make* an offering by fire unto the Lord to make a sweet savour unto the Lord." I think it is exceedingly interesting when we see how He contemplates the fact that although all that He has proposed has now been despised, yet the day will come when His people will out of the gladness of their heart

offer to Him ; I suppose, taking it out of figure, He contemplates the time when His people will understand how there is another Man before His eye, and they are before Him in all the fragrance of that blessed One who is now in His presence, and they will enter into the deep joy which God has in Him.

It is very striking that the points which are specially developed in regard to sacrifice in Numbers xv. are the meat offering with the quantity of oil with which it was mingled, and the drink offering ; the quantity of wine for the drink offering being in exact proportion to the quantity of oil mingled with the meat offering. It brings before us a Man of another order altogether, who, in place of the man who acts in the energy of his own will, is before God in divine energy by the Spirit, and the divine joy in Him is proportionate to this. It is in this blessed Man that God reaches the end He has in view, and by Him He gains His rest. And His people will yet enter into all this. The burnt offerings contemplated are of various sizes, showing various measures of apprehension, but according to the measure of the apprehension of the sacrifice will be the measure of the apprehension of what that blessed Man is to God, and consequently what the divine joy in Him is.

Now, how sweet this is to our hearts. Even

the feeblest can feel the blessedness of it here this day. We can turn from the man on whom the judgment of God rests for ever, we can turn with relief to Him in whom is all God's delight. If God had not disclosed to us His delight in that Blessed One, we could not have entered into it. But He has done so. It is very blessed to see in these Old Testament figures how God took delight in working out in varied ways the glory of that blessed Man in whom is all His pleasure. We know with perfect certainty there is nothing in the flesh in which God could take any delight. Even the most amiable qualities which are in the flesh are all contrary to God, and therefore we must leave that man entirely aside. But if we have learned that solemn lesson, we can turn to Him in whom is all God's delight. It was a wonderful moment when the heavens opened over Him *as Man* here on earth, and the word came from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight." What a relief was this after all the ages of sin and failure on the part of man after the flesh! Here at last is One in flesh who is declared the delight of the Father.

And then, beloved brethren, came that wondrous sacrifice in which came out every moral quality which was pleasing to the heart of God, all that in which He could find delight. It is a

wonderful thing that the very spot of the greatest shame, the greatest woe, should become the place for the perfect manifestation of all His own personal excellency. And then, beloved brethren, as we dwell on this, we enter somewhat into God's delight in that blessed One. I suppose it is that which is figured in the drink offering not *our* delight, but God's delight in Him. It is a great thing when *we* come to delight in Him, but then it is a more wonderful thing when in any measure we can turn to the infinite delight which God has in Him. He has removed from Himself the man that despised Him, and that despised all He proposed, and He has pronounced sentence upon him in just judgment. Then it is our privilege too, to turn from that man, and to turn to Him who is ever before God's eye an object of infinite pleasure and delight, knowing that it is in Him that God reaches the accomplishment of all that He has purposed for His own satisfaction and glory.

I do not dwell on anything more than these two thoughts, and this in connection with what has been before us. I have ventured to give expression to them with the earnest desire that our eyes may be more than ever rivetted upon that blessed One, and that our coming together may result in our deepened acquaintance through grace with Him.

J. R.

DILIGENCE NEEDED TO GO ON TO GOD'S PURPOSE.

(HEB. VI. 13-20.)

I WOULD try and say a few words on this scripture in connection with what has been before us. I think we must all feel how serious a thing it is that man after the flesh habitually despises the things of God, and we need to take to heart that that is what we all do naturally, and necessarily there is the danger for us: the flesh is the great hindrance to our going on to the purpose of God. The purpose of God for us is that we should be "holy and without blame before him in love," His sons, and in this scripture His beloved Son has entered into His presence for us as the Forerunner.

" He's gone within the veil,
For us that place has won ; "

so that we have "strong consolation," or rather "encouragement," "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." The good pleasure of God about us is that we should have this "strong encouragement." All our hope now is in another Man, the Man of God's purpose who

has entered in for *us*. He is there the Fore-runner, and we follow so that not only have we strong encouragement," but the hope is an anchor of the soul "both sure and stedfast [or secure and firm], and entereth into that within the veil"—into that blessed scene where *He* is. Nothing but what is of Christ can enter that scene—it is to me so beautifully expressed in those words—

" There all's unsullied light
 Our hearts let in its rays :
 And heavenly light makes all things bright
 Seen in that blissful gaze.

Such a scene would be intolerable to the man after the flesh—we can only come in touch with it as after *His* order who has entered there for us.

When the report of the land was brought to Israel they refused to go in, so they had to go back into the wilderness and die. In Numbers xiv. 28 we get, "Say unto them, as truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you : your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness," &c. ; and in verse 31, "But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which *ye have despised*." So God was wroth with them for forty years, because they *despised the land*—the purpose of God for *them* ; so in

chapter iii. of this epistle (ver. 17) we get "And with whom was he wroth forty years? Was it not with them whose *carcasses fell in the wilderness?*" The tendency with us is to drop down and settle here, and if our souls are not anchored within the veil, we wander in the wilderness; but if anchored, we pass on to the purpose of God, we pass through this scene under the power of a better hope, stayed by divine joy.

And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day:
Through scenes of strife and desert-life
We tread in peace our way."

As long as we are here there is danger, and we need to shew "diligence to the full assurance of hope *unto the end*, that ye be not slothful." I think it comes home pretty close to us as to how far slothfulness of soul is hindering us going on to the real entering in to divine purpose. It comes on us insidiously, "a *little* more sleep and a *little* more slumber." The Lord preserve us from it and keep us in healthy exercise of soul so that we may be "imitators of those who through *faith and long patience* have been inheritors of the promises."

The blessed God would have us enter into the unchangeableness of His purpose, so that we

might have *strong encouragement*, and we see His blessed purpose about us set forth and made good to us in Jesus who has entered *for us* into that scene of unsullied light, the very presence of God!

The Lord graciously encourage us to go on in spite of all the pressure here, in "faith and long patience" in the good of that hope which enters into that within the veil where our blessed Fore-runner is; so that we may be in happy accord with the "earnest desire" of the beloved writer of the epistle "that each one of you shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope *unto the end.*"

R. M.

“SHEW ME NOW THY GLORY.”

(EXO. XXXIII. 12-18; EZE. I. 26-28; 2 COR. IV. 3-6.)

I HAVE great diffidence in speaking at all in the presence of some able to speak more to edification than I can, but I would like to say a little in the same line that has been before us, on these three passages, in each of which the glory of God is the subject.

It is deeply interesting to see the way in which Moses acts on the occasion of the complete breakdown of Israel, of man in fact, after the flesh. Moses having received the two tables of stone had been sent down from the mountain by the Lord Himself. He had been told that the people whom he had brought out from the land of Egypt had quickly corrupted themselves and had made gods of gold; so accordingly Moses hastened down to find at the foot of the mountain the people worshipping the golden calf. He finds himself as we may say in the face of the complete and irremediable breakdown of man as after the flesh. He thereupon broke the tables at the foot of the mount, and we are confident he had the mind of God in doing so, and, although

he had no direct word for it, he did what was morally suitable. He broke the tables because being what they were he could not take them into such a camp. But judgment was executed on the people and God's righteousness was vindicated by it.

At this particular point in the chapter from which we read, Moses has again returned into the presence of God, and this time he says, "Shew me now thy glory." That was a wonderful desire and is a point of exceeding interest. It seemed as if God had been baffled, if we may venture so to speak, all along the line, but Moses now returns to God in the presence of the broken law and the utter breakdown of man, and he asks God to show him *His* glory. The question with Moses now was, What can God do? I think the idea in his mind, so far as I can understand it, was "What canst Thou do in the face of all that is come to light, what hast Thou for Thine own vindication and pleasure? He was certain of this, that there was a glory belonging to God and that God was not baffled; that He had something in reserve and He would display Himself and would bring it in in the face of all that had come to light as regards man. He believed there was some purpose of God to come out with regard to man and therefore he says, "Shew me now thy glory." That is a blessed thought. Many of

us are very much engrossed with our own relief. Most Christians are chiefly occupied in divine things with that which ministers in one way or another to their relief from evil, from pressure, trial or sorrow and the variety of things which affect them in this world. All that is quite right in its place. We must have relief, we must have salvation in truth that is exactly what God of old brought about for His people. He effected deliverance for them. He secured them from divine judgment in Egypt; He met every question with regard to His own righteousness; He brought them out with a high hand and a stretched out arm; He delivered them from the hand of Pharaoh; it was a real salvation in that respect in figure, but in effecting this for His people are we to suppose their deliverance was the end God had in view? No, His own pleasure was the point. We may discern this in the song of chapter xv. The people are spoken of as being guided to His holy habitation, and God Himself says subsequently He had brought them to Himself. And why? Because He wanted them near Himself for His own pleasure. He found His pleasure in taking a people for Himself out of this dark miserable world, a people who might know Himself and amongst whom He could find His dwelling place. How gracious, how blessed of God this is! But it is in connection with His

glory that He works thus. How many of us are desirous to be led into this side of things, into what God's own gracious heart is, into what His will toward us is in Christ for His own satisfaction and pleasure? That is where we most of us come short. I speak from experience, for the greater part of my christian life was largely taken up with my side of things in having regard to the need of my soul. But not many of us are ready to sit down in God's presence and offer up such a prayer as, "Shew me now thy glory." We need to be free of ourselves for that, to be free as to salvation and deliverance, relief from pressure and so forth. We need to have these things pretty much settled in our own souls in order to be free to know His pleasure. We may be assured that is what God wants us to enter into, even the feast that He has spread, as we were hearing this morning. I cannot conceive anything more infinitely blessed than to be allowed to enter into God's pleasure. There is nothing so inconceivably great as that God should minister to us, and lead us in, that He may have us on His own side, to fill our hearts with His own things and His own glory. It is wonderful! And God would have us to enter into all that now and thus taste of heavenly springs as the light and joy of our souls before we are actually in heaven.

Now I read the passage from Ezekiel, because it speaks of the departure of the glory which was connected with Israel in days of old; the Shekinah glory was about to depart. If we may say so, man had driven God away, and He had to withdraw His glory. But in this mysterious and remarkable vision we find right in the centre of the glory, in the brightest spot, the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon the throne. It is very affecting just when man's sin was driving His glory from the earth, and man's case was so hopeless that God could not connect His glory with him any longer, to find He had another man for Himself and had already got him there in purpose, as displayed in the vision of His glory. It must have been a great astonishment to Ezekiel to see that man at some time or other would be connected with the glory of God and be seen in the brightest spot there. We know now who that Man is.

Now, in 2 Corinthians iv. we get the full light of it. Here the apostle is speaking of the glory of God, and he tells of the light of that glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. It is this God sets before us to attract us. You might take the saints to task from morning to night for not entering into these things, but it would be of no avail. It is solely by attraction that our hearts are won to God's side of things.

There is a great difference between a flock and a fold, and it is just this. A flock is led and held together by attraction, while a fold has walls all round it, that is, people are kept in by restraint. Now what God does is to present to us a Man in the brightest spot in the glory, with all that He is in Himself set forth in that blessed Man's face. It ought to make every one of us go humbly to God and say, “Shew me now thy glory,” that we may apprehend what God has done for His own satisfaction and glory in the face of the utter breakdown of man from first to last. When God proceeds to bring to pass His own purpose He brings out a Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He puts that Man in glory. It is not only that He has come out in Him, but man has gone in to God that He may be appropriated by us on our side.

Now if that does not attract us I do not know what will. How else are hearts to be won so as to induce us to accept what is inevitable in order to pass from one man to the other? Death lies in the way, and nobody will accept it unless to reach Him is plainly worth all cost.

May the Lord graciously attract us to Himself where He is, and give every one of us to say, like Moses, “Shew me now thy glory.” How else are christian people to worship if they do not reach that sphere? We may thank God for all the

benefits conferred upon us, for forgiveness of sins and a thousand mercies along the way, and this is indeed right; but it is not worship. For worship we must be consciously in the presence of the unfolding of what God is, in the sense of the revelation of the Father in the Son. We may be incapable of taking in very much, but we may be in the ocean of God's love, a love set forth in a Man, in the most gracious way possible, and shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit that we may apprehend and enjoy it.

May the Lord lead us into it.

D. L. H.



THE NEW COVENANT

IN ITS APPLICATION TO CHRISTIANS.

(2 Cor. 6-18.)

My object in reading this scripture is to say a few words in regard to the thought of the new covenant, and in general as to the force of a covenant. It is an idea which is presented to us in scripture in different ways from time to time, and it is evident enough from the passage I have read that it has a very important application to us. The apostle speaks of being made competent as ministers of the new covenant, and then gives an idea of the terms and character of that covenant. Covenant was a thought with which those instructed in scripture were familiar, and no doubt the new covenant, spoken of literally, has its application in the future to Israel; it will be established for the house of Judah and Israel. But we find the truth here in its application to Christians, shewing that the apostles' ministry was, in principle, the ministry of the new covenant.

I purpose to refer to two or three instances in

scripture of covenants established, to shew their character, and then to refer to the new covenant to see the import of it in regard to ourselves; and in connection with this, to shew what it is intended to lead on to.

I suppose the new covenant when established with Israel will, in a sense, be the end of things for them, they will not look to anything farther, and power will be there to enable them fully to enjoy what is present. But covenant comes in in regard to us, not merely that we may enjoy what is set forth in it, but to lead us on to what is beyond; and the proof of that is found in this epistle. In chapter v. we have the ministry of reconciliation, and it is plain enough that this is something beyond the ministry of the new covenant.

Now I want first to give you the idea of a covenant. As far as I understand it, a covenant describes the terms on which God can be with an individual or a people at any given moment, the object being to secure to that people or individual the benefits of God's previous intervention on their behalf. That is rather a long sentence, but I hope you will take it in. A covenant invariably follows upon some intervention of God on man's behalf, and it is brought in in order that the benefits of that intervention may be enjoyed by the subjects of it. So that if

God comes in to establish a covenant, that covenant lays down the terms or conditions on which God can be with man. We shall see this better and more clearly when we come to illustrations of it.

Another point incidental to this is, that a subsequent covenant usually embodies the conditions of preceding covenants, so that you are not at liberty to go back to a preceding covenant; if you do, you transgress. This is an exceedingly important principle, and comes out in scripture very simply. What makes me refer especially to this is because of what we see in Christendom. There has been a general going back to the form of a preceding covenant, and in this sense they have transgressed. The Galatians were in great danger of doing this, of turning from the new covenant to the old, and the apostle shews that they were going in the direction of apostasy, and were in danger of falling from grace. It is this that very largely characterises Christendom. It has gone back from the new covenant to the form of the old covenant—to Judaism. It is not therefore, I think, too much to say that Christendom is apostate, that is, the mass apostate. I do not look with the least satisfaction on Christendom, and am only too glad to have escaped in measure from its corruption, and rather than be mixed up with much in it, I think I

would stand alone all my days. I feel in spirit more and more apart from it. If you have your eyes open, you cannot but see the enormous increase of pretension in it, and yet, as a matter of fact, almost every pulpit in the country is used to undermine the truth of God. That is pretty much the character of things in this country, and largely throughout Christendom.

To return to my subject. The first covenant to which I will allude (although it does not fully illustrate my point) is that which God made with Noah, and which followed on God's intervention on behalf of himself and his family. When the flood of water was upon the earth, Noah and his family were saved by God's intervention. They came forth from the ark on a regenerated earth, and that led to the covenant made with Noah. I have no doubt the basis of the covenant was the burnt offering, and the object of it was that they might enjoy God's intervention on their behalf. The world had been destroyed on account of its wickedness, but God having saved Noah and his family, His thought was that they should enjoy His salvation, and therefore God made a covenant on certain terms with Noah. I do not go into the detail of the terms, but there it was.

Now we pass on to Abraham, where more of the moral character of a covenant comes out.

The covenant with Abraham, as I understand it, was circumcision, a covenant in the flesh of Abraham and his children. Abraham was circumcised himself, and all the males of his household. That was the condition of God's covenant with Abraham, and the purpose and moral force of it was separation. They carried this sign with them in order that they might enjoy God's intervention, and that intervention was that God had accounted Abraham righteous. God had not only blessed him, but He made this covenant with him—that Abraham might enjoy God's grace. God lays down the condition on which He could be with Abraham, and the condition was circumcision. He was to be separate from the nations of the earth, a stranger and a pilgrim apart for God.

We will pass on to another case and look at the covenant made with Israel. God made a covenant of law with the children of Israel, and the purpose of it was that they might enjoy His intervention on their behalf, that is, their redemption from Egypt. I do not go much into the matter, but the law expressed the terms of the covenant, and these terms were good and beneficent. We find God afterwards appealing to the people on this ground, and raising the question whether any other people on the face of the earth had had righteous statutes and

judgments such as they had. They were far better off than any other people. They had an amount of light from God that no other nation enjoyed, and righteous judgments to guide them in government; and the object of the covenant was that they might enjoy the intervention of God, who had not only delivered them from Egyptian bondage, but brought them to Himself in the wilderness. The covenant with them embodied the covenant made with Abraham. We read that circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers. Thus the covenant made with them in the law embodied the principle of the preceding covenant, and described the terms on which God could be with them, and they with God.

Before passing on from this to the covenant in connection with the coming of Christ, I may remark that there was a kind of covenant made with Israel on their return from the captivity in Babylon, which return was a remarkable intervention of God on their behalf. If you search the scriptures, you will find that God laid down certain terms on which He would be with the people after their return. There was a modification of the original terms, because many things were scarcely possible after their return which had been laid down under the original covenant. They came back, you must remember, from the

captivity under the protection of the Gentile power, but they no longer had the throne of David. They were brought back to wait for Christ under Gentile domination.

Now we come to the presence of Christ in Israel, and in this we see a new intervention of God on behalf of His people, the greatest intervention of all. What could be equal to the thought of Emmanuel, God with us? In the early part of the prophecy of Isaiah we get this intervention of God on their behalf referred to prophetically, in allusion to the time when the Assyrian will yet come into the land, and the prophet says (chap. ix.): The darkness will not be like the darkness was in the past, for "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." That was the character of God's intervention on behalf of Israel. A sign was given (chap. vii.), and the sign pointed to *Immanuel*. At the birth of Christ the angels say to the shepherds: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord;" and the sign which they gave them was of a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn. The force of the intervention was "God with us." And when Christ came in thus, there were new conditions laid down for those that received

Him that they might enjoy this new intervention of God. Not that Christ was come to set aside the law, but to fulfil it; at the same time, where there was faith to appreciate this intervention of God in Christ, there were new conditions for those who accepted it. The angels celebrated this at the birth of Christ in the song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men." That is very different to anything that had gone before. I have a strong impression that those who received Christ, and were associated with Him here, came under the favour of God, under that favour in which Christ stood, the object being that they might enjoy the wonderful intervention of God on behalf of His people. This intervention is celebrated in a very blessed way in the song of Zacharias in Luke ii. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." While the occasion of the song was the birth of John the Baptist, the song is remarkable in its celebration of the coming kingdom of Christ. He was the "horn of salvation." The position of those whom Christ described as "blessed" may be seen in Matthew v.-vii. It is very interesting to trace out how those associated with Christ, when the Lord was here on earth, came

under the favour of God, and that this was the character of the covenant consequent on the introduction of Christ.

I pass on to the passage I read, which speaks of the new covenant, and this refers to ourselves. Now, in order to lead up to the new covenant, I will say a few words about God's intervention, as pictured in the great supper (Luke xiv.); and what I understand by it. The great supper brings before us, I judge, the glory of the Lord, as the celebration of righteousness accomplished; and you cannot understand or appreciate this intervention on behalf of men save as you apprehend the glory of the Lord. Then the new covenant has come in in order that we may behold and be changed by the glory of the Lord. You first have the terms of the new covenant, then it is added, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image."

Now, as I have said, the great supper connects itself with the glory of the Lord, and the glory of the Lord is a great celebration! God will have His house filled, and filled with those who are prepared to have part in the great celebration. Now, if you ask what I mean by the great supper being the celebration of righteousness, I reply that the supper is the answer to the cross,

and that the cross was the accomplishment of righteousness for God. Where sin had been, sin has been removed, and at the same time righteousness established in the righteous One. The righteous One glorified God, and vindicated God's righteousness. All was completed at the cross. Righteousness was established, nothing can be added to it. You remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is finished." That put the seal on righteousness; and the next step was the resurrection. The resurrection was the testimony of righteousness, and therefore becomes the ground of faith. It is God's testimony of righteousness accomplished. The reason of that is perfectly plain, for resurrection testified that death was no longer triumphant. It had reigned up to that time, but resurrection proved that the power of God was triumphant, that death's power was annulled. Therefore the resurrection of Christ becomes the testimony of righteousness and the ground of faith, and righteousness is imputed to us "If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." He was raised again in testimony in order that we might be justified.

Now we come to a further point, the glory of the Lord is the celebration of righteousness. I do not know whether we all enter into the

meaning of celebration, but the idea is brought before us in the great supper. I would like all to appreciate the glory of the Lord. You get a foreshadowing of it in Psalm xxiv., where we read, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." When Christ went up on high, surely He was received with rejoicing. If there was such heavenly rejoicing when Christ was born into the world, do you not think there was great rejoicing when He went up as man on high? When the Lord entered Jerusalem, at the close of His course here, to suffer, the children sang, "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Now when righteousness was completed, and Christ went to heaven in the value of that completed work, do you not think He was received there with acclamation, that there was rejoicing in heaven? All the will of God accomplished, and the One in whom God had been perfectly glorified, who had accomplished righteousness in the place of man's judgment, gone up on high. If there were not rejoicing, I think there would be very poor spirits in heaven! And if there was rejoicing in heaven, I think we must be very poor things if we do not rejoice here. I doubt not that there was acclamation in heaven when Christ went back there in the power of His accomplished work—rejoicing that can only be

made good down here in the power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has come down to report the glory of Christ, and to bring us into the celebration of the great supper, the rejoicing consequent upon Christ having entered heaven in accomplished righteousness. He came from there to do the work, He goes back as having fully glorified God. The Holy Ghost has come to bring our souls into the rejoicings of heaven. If that is true, and I think no one here would be prepared to dispute it, there not one but would wish to join in the acclamation. Every one here, I suppose, knows and confesses Christ as Lord, but how far have we entered into the rejoicings of heaven? I feel the poverty of my own spirit in this way, how little I am in accord with heaven. If we were in the spirit of what characterises heaven, we should be very bright; how much rejoicing there would be here on earth. We must be all conscious how very soon we feel the effect of a ray of sunshine; and if you got a little ray of sunshine from the glory of the Lord, from that scene, what an amazing effect there would be on the spirits of God's people down here. The Spirit of the Lord is come, and we, in the liberty of the Spirit, beholding the glory of the Lord, enter into the rejoicings above, which really began when Christ came into the world and which have not yet ended in

heaven. Christ has been received there as man, and is seated in the highest place of honour and dignity. He has taken His place at the right hand of God, He has ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

Now we will refer again to the covenant as that by which we may enjoy what we have been speaking about. The Spirit brings out the terms on which God is pleased to be with us, consequent on His intervention on our behalf. The terms are very simple: love and forgiveness, or love and righteousness. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and in the presence of the love of God it is impossible that there can be such a thing as imputation of sin. These are the spirit of the covenant, the love of God, and forgiveness or non-imputation. The love of God is the first principle of Christianity, and when the Holy Ghost is come, the love of God is shed abroad in man's heart. What is Christianity without love? I think the sense of grace would grow old in us, if you understand me, if we had not love. But love cannot grow old; love is ever fresh, because it is what God is. The sense of grace might in measure fail in the heart of a Christian, but there is no failing in the love of God. Indeed, we get the expression in 1 Corinthians xiii.: "Love never fails." It is eternal, and the Holy Ghost sheds

it abroad in our hearts. He is given to us for that end, that we might be in the blessings of the new covenant, love and righteousness. And, I judge the object is, that by beholding the glory of the Lord, we might be brought more and more by the power of the Holy Ghost into correspondence with the mind of heaven. There is a company in the Revelation that puts us to shame, a company on earth who learn the heavenly song. We do not sing it much. Our hymns have not much the character of it. The company I refer to learn the heavenly song. We ought not to have to learn it, for it belongs to us as a heavenly people. It is not for us to listen to, and to catch its tones; we ought to know it and to sing it ourselves, to be in concert with heaven. We can get on very well with such a hymn as

“ We bless our Saviour’s name,
Our sins are all forgiven.”

But that is hardly the acclamation and rejoicing of heaven; very different from it; and I think the Holy Ghost is come down here to bring our hearts into the heavenly song.

In speaking of the covenant, I have looked at it as being on our part, because covenants, though of God, are on man’s behalf. A covenant, as we have seen, describes the terms on which God can be with us so that we may enjoy His interven-

tion on our behalf; thus covenant is on our side. God does not make a covenant for Himself, but on our behalf. There are two parties to a covenant. God makes the covenant, lays down the terms, and we accept the terms. But at the same time, I believe that the new covenant is to lead us into the apprehension of what is on the part of God, and the point where we begin to touch that, is the ministry of reconciliation.

If I speak of God's love and righteousness, of sin not being imputed, that is on man's behalf; but when I come to the ministry of reconciliation, the word of reconciliation is that every man and every order of man has disappeared in the death of Christ from the eye of God, that but one Man may remain, and that man is Christ.

Consequent on reconciliation, you have this "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new, and all things are of God." That is not on man's part, but on God's part. The terms of the new covenant are to lead you to the apprehension of what is on *God's* part, and if you apprehend that, you have a very much clearer sense of what is on man's part. It is a great point for souls to go on to the apprehension of what is on God's part. Reconciliation is so, and it began when

Christ was on earth. Then He was morally outside of everything and every man here upon earth; He was addressing man, but as being Himself morally outside all; He had no part morally with man, but was outside of all and every man—the corn of wheat alone; and in the cross He removed every man.

Christ is now the blessed starting-point for God. God will have none other. If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation; new things have come to pass, and all things are of God. Christ is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might have the pre-eminence; and that we must accept.

Another thing comes in as connected with this: you have to get free from everything that links you to the course of things down here. You will feel the need of deliverance, the need to be set free from everything to which the flesh would attach you; and the flesh would attach you to everything here. You become conscious of the urgent necessity that every moral tie should be broken; you have put off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and then you prove the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, by which you are formed in everything that is after God. You partake morally of Christ.

One word more, to refer again to the covenant. In *Christ* you get the good of every preceding

covenant—you get circumcision. You may not get the good of every covenant in the letter of it, but you get the spirit of it. In the new covenant you get the circumcision of Christ. So as to the covenant of law with Israel, we get the good of it, for “the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” You get too all the good that Israel should have had in the coming and presence of Christ here. You are in the favour in which He is—“peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.” At the same time we have “access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” You stand in divine favour. “As he is, so are we in this world.” Thus you get the good of every preceding covenant; and to go back, as the Galatians were doing, to the form of some previous covenant, is really apostasy from the truth. I see cases of departure from us now, people leaving us, and going away from the light which they have been brought into, to something out of which they had come, to what is set up after the terms of another covenant, and that really means apostasy from the light. I pray God to preserve every soul from it. We are brought into the light and pleasure of God, and we ought to understand the terms on which it pleases God to be with us.

I touch on one other point. We read, "He hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." That is, that we should be the eternal witness of the righteousness and consistency of God. There was in the cross the perfect solution of every moral question, and the reconciliation of love and righteousness. We are, in virtue of it, the objects of God's love, and at the same time the witness of His righteousness. If you want to learn great and eternal lessons, there is one point where you learn them, and that is in the *death of Christ*.

F E. R.



RECONCILIATION.

(READING ON COL. 15-29.)

F. E. R. What was your point, Dr. B., reading this scripture ?

F. H. B. I thought we might look at reconciliation and what it leads on to. It would be helpful to say a word as to the difference between justification and reconciliation ; both are spoken of in Romans v.

F. E. R. There is a good deal of difference in the two. *Things* are said to be reconciled, which don't need to be justified. Reconciliation applies to a good deal to which justification hardly applies.

G. H. E. What things are to be reconciled ?

F. E. R. Thrones, dominions, principalities, &c.

G. H. E. And persons are justified ?

REMARKED. But persons are reconciled also.

F. E. R. Reconciliation takes in the whole universe—everything that has been affected by sin needs to be reconciled. “ 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 on earth, or things in heaven.

QUES. Are the things mentioned in verse 20 the same as in verse 16?

F. E. R. I should think so. It says "all things" in both. In verse 16 all things were created by Him, and for Him. In verse 20 He takes up all these things created for Him on the ground of reconciliation.

T. H. R. It is a sort of double title to Headship. All are to be reconciled by Him, and in that sense it amplifies the title of Christ.

F. H. B. What is the difference in the effect on the soul between justification and reconciliation?

F. E. R. Justification is on my side, reconciliation is on God's side.

F. H. B. What do you mean by reconciliation being on God's side; is it to make me suitable to God?

F. E. R. Yes, the moment you touch it you touch what is for God. Justification clears me. A man must have forgiveness, but forgiveness is on my side, reconciliation is for God. All things are to be reconciled for God, for *Himself*. In reconciliation you really reach the other side—what is for God.

T. M. In what sense do things need to be reconciled?

F. E. R. For God. That they may be suitable for God to have His pleasure in them. All have

to be taken up in Christ. Christ takes up every throne, dominion, and principality and power for the pleasure of God.

QUES. I suppose government in the world is altogether dissociated from righteousness ?

F. E. R. Yes; but judgment will return to righteousness.

QUES. Are the things spoken of things moral or material ?

F. E. R. Moral in a sense, or moral ideas are connected with them.

F. H. B. In the type (Lev. xvi.) we see Aaron reconciled all the vessels for service.

F. E. R. The blood was carried into the holiest, and then the high priest came out to reconcile.

W. W. Reconciliation was made because sin was there, that God may have pleasure in them.

F. E. R. Yes; everything has through sin become alienated from God. Alienated from the state in which God had His pleasure it when He created it.

QUES. Is tasting death for everything co-extensive with the atonement ?

F. E. R. I think so. Aaron carried the blood into the holiest to make an atonement first for himself and his house, and afterwards for the people, then for the holy places, &c.

T. H. R. It is interesting to see in the New

Testament that only Paul touches that line. He always begins with God. For instance, "God sent forth his Son," "God commendeth his love toward us," "He hath made him to be sin for us." Paul takes that line very much. Peter does not, but takes our side. He says, "Who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree." Paul brings God out every way. In the day of atonement we get reconciliation, and that in view of the eternal state.

F. E. R. Yes, and that is of great importance.

D. L. H. Then, is the idea that everywhere where the creature has been, there Christ has to be ?

F. E. R. I think so.

QUES. Why does it take in things in heaven?

F. E. R. Because everything is taken up in Christ.

QUES. Would you say everything has been defiled by the sin which came in in Adam and had to be reconciled through Christ ?

F. E. R. You must go further back than Adam, for sin has affected things in heaven as well as things on earth. It is said: "By one man sin entered into the world" but the devil sinned from the outset.

D. L. H. In what sense can we think of the angelic beings, or things connected with angels, and thrones, and principalities, &c., in what

sense can we conceive of these being reconciled?

F. E. R. I cannot say much about it. They come in subordinately to Christ. For instance, in Hebrews xii. you get Mount Zion, and then every part of that system of things which is connected with Mount Zion, and among them myriads of angels.

REMARKED. It says the heavens are not clean in His sight, and even the angels He charges with folly.

F. E. R. The word says we are to judge angels.

D. L. H. Then He gathers together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him.

F. E. R. God never divorces heaven from earth. It is Satan who seeks to do so. It is the special effort of Antichrist. From beginning to end in scripture you get the connection of heaven and earth, and in the Revelation John says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." In Genesis God begins with the sphere of the heavens and the earth.

D. L. H. Seeing that sin has affected both, it is clear reconciliation must be for both.

F. E. R. I think so. The break-out of evil has affected the universe. Man does not under-

stand it, but the whole is compromised. Angels fell as well as men, but man only is redeemed.

T. H. R. After all, angels come in under man—superior beings, but they come in under man.

F. E. R. Hebrews ii. is conclusive as to that.

T. H. R. John i. shews us angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man. The moment the Son was here He was the object of angelic hosts.

F. E. R. Angels have to take their place as attendant on the heavenly city in connection with the system of grace.

REMARKED. In Hosea ii. it says: "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth."

F. E. R. Yes, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil. Reconciliation will be complete in the millennium.

QUES. What is the difference between reconciliation as in Romans and as in Colossians?

F. E. R. I see no difference between the two. Reconciliation is alluded to in Romans in connection with the change of Headship; it is more fully presented in Colossians. In Romans it merely say. "By whom we have received the reconciliation." It is simply a statement of a fact, but the apostle does not enlarge on it there.

QUES. Why is it by the *blood* of His cross in

regard to *things*, and in the *body* of His flesh through death as applied to *believers*?

F. E. R. The first is an allusion to the day of atonement. "Having made peace by the blood of his cross." The blood is carried into the holiest in witness of the removal of all that disturbed. Hence it comes out in Hebrews ix. "He hath appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." By his own blood he has entered once into heaven. The blood has been carried in as witness, and then the High Priest comes forth to bring reconciliation into effect.

QUES. Then there would be a difference between reconciliation of things and of persons—what is that difference?

F. E. R. The reconciliation of things is remarkably simple. Everything is taken up in Christ. The reconciliation of persons refers to individuals and has to be individually accepted. "Through whom we have now received the reconciliation." In Corinthians it is, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Reconciliation has to be accepted when it is a question of persons, therefore there was the ministry of reconciliation.

QUES. Is there any thought of the enmity being brought to an end in reconciliation?

F. E. R. The enmity is only brought in to

shew that the one marked by it must go. You cannot improve with reference to enmity. You cannot reconcile what is at enmity. It is the purest folly to think of reconciling what is hostile.

D. L. H. Then the way in which we are reconciled before God is the way we have to take through death ?

F. E. R. Yes, "You that were sometime alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." That in which was the enmity has gone in death, you have to accept this ; now it is the "word of reconciliation."

REMARKED. You must distinguish between the enmity and the person who had the enmity.

F. E. R. Yes.

E. H. C. In the millennium there will still be persons unreconciled ?

F. E. R. Everything is taken up then under the eye of God in Christ. Reconciliation raises the question of how things are presented under the eye of God.

F. H. B. Reconciliation is by death, but in Christ.

F. E. R. Yes ; what was at enmity is ended in Christ. All is made suitable to God, and that can be only in Christ.

QUES. It says, "When we were enemies we were reconciled."

F. E. R. Yes; but it was by learning that what was at enmity had been removed by the death of Christ. That is the way of it. I do not think the apostle refers to a change of feeling on the part of people, but to acceptance of the truth that what was at enmity has been removed. They had received the word of reconciliation—"When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." They had accepted that as their death. This is the truth on God's side—on the experimental side it is somewhat different.

F. H. B. I thought we had to distinguish between reconciliation on God's side and the reconciliation of Christians in regard to responsibility?

F. E. R. Responsibility hardly comes in in connection with reconciliation. Justification is connected with responsibility. I am helped by recollecting that justification is on our side and reconciliation is on God's side. Justification is for man, reconciliation is what is effected for God. God was in Christ carrying this out for His own satisfaction.

QUES. Is propitiation for God, and the basis of reconciliation?

F. E. R. That is connected more with man's responsibility. It is for sins.

D. L. H. Is reconciliation for bringing to pass the purpose of God?

F. E. R. Yes; God's purpose of reconciliation is outside the question of man's responsibility.

QUES. Is it for bringing God's purpose into effect in connection with the "true tabernacle which God pitched, and not man"?

F. E. R. Yes, based on the atonement, on the putting away of sin. "He hath appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

W MCG. Would you say the blood is the witness that reconciliation has been effected for God?

F. E. R. I would say rather that blood is the witness of *peace*, that *peace* is made by the blood of the cross.

QUES. Is there any difference between the ordinary use of the term reconciliation, and the scriptural use of it?

F. E. R. You must find out from scripture what is the force of the word. It is one of the terms the force of which you must find from its use in scripture. The dictionary would not give you the scriptural use of it.

REMARKED. In the ordinary use of the word

the sense is that two persons estranged have been brought together.

F. E. R. That is not the scripture idea. It is not minds that are reconciled.

REMARKED, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

F. E. R. But how was God reconciling the world unto Himself? There was no enmity on the part of God towards the world; and certainly the mission of Christ was not to make people more pleasant. Yet in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

W. B. I thought it came out in the Lord's ministry of grace here on earth.

F. E. R. Then you will be bound to admit this, that His ministry was ineffective.

W. B. I know the world was not reconciled, but I thought that that ministry began with the Lord, and was afterwards committed to the disciples.

F. E. R. I do not think it is exactly that. The apostles came out with the *word of reconciliation* which altered the whole position of things.

W. B. You distinguish between the ministry of reconciliation and the word of reconciliation?

F. E. R. Yes, the ministry of reconciliation

began with Christ Himself, and meant that in the presence of Christ here everything was under the eye of God on a wholly new footing in connection with Him. That was the effect of the presence of Christ.

QUES. Was that before His death ?

F. E. R. Yes, it was a foretaste of what is yet to come. In the presence of Christ God was not dealing with man on the ground of law or prophets, everything was on an entirely new footing.

W. B. What was the new footing ?

F. E. R. Grace and favour. God was in a new light toward man. He saw what was perfectly suitable to Himself on earth in Christ.

G. H. E. Did that take place when the Lord was born into this world ?

F. E. R. Yes ; but there was a presentation in connection with His being here of what was perfectly agreeable to God. It was as though God was as favourable to man as possible.

QUES. Has not the song, " Good pleasure in men " that signification ?

F. E. R. Yes, and Christ's presence formed the crucial test so long as He was here. The eye of God rested on Him. It was a ministry of reconciliation. Supposing that not one single person on the face of the earth had been affected by the ministry, yet it would not for a moment

have altered the fact. I do not think the fact depends upon persons being affected by it. The fact remained whether people were affected or not.

D. L. H. It was not the presence of Christ here that was to put the world to rights.

F. E. R. No; He presented Himself to man entirely independent of man in that which was perfectly agreeable in the eye of God. That is the wonderful thing.

F. H. B. But death was necessary for the effect?

F. E. R. Yes, of course, it all had His death in view, but it was so far independent of results.

QUES. What is the difference between the ministry of reconciliation and the word of reconciliation?

F. E. R. The ministry of reconciliation was effected in Christ in His life. God approached the world outside of it. He was favourable to the world, in Christ, not hostile; but when you come to the word of reconciliation it is the testimony that reconciliation has been effected in death. It is not now simply that God has approached the world in another Man, in Christ being here, but the man hostile to God has been removed. So you have both things now, God's approach to man, and the man antagonistic to God removed in death. That is what I under-

stand by the word of reconciliation, and we have to accept it.

F. H. B. I fear but very few know anything about it.

F. E. R. Do you believe the bulk of Christians could give you any idea of what the new covenant is ?

W B. I fear they could not.

QUES. Have we both the word and the ministry of reconciliation ?

F. E. R. I think so. The disciples and others accepted the attitude of God.

QUES. In receiving forgiveness of sins ?

F. E. R. Yes. Take the case of the woman who was a sinner. (Luke vii.)

G. G. Do you say that God reconciling the world unto Himself includes the death of Christ ?

F. E. R. No. I don't think so, though it led up to it. It is beautiful to see that God had a way of approaching man entirely independent of man, and yet entirely favourable towards man, in spite of his state, because He was approaching men in a man entirely agreeable to Himself.

QUES. Though the attitude of God in the presentation of Himself in Christ effected nothing, did not that bring judgment on the world, as the Lord says in John, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but

now they have no cloke for their sin, and further He says, "Now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." Had not this brought out the enmity?

F. E. R. Yes, it had that effect.

G. G. What is the effect of reconciliation?

F. E. R. The effect is very profound it changes a man's thoughts entirely. I do not suppose that many of us here this afternoon are in it. The profound effect it produces is this: You are here for God's pleasure, and not for your own. It changes everything. If I am only in the good of justification I may be here, cleared of sin, but still in a way for myself; but when reconciliation is understood it is no longer question of what I like. "I have nothing to seek nor to choose." I am wholly and entirely for God's pleasure and satisfaction.

QUES. Do we not grow in the apprehension of that?

F. E. R. Yes but the point first to accept it.

F. H. B. One effect of it would be, we could be with God to take in and enjoy what is God's good pleasure.

F. E. R. What pleasure or joy in God could there be without it? People joy in other things. When a person changes his residence for the bettering of himself, it does not indicate to me that

he is here for the pleasure of God. If it were so, it would be immaterial to me whether I live in the worst place or the best.

T. H. R. Do not you think that the full effect of reconciliation in the eternal state will be that everything is brought into the blessedness of God Himself?

F. E. R. Yes, and God will be reflected in everything.

REMARKED. Nothing will be in the slightest dissonance with Himself.

QUES. When the apostle says, "Be ye reconciled to God," had they touched it?

F. E. R. I do not think the Corinthians had touched it.

QUES. Then the Romans would be an advance on them in that way, for to them he says, "Through whom ye have now *received* the reconciliation." Where does the receiving of the reconciliation in the case of the prodigal come in?

F. E. R. When he accepted the Father's embrace he was conscious that the Father was favourable.

QUES. Where does the best robe come in?

F. E. R. That goes further than reconciliation. It really is new creation, Christ formed in the Christian.

QUES. Then reconciliation goes on to new creation?

F. E. R. Reconciliation could not be complete without it. In fact it involves new creation.

QUES. Were they effected historically in the prodigal at the same time? Do they go together?

F. E. R. You cannot get things clearly in a parable. No parable goes on all fours.

QUES. What does the best robe indicate?

F. E. R. The embrace presents the Father's side, and the best robe, the prodigal's side. You see that though the prodigal might be perfectly suitable for the Father's eye, he needed the best robe to enjoy what was the Father's pleasure.

QUES. What is the basis of the reconciliation spoken of in 2 Corinthians v.?

F. E. R. The removal of sin is the basis. It carries you back to the day of atonement.

QUES. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." That would be reconciliation?

F. E. R. Yes. Christ has appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." That is the basis.

QUES. No one could have accepted it apart from that?

F. E. R. No, it would not have been possible apart from that. The removal of sin judicially was necessary to carry out reconciliation.

REMARKED. He has reconciled us in the body of His flesh through death?

F. E. R. That is how it is effected subjectively for us.

QUES. Is reconciliation for a Christian or for a sinner?

F. E. R. I do not think a sinner as such is conscious of wanting reconciliation, but forgiveness; he wants justification.

QUES. Would you preach the ministry of reconciliation to sinners?

F. E. R. It would not be much good to them. What is announced to sinners is forgiveness of sins. That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name."

QUES. Where is the ministry of reconciliation to be exercised?

F. E. R. I think very much amongst those who believe.

F. H. B. When we preach the gospel we preach to many of the converted, and in that way we could preach reconciliation.

QUES. But do they need to be reconciled?

F. E. R. I think so, if they are to be for the satisfaction of God. To be to His satisfaction, they must not only be justified, but reconciled. It is all a question of where you are going to stop.

REMARKED. If reconciled, one would be entirely for God's pleasure ?

F. E. R. Yes, and it is important to see that it is in another man that holiness comes in. It is the new man that is created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth.

REMARKED. Holiness is for God's pleasure.

F. E. R. Yes, that you may be according to Himself; but you cannot touch holiness apart from love, it is by being in the presence of holy love, and the subject of holy love, that holiness is promoted in us. "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

F. H. B. Then reconciliation is with a view to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight ?

F. E. R. Do you think a man, an enemy to God by wicked works, could ever be changed into unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight ? It could not be. That *person* could be, but not that *man*.

QUES. What are the ministries ?

F. E. R. The ministry of the gospel, the ministry of the new covenant, the ministry of reconciliation, and the ministry of the mystery.

QUES. Why do we get the ministry of the gospel, and the ministry of the mystery here ?

F. E. R. One takes in the new covenant ministry, and the other is connected with the

ministry of reconciliation—the new covenant ministry is all on the line of what God is towards you.

REMARKED. The ministry in 2 Corinthians is the highest form of the gospel ministry.

F. H. B. How is reconciliation connected with the body ?

F. E. R. Because when you come to what is for God you necessarily come to new creation. You cannot stop short of this when you come to what is for God, and really enjoy Christ. Then it is, "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new: and all things are of God." Then you come to the scene of God's purpose in what is *in Christ*. You come to the truth of the body, for Christ is not fully expressed in any one saint.

T. H. R. New covenant ministry is more in connection with the kingdom, but reconciliation carries you to the purpose of God.

F. E. R. Yes, and you come into the light of the body.

T. H. R. New covenant ministry is more in connection with righteousness, reconciliation more with holiness. Reconciliation takes you into the holiest.

F. H. B. We could not enter into the holiest without reconciliation.

F. E. R. No; you are not suitable else. But when you come to that line of things, into the truth of association with Christ, the point is, you cease to be simply an individual, you become one of a company. I do not believe you really reach the idea of the body until you reach the Head, except as a dogma.

QUES. Do you come to that through the ministry of reconciliation?

F. E. R. Yes, reconciliation is connected with the body.

QUES. How so?

F. E. R. If you are associated with Christ you are in Christ, you are of His order. But then of necessity He is the Head of that order. The moment you come to the expression "in Christ" you come to another side of things; you could not be said to be created in "the Lord," but "in Christ," the Head. You are new created in Christ, you apprehend Him in a new state, and this brings in the body.

QUES. Then reconciliation is connected with headship here?

F. E. R. Yes.

D. L. H. Say a word on "If ye continue in the faith and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel."

F. E. R. It is brought in on account of the apostle writing to a company, every member

of which he could not know ; their responsibility was maintained.

F. H. B. There was danger of their slipping away.

F. E. R. Yes, quite so.

QUES. Is sanctification at all in line with reconciliation ?

F. E. R. Hardly, I think. Sanctification comes in from the very outset. It is on the line of God's sovereignty. It is scarcely the idea of reconciliation.

W. J. Is "the new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us," in connection with reconciliation ?

F. E. R. Yes, and it is the sanctified company who go in by that way. That is the effect of reconciliation. In chapter ix. you get reconciliation established, and the effect of it comes out in chapter x. There you have the sanctified company with boldness to enter.

E. H. C. When it is forgiveness, it is the death of *Christ*, but when reconciliation it is by the death of *His Son*. Why ?

F. E. R. Because reconciliation brings in the full light of divine purpose. God sent His Son. It brings you into the full light of God.

QUES. Would you say that in reconciliation all moral distance is removed ?

F. E. R. Distance was removed in the death

of Christ, but in reconciliation there is more than that, you are entirely according to God. You are in the presence of the fulness of God, conscious of His perfect complacency in you, you are before Him, according to Him.

REMARKED. All moral distance must be removed for that ?

F. E. R. Yes, but reconciliation tells you it *has* been removed ; and you are conscious of being before God in love—suitable to His eye. It is made good to you when you have accepted His love and are formed in it. All our difficulty about reconciliation is because we are so little acquainted with the love of God. It would be very simple to us if we were.

REMARKED. It would be a sort of natural conclusion.

F. E. R. Yes, exactly so.

QUES. Was not all that set forth in Christ, the good pleasure of God in Him ?

F. E. R. He was the beginning of it, "Who is the beginning."

G. G. Is the sanctified company and the reconciled company the same ?

F. E. R. Yes ; but sanctified brings in another idea. Sanctification is on the line of the sovereignty of God's will, which has set you apart for Himself, according to Hebrews x.

QUES. What brings us into the effect of reconciliation ?

F. E. R. I do not think anything will but acquaintance with the love of God. You are drawn into it in that way.

R. F. K. Would you say once more what is the scriptural thought of reconciliation ?

F. E. R. I think the idea of the term is the bringing things into conscious complacency with the divine mind and pleasure.

QUES. Would you say suitability gives the thought ?

F. E. R. It is more than that. It is God's complacency ; that God may have satisfaction in all. You must bring Christ in for this.

QUES. While it is the present state necessarily, will it not go on to the millennium ?

F. E. R. Yes. The eternal state is necessary for its full display because the eternal state brings you to the full blessedness of God. It is then not merely rule and government, but God all in all.

T. H. R. Take eternal life : you do not like to connect that idea with God. To my mind it does not reach up to the blessedness of God. It is something that *belongs* to God, only we are brought into it, and that must be eternal.

QUES. You would say the new man would not be satisfied with the millennium ?

T. H. R. No. Everything must be brought into the blessedness of God Himself. There is the necessity of love which brings into its own blessedness.

F. E. R. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth."

T. H. R. I was thinking this morning, in reference to the Jew being satisfied in the millennium, will not he too look forward to the eternal state?

F. E. R. I think so. The blessings of the kingdom and all the happiness that pertains to it would be incomplete without that; for the full expanse of blessing, you must have the eternal state when "the tabernacle of God is with men."

QUES. Who are the "men"? Are they those living on the earth?

T. H. R. I thought so.

W. H. B. Will not the church too have to wait through the millennium for full blessedness?

T. H. R. No. J. B. S. used to say their blessedness was complete because they were with Christ, that the New Jerusalem is not a new thing but a new scene.

QUES. Is not the eternal state what God is?

T. H. R. God is, and He exists in blessedness. That is the eternal state as we speak. We connect it with the eternal life, and we connect a thought of time with the eternal state, but it is

God *is*—that is eternal, when we speak of eternal it is difficult to eliminate time from our thoughts.

F. E. R. It is impossible to do so, it is due to the limitation of our minds. It is an impossibility for a finite mind to grasp the idea of eternity.

QUES. "God to be all in all," is that the effect of reconciliation ?

F. E. R. Yes ; I think so. Reconciliation has done its work ; it has been effected then.

T. H. R. In the day of atonement we get reconciliation, also the putting away of sins on that day, so that both come in there. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." That is government, and government is satisfied every way in righteousness by the putting away of sins, and that enables man to be brought into holiness.

QUES. Then reconciliation is for God's good pleasure ?

F. E. R. Yes ; justification is on man's side, reconciliation on God's side.

F. H. B. A person receiving the reconciliation and approaching God thinks of what God is.

F. E. R. Then he has the consciousness of being according to God, he is before Him holy and without blame, not conscious of unsuitability, he has the best robe on.

F. H. B. I think our Lord's day morning meetings would be of a different character if we understood the meaning of reconciliation.

F. E. R. We should know that we were not only a justified company, but a reconciled company. The bulk of people are as to their sense of things a company of believers justified.

QUES. How is that state to be promoted ?

F. E. R. We have to begin with ourselves.

T. H. R. We might ask ourselves one simple question, Do I know the love of God ?

F. E. R. It is no use seeking what to do with others, and thinking how we are going to affect others. I have asked myself, supposing it were possible that I could affect others, how should I like to affect them ?

REMARKED. You can only do that, I suppose, as you are affected yourself.

F. E. R. No; but supposing it were possible to affect others—I know one cannot affect others—but supposing one could, how would I like them to be affected ?

REMARKED. But you may influence another.

F. E. R. It is only God who affects you for good. He does all the work Himself; but supposing I could affect you, how should I like to affect you ?

QUES. Well, what is the answer ?

F. E. R. It makes me seriously question what

my object would be ; I ought to be wishing everybody to be like myself ; and I do not know that I am prepared for that.

QUES. Is that what Paul meant when he said, "Brethren, be followers together of me" ?

F. E. R. I do not think I am prepared to say that.

QUES. "Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus," is that the effect of ministry ?

F. E. R. That is a question of intelligence. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom ; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." That is full grown in point of intelligence.

QUES. You look that from the scriptures ministered, souls may be led into God's things.

F. E. R. I have not any confidence in anything effected by man.

F. H. B. Would not God affect them through your ministry ?

F. E. R. It is a great thing to bring before people what is the divine mind, to enlighten them, that they may know the mind of God. Then the next thing to come to pass is the subjective effect. We are to be exercised by what we hear, and if we are, then through that God will work ; but He will do the work Himself. I might shew you how you ought to be affected, but it is only God who can affect you.

QUES. Why does the apostle put "warning every man" first in the passage you quoted?

F. E. R. Because *you* can do that; a wise man can warn against snares and such like.

D. L. H. What is the bearing of the expression the apostle uses in 1 Corinthians iv. 15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel"?

F. E. R. I think they were all accounted his children in that way. They were converted through him. All whose eyes were opened through him he looked at as his children.

F. H. B. Do you not in saying "through him" admit the point contended for?

F. E. R. No; for although they were converted through him, and so begotten by his gospel, he was used only to enlighten them.

QUES. So that when you said yesterday the Lord alone can teach you, that is what you mean?

F. E. R. Yes. For my part, I think it is too serious a responsibility to affect one another. I could not bear the responsibility. It would be too much man's work.

QUES. "He works the work of the Lord, as I also do"—what of that?

F. E. R. I think that was in the way of

testimony, we may learn a great deal from one another. We may get intelligence of the mind of God, but that is not a work wrought in you. It is a great thing to get this, but intelligence in the mind of God must lead to exercise on your part, or nothing is wrought in you. Through the exercise God works in you.

QUES. Do you make any difference between the apostles, and ministers in the present day in this respect?

F. E. R. The apostle did not, as it appears to me, accept the responsibility as to the work in the soul. He looks at what had taken place in the saints as God's work from beginning to end.

REMARKED. For instance, at Corinth the Lord says, "I have much people in this place."

F. E. R. The point with the apostle was to bring these to light.

J. M. Then you think that the only way in which we can influence one another is to bring light to the conscience to lead them to exercise?

F. E. R. Yes.

D. L. H. The apostle says, "That they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God."

A. C. Has the evangelist any more power to open people's eyes than he has to turn them from darkness to light?

F. E. R. Yes, he *has* power to open people's eyes, he can enlighten them. Suppose I have been grossly deceived all my life by somebody, and you know that somebody perfectly, and expose him to me, you would open my eyes, and you would in all probability produce a profound impression on me.

D. L. H. It is a very common expression, a person says, "You have opened my eyes."

F. E. R. Yes. The devil had grossly deceived the Gentiles, and the apostle was sent to enlighten them, to undeceive them. Then they turned to God, for they saw that they had been deluded by Satan; when the light was brought to them they could see what God was, and they turned to Him.

QUES. Does to open the eyes involve a work of God?

F. E. R. No person would appreciate the light which you bring, except there was a previous work of God in him. New birth is the previous work of God.

T. H. R. You must have the honest and good ground. It is only there the seed springs up and brings forth fruit. The ground must be divinely prepared.

F. H. B. A person must have been born again to accept the truth.

G. H. E. Just as with the men of Samaria,

they say, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves."

F. E. R. Yes, she simply drew attention to Christ.

W. B. Would you preach only to those born again?

F. H. B. I said no one could accept the truth without being born again.

W. B. Have you not seen people very much unconverted brought under the sound of the gospel, and then converted?

F. H. B. But God did it.

W. B. I know it is all God's work, and I would like to speak to 500 people desperately unconverted, and if any of them were converted, I know it would be all His work from first to last.

P. And the hand of the Lord be with you.

W. B. Yes, or nothing would be done.

REMARKED. A man can receive nothing unless it be given him from above."

F. E. R. The point is of vital importance. If you take B's company of 500, and suppose 499 converted, in these there would have been a previous work of God independent of B.

D. L. H. If 499 of that company were converted, all of them would owe that to God's work and not yours.

W. B. Every shred of it, but the Lord might

use the word which falls from His servant's lips. While one is preaching God may work.

F. E. R. But while He uses you to enlighten He works independently of you. If they are going to receive your testimony He must have wrought a work in them before. It is not your preaching that does that work. The point is whether the beginning is God's work or man's work. It may have taken place only a few seconds previously, but it is not man's work but God's work, and that is vitally important.



“SHEW ME NOW THY WAY.”

(EXO. XXXIII. 12, 13; LUKE XXIII.)

WHAT I have specially before me is the request of Moses, “Shew me now thy way.” We say the cross is the way to the crown, and that is true.

Now I would like in connection with that to turn to Luke xxiii. 39-47, and chapter xxiv. 44-53, as I desire to say a word on the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have had indicated to us once or twice in these meetings the necessity of our souls becoming more deeply acquainted with the wonderful truth of the death of Christ, and in saying that I do not mean only that He died a sacrifice for sins. I need hardly say that the great foundation of everything is the atonement; but then, beloved friends, in the marvellous wisdom of God the blessed Son of God has come into death, and in that sense I may say, God has—one almost hesitates to say it—but it is a most wonderful thing that God should come into death, and has made death the field of His operations. Morally, it means that the sphere of man’s misery and sin has become the field of the operation of grace.

We shall see that this operation of grace is connected with His ways, those ways all leading to the accomplishment of eternal purpose. In these ways we come to know God, not merely as addressing Himself to the need of the creature, great as that need was, but entering into death, and turning it into the wondrous place where the depths of love were manifested, and where the ground was laid for bringing out the purpose of eternal life. Thus death becomes to us in that way something very wonderful! That God should have wrought in the midst of death! Here we are shewn His ways; and it is these ways that lead on to the accomplishment of His purposes in glory.

It is in Exodus that God's way is first mentioned. After the utter ruin and break-down that there was in man came out in the history of Israel, then there was that which lay clean outside of man—God's own glory. That there was that in God for man, which lay outside all that was of man, seems to me to have been on the mind of each speaker in these meetings. As far as my memory carries me the great thought on the mind of each has been how the first man has been set aside, and how God could work outside that man altogether. That has been pressed upon us.

Referring to Matthew xi. you see there the

Lord conscious of the entire break-down of His work among men, and the testimony not received either of John the Baptist or of Himself. The cities where most of His mighty works had been done, would not receive Him, He had to say to them, "Woe to you! woe to you! woe to you!" a most terrible thing when you think that those blessed lips of love—lips that had told of the love of God—should have to use such words as these. This is one of the most solemn things connected with the break-down of man; but then comes the revelation of a sphere of holy love that lay clean outside of man—the Father and the Son. Whatever there was down here, hatred, evil, misery and sin, the blessed Lord stood there in the consciousness that the Father knew Him, and He knew the Father. He turns to the Father, "Father, I thank thee," and shews at once that He is in His own spirit, apart from the whole scene of enmity and break-down. In rejecting Him man proved his enmity to God in grace. Of the cities where most of His mighty works were done, He had to say "they repented not," as in another place He says "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." He accepts the rejection, and turns to that scene of holy love. He was

in the consciousness of the truth of His own Person, which none knew but the Father—that was outside of man, and so was the knowledge of the Father, but He, the Son, knew the Father. He was in the secret of that relationship. There was what the Father was to Him in the midst of man's hatred and rejection, and when all was hopeless as to man, He could reveal the secret of this relationship, and hence to the weary and heavy laden He says, "Come unto me. So far from setting up the first man, we have here the thorough break-down of man, but the introduction of one that comes to Him into the circle of that love and rest which the Son knew, and which lay outside all the ruin of man.

In Exodus xxxiii. we see, as was pointed out yesterday, that Israel standing in relationship to God under law came to a thorough break-down, but Moses had learned God enough to look beyond that and say, "Shew me thy glory." If man is a thorough failure, there is that which is in God Himself, His glory; that is not touched, and, as it were, Moses says I would like to see that, "Shew me thy glory." It could not then be shewn, for it could only be seen in the face of Jesus Christ, but I think Moses had a great sense of what there was in God, as entirely beyond the ruin of Israel.

You get this contrast between man and God

brought out very beautifully in Ephesians Paul first speaks of what man was. "And you --in the translation, supposing they were giving the sense, the translators supplied the words "hath he quickened"—but the point is what *those Ephesians had been*. "And you"—stop there, what about *you*? "Dead in trespasses and sins."—"Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." That was the Gentile dead in trespasses and in sins. Just led along like a straw before the wind by the devil. Then he comes to the Jews, who dispensationally were nearer, Among whom also *we* all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." That is a terrible picture of man. But now look at the contrast, "But God"—Ah! there is the other side! what will he say about God? "Wealthy in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ"—made us to live with Christ, that blessed Christ risen from the dead. That is clean outside the first man.

Now, I think in a certain way Moses had a kind of inkling of something in God which could go beyond and surmount all the ruin of man.

I suppose his having seen the patterns of things in the heavens must have assured him there was something outside the wreck of things down here. To use a phrase familiar with us now, the tabernacle was embodied in figure what was to come out in actuality in "the world to come" the New Jerusalem is finally seen as the tabernacle of God. As Moses looked at that, and then saw the shipwreck which Israel had made, he must have had the sense of something behind it which God would act for His own glory. It is not the patterns *we* see, but that which Moses had a sense of, but could not see, we now see set forth in Christ, as we behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled face. But I wanted to try and shew you the way of God with those people who had ruined themselves, but in whom He will ultimately be glorified. It is this that came up first in the mind of Moses. There was Canaan and the rest of God, and how were the people to be led into it. What Moses had fallen back upon in his intercession for them was the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Moses could say nothing at all about the covenant of law, all was ruined on that line, but there was the promise to Abraham, and he pleads that, and upon that ground God says Moses should take the people into the land promised to Abraham. The promise to Abraham's seed would have been fulfilled had

He made a nation of Moses. But upon the promise made to Abraham, Moses intercedes for the people and asks that they might inherit the land. It is on this ground the Lord bids *Moses to go up with the people*, for they were such a stiff-necked people, He would not go up in their midst.

Now for them to go through the wilderness with God, all broken down as they were, on the ground of pure law, was impossible. But Moses had the sense given to him of the grace of God, and nothing would do then, but that the people should be in the same favour as himself, and therefore he says, "If I have found grace in thy sight, Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee." It is as if he had said, I am sure you have some way of meeting in grace all this break-down on the part of the people, as afterwards it is as if he had said, I am sure there is something outside this scene altogether, and that is "Thy glory." Thus he had the sense given to him of God—Yes, God has a way, utterly broken down as are the people, by which He can bring them into His promised blessing. Had Moses led them in in mere fulfilment of promise, apart from the Lord's way and presence, glory could not have been the goal. If you and I accept the break-down of man, we must admit God has *His* way of accomplishing all for man according to His own glory.

The question of deepest interest to Moses was, what was God's way? Had not God a way He had a way, and though it could not be fully opened up then, He had a way, and in order to carry it out He retreats into the sovereignty of His own grace and mercy. "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."

If you remember it on that ground the Gentile comes in. (Rom. ix. 15.) It is on the ground of what there is in God Himself—pure mercy, sovereign mercy that any are blessed. In Ephesians, as we have seen, there is not only the sovereignty of mercy, but the wealth of mercy. I do not believe any soul ever reached peace until he knew what it was to be a debtor to sovereign mercy, and until stripped in the presence of God in the true sense of break-down, he sees himself a poor broken-down sinner, but sees that there is mercy with God. Through the cross the wealth of mercy is now told out. Now, I can look up into the face of the blessed God made known in Christ and say, well, whatever I am, there is what has met my case with God. There is mercy with God. I do not think anybody who comes to the place of a broken-down sinner, and looks up into the face of the blessed God, but must say, He could not send me to hell, there is that in Him that will save me, there is

wealth of mercy in Him, He loves me. He can "take the beggar from the dung-hill to set him among princes."

I believe nobody knows what peace with God is, the solid rock of peace beneath his feet, until he knows the way of God's mercy, that there is mercy with God, wealth of mercy it is not merely that which meets me in my ruin, but which brings me into the love of God. If I look up into His blessed face, I see not only mercy and forgiveness there, but love. There is the blessed ground of everything for our souls, the flood-gates of mercy opened that love might flow through them. Where does love come out? In death. God has come into death to declare His love; He has come there, in order that He might bring me to know His blessed ways of grace. When the Lord passed by before Moses and proclaimed His name, with long-suffering mercy and grace attached to it, Now, says Moses, as it were, we cannot do without you, for it is a stiff-necked people. It is a great thing to know the Lord, and I would like to refer here to three psalms (Psa. xxii., xxiii., xxiv.), as I have found them very interesting and helpful in learning the ways of God. I believe these three psalms prophetically taught the Jews what to look for in the Lord. Of course, we, with our much enlightened apprehension through the Spirit of

God given to us, know that all is now filled out by Jesus ; but I believe we get here how the Jew will learn Jehovah in the last day. and how in faith David or any Old Testament saint could have learned Jehovah in their day. The first thing in Psalm xxii. I learn is, that there is One who has taken up the question of sin, and dealt with it in judgment on a victim, so that the blessed God might become the praise of sinner. I do not say how far David entered into what he wrote, but he must have had a sense in his soul of somebody forsaken of God, and then coming out of the depths of judgment to proclaim God's name as he had learned it in deliverance out of those depths of judgments. God had been known *there*, and declared by that One who had maintained His glory and told out His love in death.

Then the second thing is in Psalm xxiii. There Jehovah is known *as* the Shepherd of His people. It is not merely the fact that He the Shepherd. It is very easy to say, "The Lord my shepherd ;" that is, that He *is* a Shepherd, and then think if I want or need guidance He will supply my need and direct me. That not the idea. The idea is that I am experiencing day by day what it is to have His hand holding me, to be led of Him. I think the Psalm is often understood, and wrongly, in this way, "The Lord is my shepherd,

and he will *supply* every want." But it does not say anything of the kind. No; *I shall not want*. Under His hand there will be no want. That shews me whether I know the Shepherd or not. It is not that I know the Shepherd who will supply my every want, but that I have the sense He is shepherding me, and under His hand I learn His way. I am learning the wonderful way that God's sheep are in His hand, and there can be no want there, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures he leadeth me beside the still water." He leads in the paths of righteousness, and "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Death is turned into the way by which God is leading into life: and lastly, I shall dwell in the Lord's house for ever—not my own house, but His. I have learned God in death, the Lord has been there; now I know Him as the One alive out of death, the One who shepherds me; and I see Him in Psalm xxiv. as the King of glory. Thus I learn the Lord in three ways. Then in Psalm xxv. we get a beautiful response to these lessons of the three previous psalms "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." The soul is engaged with the Lord whom it has learned. Then it wants to be shewn His ways: "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths." The Lord's way has been

through death; and now He leads and shepherds His people, and if they have to take the way that He has taken, He is with them. His rod and His staff comfort them. It is very wonderful that we can learn the way that God has taken to bring about His purpose. Nothing so wonderful as that He has taken a way through death, and can I say, "Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee" Yes; the blessed God Himself has become to us the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, as we learn the lesson of death and resurrection, for that is the great principle of His ways with us; but all leads to glory. No doubt Psalm xxiv. is millennial, and the earthly Jerusalem is referred to in the words: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." But it is equally true that the Lord has gone into heaven, and that the spirit of prophecy designates Him who has thus ascended into the hill of the Lord, and stands in His holy presence, as the King of glory. In this psalm we track the pathway of the King of glory. All is set forth in Christ, and in the sense of it, we can lift up our souls to the Lord and say, "Shew me thy ways, teach me thy paths."

I have not yet touched the point in Luke, but I wanted to shew you that God had a way, and

Moses desired to learn it that he might know Him. It was when hidden in the cleft of the rock and the Lord passed by before him, that he learned in some measure the Lord. "The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." You constantly find in the Psalms this referred to. Indeed, what has been called the formula of Israel's praise is, His mercy endureth for ever." Moses had pleaded the promise made to Abraham, but now he is instructed in the knowledge of the Lord, and His ways would be in accord with the revelation of Himself. Hence he immediately ventures on the grace made known to him. "If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people." As much as to say, "If that is what you are to such as we are, we cannot do without you. If you remember, the reason He gave to Moses why He would not go with them was that they were a stiff-necked people, but on the revelation of the Lord in mercy and grace, that is the very reason that Moses pleads that He should go.

When I look at the Lord as the King of glory, or rather now we see the glory of the Lord, and all that is set forth in Him, it connects me with another scene altogether, but the way the Lord takes with a soul is peculiarly

encouraging. He shews it His way, and encourages it to take it, but meanwhile teaches it so to know Himself that it say I cannot do without Thee.

Turn now to Luke xxiii. It is not so much that you get the sacrifice for sin there; Matthew gives us specially that side of the cross but in a remarkable way you find the Lord in death. There is no cry here, as in Matthew—"My God! my God why hast thou forsaken me?" and the rending of the veil seems to have a different bearing in the two gospels. The first point I would notice with regard to the Lord come into death is connected with the dying thief. There you get a man who had been a blasphemer. I gather that from the other gospels, perhaps through being maddened by the sufferings of the cruel death awarded to him. Perhaps a cruel man himself, but his fellow-men in cruelty had nailed him to a cross, and he only thought of deliverance from pain here. In the tumult of misery in his soul, he turned to the Lord to blaspheme for a moment, but God worked there. The marvellous change must have been the work of God in his soul. All will allow that in this case it was God's work entirely, and this work was entirely outside the range of man. I can understand affecting man. By eloquence or imagination or by fervency I might be able to

work on a man's feelings, but this poor malefactor outside of all this, man's sphere of things so to speak, past for him, death upon him, and he lifted up out of man's world or sphere on to a cross. But there we see the wonderful work of God. We may well be exercised about it before God, that He works outside of the range of the first man. This strikingly appears in the case of this poor thief, his mind with regard to the Lord got entirely changed. Nothing could have effected it but God's power, though as to how it was wrought nothing is told us. But what I find is that in One who had also been lifted up out of the sphere of the first man he is led to recognise the blessed vessel of God's grace. His soul was brought into touch with Jesus, and all the grace of God expressed in death, *His* death. I do not say the thief could have so expressed it, but what he did say shewed that there was an apprehension in his soul of the grace which had brought Jesus into the same condemnation.

What we see here is not the grace of God in a living man, and living men in misery and want getting relief, if but the hem of His garment were touched; but the grace of God come into death, and a dying man brought into touch with it there. Both the thief and the blessed Lord were virtually outside of men, and the great fact that

the Lord had come into death brought Him side by side with the thief. And what did the death of Jesus do? It made a way into paradise, and thither the Lord directs the soul of the poor thief. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Man and his world are left behind, and a poor, degraded and wretched sinner brought into touch with the grace of God in death gets a passport into paradise. What a marvellous way has God taken! The death of Christ became the way into paradise for the thief that very day. What a change from the gibbet to the paradise of God! What a wonderful effect of death! The thief brought into touch with God's grace death, looked for the kingdom in a future day, but what a bright and blessed light burst upon his soul as the world of man lay in darkness around. Outside of man he had been in the doom of a malefactor's death. Outside of man he now is, but his soul is in the light of the grace of God in death, and a way opened to be with Jesus in paradise.

Now look a little further, and see another effect of the death of Jesus: There was darkness over all the earth, or rather land, until the ninth hour." I have no doubt the land of Israel is there referred to. There everything was in darkness. I know a deeper darkness came upon the soul of Jesus, but it is equally true that

darkness lay upon man, but the light of life beamed for that poor thief. Where? In death! in death! We have not yet come to resurrection, but death has become a way into paradise. Light shone there for his soul. The Jews thought they had light, and crucified One whom they took to be a malefactor, but darkness was over their land. The sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. It was the break-up of the whole Jewish system; no doubt it leads to a place within the veil, but the effect upon man of the death of Christ is that his whole religious system broken up, and to Israel, who had the oracles of God committed to them, the death of Christ was darkness.

But we come to another fact connected with the death of Christ in verse 46. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Apart from what is contained in that verse, the thief could not have gone to be with Christ in paradise. With death here we are familiar, it is the end of things here, but beyond it there lies the judgment of God, but that has been borne on the cross. It is not this side we get in Luke; that which the sting of death had been met, and death is now the way in which the spirit of Christ goes to the Father. Do you believe that Satan ever thought, when attempting to wield

the power of death against Christ, that the Son of God could turn it into such a pathway as we see here. A condemned malefactor goes from a gibbet to paradise. And the world who put both Christ and him on a cross is left in darkness, the Jewish system broken up, the veil rent in the midst so that the secret mystery of Judaism, the shrine of the presence of God is broken down, and the spirit of that blessed Man goes to the Father.

Another thing flows from the spirit of the Lord going to the Father. For us death now becomes the way in which the spirits of His own go to be with Him. We are not yet speaking of resurrection, but of what are some of the results of the Lord having gone into death. Stephen, when dying, could say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It is very beautiful to me to think that death, which once was the realm of darkness, has now become part of the sphere of Christ's administration as Lord. He has the keys of death and Hades, and now He receives the spirits of all those who are absent from the body and present with the Lord. Who could have thought that death would be turned into God's way of taking into a sphere that is outside of man and his world? Jesus died and leaves the world behind, and His spirit goes by that way of death to the Father. Then think of the paradise of God for

a thief; he goes to be with Christ there. What then has death become to the Christian? In one sense it is death, and mortality we can say is but a thin veil which keeps the spirit away from His presence, and death takes him there. The body indeed is in the grave, but death has become the path for the spirit to be with Him. What a wonderful thing to be a Christian. He can say, Death is the way my Lord went, and I have no fear now. I know it would be far better for the Lord to come, as the apostle says, "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Yet after all, if we have to go that way, it is the way the Lord has gone. He has taken the sting out of death, and made it a way to Himself. The domain of death is under His hand, and He administers in it so that He now receives the spirits of His own.

Then, though this world cast Him out, He is Lord of glory. The everlasting gates have been lifted up for Him to enter in, but that brings us to His resurrection and ascension. I refer to it as another part of the sphere of His administration. He is now Lord of glory, and the Spirit brings to us the gladness of the scene, while we wait for the revelation of His glory. But there was another thing connected with the death of Christ. Though darkness covered the land, and

the shrine of the Jewish temple was laid bare, for its destitution was complete in the death of Christ, a poor Gentile acknowledged the glory of that blessed Man. "When the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man." Light is afforded us in this incident of how the grace of God through the death of Christ would affect Gentiles, and they would learn to glorify God. I do not say whether the centurion was converted or not, but it is remarkable that seeing what took place in death, he glorified God and owned that the One who had been committed to him to be crucified was a righteous Man.

My subject would not be complete if I did not touch on resurrection. Resurrection is looked at in Luke as part of the things concerning Himself, which had been written in the scriptures. Resurrection is there shewn to be part of God's way, the way into His purpose and glory. The Lord does not in anywise appeal to the senses of the two going to Emmaus, as to the verity of His resurrection; and when speaking to the disciples after they had seen and handled Him, He say. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead the third day." The angels also call to the remembrance of the women what He spake to them when He was yet in Galilee, that the Son

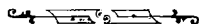
of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. On the way to Emmaus He expounded to the two disciples in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" He becomes known of them in the breaking of bread, that which must have recalled to their minds the touching action of the last supper but the point on which He fixes their minds was the way of God made known in scripture, death and resurrection. God's way was in death, and resurrection His way out of death. That was His way of blessing. Afterwards He opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures, taking them off the question of sight, that their souls might be founded in the ways of God made known in the word.

Then He led them out to Bethany, and they see Him taken up into heaven. The point I have sought to press upon you is that the way of God lies outside the sphere of man and his breakdown. In this last interview with them, He is blessing His disciples when parted from them, but He is blessing on resurrection ground, and outside of Jerusalem. He is going to heaven, and as it were, He blesses from thence.

May the Lord teach us more of the value of the cross. I am sure we need to be more

acquainted with the death of Christ, in order that we may be more rooted and founded in love. It is in death that we have learnt the love of God. May He give us to learn it there more fully for His name's sake.

T. H. R.



THE SECRET OF HEAVENLY JOY.

(LUKE IX. 28-35.)

I WISH to give just a little word of encouragement, more especially to those who are young here to-night. You will recollect that this morning we had brought before us two great characteristics of the new covenant, namely, love and the non-imputation of sins on the ground of righteousness. We saw that both these blessings met in Christ's death. In that death God's love was expressed, man's sin was removed—removed for the believer from the eye of God for ever. In that death all was swept away that love could not delight in, and through that death, as we heard, the very music of heaven can be brought to our hearts. Then we saw how this love was actually brought to us, that He who accomplished redemption is now in glory, and that the good news of what has been accomplished has been brought to us by the Holy Ghost from that place, so that, even while here, we might actually share in the joys of God in connection with the triumphs of Christ. Wonderful! is it not?

Now I desire to bring before you two or three scriptures to shew how these two characteristics of the new covenant—love and the non-imputation of sins—are illustrated in the living pictures there brought before us. In the scripture just read we see the Lord Himself together with a privileged company of believers. The subject of their conversation is the death which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now think for a moment of those who composed that little company. Peter, James and John were with Him, and were they not poor failing ones like ourselves? Then there were Moses and Elias and neither of them were without their own shortcomings. For example, one ran away from an angry king, the other in cowardly fear from an angry queen.

I suppose we may say that in each we have a fair specimen of what we ourselves have been proved to be when put to the test, that is, full of weakness and failure. But let me draw your attention to this one fact, that there was not a single whisper about their failings to be heard in that heavenly scene. The Lord introduces a subject they could well afford to contemplate, namely, His own death, a theme which pointed to the complete removal of every vestige of their failure, and which at the same time fully expressed His love. It is our failure that so

often depresses us, and, alas! so often engages our attention. But here His death was their one absorbing theme, and there is nothing depressing about that. The Father's delight in the Son is brought before them, and not the failure of His saints. Here we find a love that is beyond all failure, that proves itself superior to it, a love that expresses itself in dealing with our sins so that that question is settled and done with for ever. All that the enemy himself could possibly bring as a charge against us He has removed for ever, and all that remains is His love and ourselves in His blessed presence to enjoy it. They "spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

It is not that in the histories of these disciples there is no record of breakdown. There was plenty of shortcoming and weakness. Luke tells us that the three disciples were asleep, even on the mount of transfiguration: they were not personally equal to the occasion. Then when they went down the mountain they found that their fellow-disciples had been brought face to face with the devil's power and that he had been more than a match for them. Again, if the tax-collector comes, Peter has but to bring his empty hand to the Lord in order to find that if he and his fellow-disciples are equal to nothing the Lord is equal to everything.

We will now turn to John xvii., and I think you will agree with me when I say that one of the most wonderful things about this unique chapter is that which finds no place in it. We have in it the most marvellous unfoldings of the thoughts of the Father and the Son about those He calls "his own," and we are allowed to listen to these unfoldings of divine affections. But one of the most wonderful things in connection with this chapter is that which is not mentioned at all. I believe in John xvii. we have the very atmosphere of heaven; we have that which properly characterises the assembly, so that to be consciously in the blessing of this association is practically to be in the holiest of all. What is it, then, that is not to be found in this remarkable chapter? Not a single hint about sinful deeds or a sinful nature is to be found there! It is true that He has only a few poor failing things around Him. Peter is there and he is going to deny Him. Thomas is there, so soon to be rebuked for his unbelief. Philip is there with his lack of spiritual perception; John is there who, loving as he was, had only just before desired to call down fire from heaven to consume their enemies. Indeed they had all been disputing by the way as to who should be the greatest. Yet not one breath from His lips about any of their failures, as He speaks to His Father about

them. The Father's gracious purposes concerning them are in His heart and He pours all out before that Father.

What a wonderful *listening* it must have been! And depend upon it the worst thing He has to say about them He will say to their faces. He will not say a worse thing behind their backs than He will say in their hearing, and He has not one word of complaint to make, not one breath of accusation as to their selfishness or sin! *He* is before the Father on the ground of what His own death had accomplished, and He would draw *their* hearts there also. He says, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He speaks as one who knew that all that they were down here as men in flesh had been ended in death and nothing left but love. In the full flow of that love He breathes out His heart's desire for them in His Father's ear. Is not that encouraging? Is there anything depressing about that? Nothing. What He desires is that you should enjoy what belongs to you, and that is His own blessed heart full of love.

We will now go a step further. We will pass on to resurrection scenes. There we shall see He is just the same gracious Lord. As in life, so in death, and so in resurrection. We saw in the chapter already brought before us to-night that

His answer to His murderers was "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." But what will He have to say as He comes into their midst in resurrection? See John xx. Has He anything to say as to their breakdown just before? Does He say, You all behaved yourselves very shamefully towards Me in running away from Me as you did. You all professed to follow Me, and yet forsook Me at the moment of My deepest sorrow. You professed great things, Peter; you said you would *never* deny Me, that you would go to death rather than deny Me! Oh, but does their risen Master say anything of the kind? Not a word, though there was plenty of occasion for it. Instead of such upbraidings, "Peace unto you" is His gracious greeting. He fills their hearts with gladness; He will let them feel that, *inside* with Him, they have nothing to fear; though they had already learned that there was plenty to fear outside. He had just been to the cross on their account. His love is perfect, and His word is, "Peace unto you." Then breathing on them He says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," as though He had said, I have one more blessing for you, I will send My spirit to dwell within you in order that that which will be your portion for ever—my love, you may be able to enjoy all the way home.

Only on one or two occasions, in all those

resurrection scenes, does He use the language of rebuke. In Luke xxiv. He says to the two disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," &c. That they were greatly disappointed there can be no question. They had read the prophetic statements about Him, but had passed over those which ought to have spoken to their hearts of His love, that is, His sufferings and death. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things," He says, "and to enter into his glory?" They had been occupied with a coming dispensation, but had missed the best of it, for they did not understand His death.

Again in John xxi. Peter leaves the boat and comes to the Lord on the shores of the sea of Galilee. Just mark the gracious way in which the Lord deals with His failing follower. Instead of openly mentioning Peter's denial, He tenderly challenges his love. "Lovest thou me," Peter? He asks, again and again. Has He not a lovely way of doing things, young believer?

The true secret of increased happiness in our souls is only to be found in a better acquaintance with Christ, a deeper sense of His love. When the Holy Ghost came down at Pentecost what was the one great thing that characterised the disciples? Was it not holy gladness? And what was the secret of their joy but a deeper

sense of His love? The Holy Ghost came into the hearts of men—men in themselves full of weakness, as the past had too well proved—yet His holy presence did not depress them. On the contrary, filled to overflowing with heavenly joy they could go forth and preach to the people “with all boldness.” And such extraordinary joy was it that their hearers exclaimed, “These men are filled with new wine.” And this was *real* joy, too; not the fading joy of a passing excitement, but the joy of heaven come down to earth. The Holy Ghost was shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts, and this accounted for their joy. May the Lord give us great encouragement in seeing how completely sin has been judged for the believer in the death of Christ. It is not God’s wish that His people should be occupied either with sinful self or his doings. Let us then be slow in taking up what God has dropped. And since *He* has done with sinful self, as to any *expectation* from it, may He give us grace to have done with it also, except to judge it when it acts.

GEO. C.



THE PRIESTLY COMPANY.

(READING ON LEV.

T. H. R. I thought we might look at the priesthood, and what it is to belong to the sanctuary. To begin with, the great point in Leviticus is approach to God. In chapter i. we have, "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord." There it is individual approach, but here (Lev. viii.) it is the approach of a company, though, as we shall see, they were only in the court; they eat the consecrations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. The worship of Israel did not go farther than the gate of heaven (Gen. xxviii. 17), but there was a company that belonged to the sanctuary—the sanctified company. They were not to go out of the door of the tabernacle for the seven days. They were shut up to the sanctuary. (See vers. 33-35.) Note, too, there is nothing in this chapter about ministering for the people, it is ministry to the Lord, the first great idea of the priesthood is ministering to the Lord. In chapter ix. you get ministry for the people. But if *we* enter into what characterised the consecrated company, we

should see that we, as to our privileged place, belong to the sanctuary. We always do.

F. H. B. Does the seven days refer to the complete period of our life, as priests ?

T. H. R. Yes. A complete period of time that takes in the dispensation. It is not that the priests had not their own things to attend to, they had their own tents in front of the tabernacle, but the great point is that they belonged to the sanctuary. A priest would not do a great many things because he was a priest and belonged to the sanctuary. If we entered into that we should not do a great many things that we do. We should feel that as priests we belong to the sanctuary, though we may have many other things to see to. Some of us have to earn our living, but still we ought always to keep up the thought, that we belong to the sanctuary.

F. H. B. Everything else should be subservient to that ?

T. H. R. Yes. I might suppose the case of a man having a title, say a baron, and the Queen makes him a duke, he does not call himself by his title of baron though he is one ; he sticks to that of duke. He sticks to his highest dignity. The difficulty with us is to accept the place God has given us in grace, but when we do, we do not care to revert to our former position.

QUES. What are we down here in this world—common people?

T. H. R. Yes, but being priests is uppermost as to being common people, there remains the fact that the priest in every day life had his tent and family to see to.

QUES. As Levites and common people we have a sphere down here?

F. H. B. We have our duties, but our sphere as priests is in the sanctuary.

D. L. H. The question is which is uppermost? That is the point.

G. J. S. What answers to the holy place now in contrast to the holiest of all?

T. H. R. There is no holy place now. Hebrews shews that; we see "the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest," while the first tabernacle stood. We have another instance of this on the day of atonement, when the high priest went into the holiest nobody must be in the first tabernacle. But the fact is that the whole system is gone now that the first tabernacle has no standing.

F. H. B. Should we not apprehend very clearly what a priest is, that is, that we must be all of Christ's order?

T. H. R. Yes.

G. W. What is the sanctuary to us?

T. H. R. The presence of God. The assembly

is where we specially know it, because there we are apart from the life of flesh and the world through fellowship with Christ's death. The assembly is nothing if not gathered in the presence of the Lord, and the flesh has no place in His presence. Moreover, the Lord's presence is everything to us in the assembly. We are there in company with the great Priest. He leads us in.

F. H. B. As you said yesterday, to be before God in all the blessedness of what He is.

T. H. R. Yes, but there we are in company with the great Priest, we enter as a company of priests in association with Him.

G. It is according to the house of God as in 1 Peter ii., a holy priesthood come to be built up a spiritual house.

T. H. R. To my mind there are two great thoughts connected with the priesthood. They had nearness to God in the sanctuary, they were a company whose place was inside. Though the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, yet still their place was the sanctuary to minister to the Lord. The second thing was they had the mind of God, they had the Urim and Thummim. It was the High Priest who wore it, but they were in company with the High Priest. We are Christ's companions, and enter into the mind of God as He makes it known.

Whatever is set forth in Christ we are privileged to have as belonging to that company. I see in Him the Urim and Thummim, all the lights and perfections of God come out in Him, and as of His company and order we have the mind of Christ.

G. G. In the priestly character you would say the Lord is for us on our side?

T. H. R. Yes. He leads us in.

W. W. Is that access by one Spirit to the Father as in Ephesians ii.?

T. H. R. That is for the holy priesthood too; but I do not think you could get that set forth in the Old Testament. As to worship, I see two things which characterise it. I see *God* has been glorified in a *Man*, and the *Father* has been glorified in the *Son*. I think worship takes these two characters. You approach God in the delight God has in the sacrifice of Christ, as a *Man* who offered Himself without spot to God, but then you also worship in the atmosphere of the love of the *Father* to the *Son*. You worship the *Father* in the sense of what the *Son* is to the *Father*, in the atmosphere of the divine nature—love.

F. H. B. So that priests are sons. Sonship is the basis of our priesthood, is it not?

T. H. R. Yes.

D. L. H. All that comes out in Hebrews, He

is the Son. "The word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." Thus He as Son was made Priest, and that is how we come in.

T. H. R. I think if you take the end of Ephesians iii. you get the great privilege of the priesthood. There we are in the mind of God, we apprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," that is the privilege of the company brought into nearness.

QUES. In a place of light and perfection ?

F. H. B. It must be an immense favor in the eye of God.

T. H. R. It is wonderful to be "strengthened with might by the Spirit of the Father in the inner man"—to be rooted and grounded in the love of God, and to know the love of Christ—rooted and grounded in love that you may be able to apprehend with all saints. Then that there should be glory to God in the church throughout all ages. There you get what is really the privilege of the priesthood. They have the mind of God regarding His counsels and they know the love of Christ; in a way glory to God in the church answers to ministering to the Lord (Exo. xxviii. 1); there is also setting

forth God's glory, the universe. But there is glory to God in the church because it answers to His own mind, as formed in His own nature ; as instructed in Christ, it can respond to His glory and morally reflect it. One can only see what a wondrous privilege it is to belong to the sanctuary, and that is what we belong to.

F. H. B. You see at the end of the chapter the sons are anointed with Aaron. It is true Aaron is first anointed without his sons, but it is striking how the priests are identified with the tabernacle and altar. All are sprinkled with the oil.

T. H. R. Yes, and you get another thing in connection with the priests, you come into the priesthood by water and by blood ; first the washing by water and then the blood.

QUES. What is the force of that ?

T. H. R. You come by death. I do not doubt the water is the word, the communication of what is of God to us ; we are, too, instructed in Christ, but then the communication only becomes effectual by being united with the blood. It is through death where man and his thoughts are gone, that the water becomes effectual in bringing me into the thoughts and mind of God. The water gets its full value in death. Death sets aside man and all his wisdom that as priests we may be in the mind of God.

G. G. This would not be the same as John xiii. ?

T. H. R. Water has only one signification, but different bearings. It is always cleansing, but cleansing is only really effectual through death. We do not get the full value of the communications of God to us, except as we get them through death.

G. W. Why is it that the tabernacle had only the oil sprinkled on it, not blood ?

T. H. R. Blood *was* put on it on the day of atonement. My impression from what we get in Exodus xl. is that the universe was to be the sphere for the display of God's glory the power of the Spirit. Aaron, too, was anointed without blood, then we get the company consecrated, and when they failed then there came out the necessity of reconciliation. The tabernacle was anointed first of all, and the thought is, I believe, the universe was set apart by God to be the sphere of the display of His glory in Christ. Then because of sin all is based on atonement. You see in Genesis i. the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters; God was present there, speaking the word, and what was created by His word was to be the sphere for the display of His glory; you can see if you read Genesis i. that God the Spirit was moving there, and the universe in that sense was sanctified to be the sphere of the display of His glory, and now He

has got the Man for it. Adam was set over it as head, but he failed; here you have the priest anointed, and he is to minister in the anointed scene. The garments of glory and beauty were for the holy place.

QUES. Then chapter xvi. was for what came in afterwards?

T. H. R. Yes, it was after the death of the two sons of Aaron.

QUES. There was no provision for failure until the failure occurred?

T. H. R. There is no direct instruction as to it. No doubt all was foreknown, and the thought of yearly atonement is in Exodus xxx. 10, but in chapter viii. nothing went beyond the brazen altar as to the company. The thought of reconciliation and of going within the vail comes out in the day of atonement.

QUES. But the priest went into the holy place?

T. H. R. Not here, they were only at the door. *The company* were at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. A ministering priest went into the holy place, but he represented Christ.

D. L. H. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things
It is impossible to find the very image of the thing except in Christianity.

QUES. And ye shall not go out at the door of the tabernacle—what is that?

T. H. R. That was the door of the court. They were at the altar. They were not to go out for the seven days.

QUES. Will you say again what your thought of the water?

T. H. R. The water is really the word of God and becomes the communication of what is of God to the soul, because it is His word. Man is to live by His word, but you must connect it with blood to get its full value. It is through death that the word becomes effectual in us.

QUES. What was the connection with the water which came from the side of the dead Christ?

T. H. R. The word must be connected with death. Death gives effect to the word. The word comes to morally set aside all of the flesh, but effectively death is necessary.

REMARKED. The fact is the ground has to be cleared entirely that there might be a new beginning according to God.

T. H. R. Yes. They had the word of God in the Old Testament, and had faith, but they were always subject to bondage. You must get that cleared away for the word of God to become effectual and to get the true sense of liberty. We all know how our natural characters and tempera-

ments hinder our really knowing what may be known in our souls of God; we must be cleared of all the hindrances in ourselves. The great thing is that as priests you are on the resurrection side, as a common person you are not. Death has come in to clear you of the old thing entirely that the new may come out.

QUES. That is the side of the Spirit, is it not?

T. H. R. Yes. You get that in John's epistle, "This is he that came by water and blood," and the Spirit is witness—of what? That I have life in the Son—that I am of another order and line altogether. For us the blood comes first, on God's side the oil. The Spirit and the water and the blood are His witness.

D. L. H. That is really where priesthood comes in?

A. H. What is the antitype of Moses in this chapter

T. H. R. I think it is Christ as Mediator, really providing, so to speak, a company for God, and when provided, He as Priest leads the company to God. As the Mediator, He provides the company for God, and then as Priest He leads, but He first provides the company. He shed His blood, and the blood and water came from His side. Thus He cleanses us, and then gives us of His Spirit.

D. L. H. Christ is Apostle as well as High Priest.

T. H. R. Yes, He is.

REMARKED. It is a wonderful thought that He provides a company for God.

T. H. R. I think we see how what belongs to priesthood, that is worship, is beautifully developed in the woman of Samaria. Her heart was filled with all sorts of things, and she comes to the well and meets the Son who knew the will of the Father, the Father was seeking worshippers, and the Son knew it, and He had come to provide worshippers; and how does He do it? He could so fill by His words the heart of that poor woman with Himself, that its proper upspringing would be to up to the Father in worship.

D. L. H. And present God to her heart, saying, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink . . .

T. H. R. He could give what was of Himself, so that what He had poured into her heart might rise up to the Father. That is how, so to speak, she was made a priest.

REMARKED. He was a Mediator from God to man, and the priest was from man to God.

T. H. R. Yes, He provides the company, and leads the company, and therefore on the Lord's day morning the real thing is to be in the

sanctuary, and to know the support of the Priest, that I am supported in His own presence. It is a wonderful thing to experience what His support is in the presence of the greatness of God. I am supported by Christ, it is not what I know, but in the presence of the blessed Lord I feel I am nothing, and I want the support of the Priest, and we get it.

D. L. H. Is it not very important to see what comes out in this chapter as to the order of the sacrifices? We must be beyond the sin offering and the burnt offering, and in the good of the ram of consecration.

T. H. R. That is where the priestly office begins. When the sin offering and the burnt offering had had their place, now the ram comes forward. What I have thought about it is, you must get the question of your own side settled first. The sin offering and the burnt offering come in in relation to sin and acceptance, and those questions must be settled before the ram of consecration comes out at all. The priestly work really begins with the ram of consecration. With that ram the priest's hands are filled, not with the sin offering or the burnt offering, but with the ram of consecration.

R. F. K. What is that?

T. H. R. The blood of the ram was the main

point, it was put upon them; then all the consecrations were put on their hands.

F. H. B. What does the ram of consecration set forth?

T. H. R. My impression is it sets forth Christ in devotedness—what Christ is for God, entirely devoted to the will of God.

QUES. Has it not the character of the peace offering?

T. H. R. It is more than that. It is devotedness to the will of God.

QUES. In Exodus xxix. 33 they eat the ram. They eat the things wherewith the atonement was made, how do you understand that?

T. H. R. I think the ram of consecration was connected with the burnt offering; what of it was burnt, was burnt on the altar of burnt offering. But another ram was necessary to express this special devotedness to God, to shew the peculiarity of the consecration of this special company.

REMARKED. But in the peace offering the priests had their part.

T. H. R. Yes, I know; but the ram of consecration was a sanctuary offering expressly. I think it being expressly for a priestly company would entirely connect it with the sanctuary.

REMARKED. They were all different views of

the same act. One could see that in the way atonement was made.

T. H. R. Yes; but in the peace offering you eat as an individual. As a matter of fact, every animal they killed in the wilderness they had to bring to the altar. An Israelite's communion and daily life was thus connected with the altar. But then my communion and daily life is hardly the idea of a company connected with the sanctuary.

J. S. A. Does the burnt offering carry further than personal acceptance?

T. H. R. No, and it does not go beyond the brazen altar. It is not the company. The ram of consecration was a sanctuary offering. It connects us especially with it, and specially sets apart a consecrated company.

QUES. The special character of the offering is seen, is it not, in its being waved before God?

T. H. R. Yes.

QUES. What is the thought of the hands being filled with the ram? Is it the thought of consecration?

T. H. R. Yes. Another thing is that what filled the hand was always burnt. (Ver. 28.)

QUES. What did that mean?

T. H. R. When the meat offering was brought, the priest filled his hand. It says, "He shall take a handful." Whatever filled the hand of

the priest was burnt, it went up to God. What is put on our hands is for God, therefore it was burnt in the type. In our priestly character we are for God, that is the idea of consecration. I can understand God coming into my things, and I as a common person can bring Him into my things, in my family, &c. I have the privilege of bringing God in, but here we come into His things, and that is why we come in by water and by blood.

QUES. Would the ram of consecration be connected with Hebrews x. ?

T. H. R. Yes. I think so.

G. G. Connected with devotedness, by the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Is that as priests ?

T. H. R. Yes. Only think of what it is to Christ to provide a company that is in the mind and thought of God.

QUES. Does that explain the term "according to the word spoken to Moses ?"

T. H. R. Yes: in hymn 14, Hark, ten thousand voices crying"—the verses left out in our hymn book, though not suitable for our worship, are exceedingly beautiful. They describe the thoughts and musings of the heavenly company in the most wonderful way—

“ Then their richest thoughts unfolding,
 Each to each with joy divine ;
 Heavenly converse blissful holding,
 Tells how bright His glories shine.”

* * * * *

And again—

“ All on love surpassing rest.”

QUES. Has consecration the idea of perfect satisfaction ?

T. H. R. When you come into that sphere, then you get it.

W. A. W. Is the ram the energy of devotedness ?

T. H. R. I think so. And it is in the sense of being brought nigh that you enjoy all that is in Christ.

REMARKED. Revelation v. is often read at the Lord's Day morning meeting.

T. H. R. Yes, but the song does not set forth the worship peculiar to the heavenly company, although it is sung by a heavenly company, but it is not the worship of the Father and of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a priestly company having the mind of God as to redemption on earth, the earthly company are of great interest to the heavenly, as redeemed to God.

REMARKED. It is in view of the establishment of the kingdom.

QUES. Is Revelation i. 5, 6, expressive of our worship?

T. H. R. There is not a glory of Christ that we do not take up, but we are not introduced to the Father and the Son there.

F. H. B. Does not a priestly company include others beside the church?

T. H. R. Yes, it appears so here. (Rev. v. 16.) One thing that characterises the heavenly company is seen here, they have intelligence in the mind of God, and they know exactly what to say the elders do not merely celebrate but give a reason, they have divine intelligence.

QUES. This song belongs, does it not, to a future time especially?

T. H. R. Yes; but only let us think what it is to be brought into the thoughts of God, into such nearness to God, Christ bringing us there and leading us when there and teaching us.

QUES. Are the prophets and teachers in Acts xiii. in their priestly privilege there ministering to the Lord?

T. H. R. I think so.

A. H. I suppose what we are as priests greatly affects what we are as common people?

T. H. R. Yes, but I do not care to refer to the common person. I prefer to think of ourselves as priests. In a way, the priest had to take up the ordinary duties of the common

people. He had his tent and family, but he was a priest.

QUES. What would you say were the great distinguishing features of the common people, the Levites, and the priests?

T. H. R. The common person is always in a wilderness condition. And what is to me an exceedingly solemn thing as to the common people, they were forbidden to come near the sanctuary. They broke down when they rejected Moses and Aaron as king and priest, and the result of that is that priesthood is established in a new kind of way. On account of the flesh everything for God must be established in resurrection. On this line the priestly race was established, and the common people were forbidden to go near the sanctuary. Through God's grace they got another provision in the ashes of the red heifer. I see a great difference between the position of the priest belonging to the sanctuary—having my house and family to attend to as much as a common person has, and being a common person only in a wilderness condition, where there is liability to stumble over a grave, or touch a bone or dead body. In the latter I want the ashes of the red heifer. A man in the sanctuary would not stumble over a grave, or touch a dead body, or a bone. Israel are now in a wilderness condition, debarred from

the sanctuary, and they will get purified by the red heifer. (Zech. xiii.)

REMARKED. We cannot escape from the fact that we have the wilderness to go through.

T. H. R. But the more you look at yourself in connection with the sanctuary the better. I know the tabernacle and the priests had to go through the wilderness, but the priests belonged to the sanctuary it is a different thing to be a priest in the wilderness, and to be a man in a wilderness condition only; if I am I shall stumble over graves and such like. Let us hold to it that we are a priestly company even if in the wilderness.

F. H. B. We do not get much about common persons in the New Testament.

QUES. What about the Levites?

T. H. R. They were under the hand of the priests, and they cannot be separated from the priest. You cannot separate yourself as a Levite from the priest, or you would not be in the mind of the Lord. It is priestly discernment enables you to serve: "If any man serve me, let him follow me." A man may take the place of a Levite and not know his place as priest, if so he does not know the mind and thought of God. The priestly company are in the mind and thoughts of God, and as a Levite you serve in the light of that.

QUES. Were the Levites in service when the

tabernacle was down and the priests when it was up?

T. H. R. I think you cannot look at it exactly in that way. In general, the Levites kept the charge, and waited on the service of the tabernacle, and also carried the tabernacle of the testimony through the wilderness; thus they bore the testimony of God. We cannot look at it in a material way, but we do carry the testimony of God through this wilderness world; the church is now the vessel of the testimony, but the testimony all centres in Christ. In that sense the church is a company of Levites. At the same time the church's great privilege is a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. The church is the place where God is praised and worshipped, and it has the apprehension of the purposes of divine love.

REMARKED. But we are not always in the assembly.

T. H. R. Quite true, but we are always priests.

QUES. Would you connect gift with the Levite?

T. H. R. I do not feel in the morning meeting that I am a Levite, even if I speak. There I seek to minister in the grace of the *Head*, not, so to speak, as under the hand of the *Lord*. I consider a person who speaks there is a priest

among priests, but it is in the grace of the Head he ministers.

REMARKED. That seems an important difference as it gives a special character to the ministry.

T. H. R. I think a word of exhortation, or giving people a lecture, in the morning meeting altogether out of place.

G. In Israel there were three different kinds of people; do not we fill up the line of Israel?

T. H. R. In a certain way we fill up the line of Israel, but I do think we know so very little about our great privileges as priests. I dread getting back to Jewish ground. Israel really are the common people.

G. What makes a good priest?

T. H. R. Water and blood, and then the Spirit of sonship.

QUES. Can you make that a little clearer?

T. H. R. You must be the other side of death in the sense of having reached God's side in resurrection. You have reached the Son of God and are in the sense of the love of God.

F. H. B. In the sense of worship. The response to divine love is worship.

G. G. You said at the beginning there were two lines of worship, will you say something about it?

T. H. R. You do not get more in Leviticus typically than God glorified in the *Son of man*. But now there is more made known to us. We know the Father is seeking worshippers, and we worship in the spirit of sonship, in the relationship of sons, knowing the revelation of the Father and the Son. But then also we approach God in the sense of how He has been perfectly glorified in man, and righteousness established to His glory, but that Man is His Son, the object of the Father's love in eternity. He has found a Man in whom He can delight, who has perfectly glorified Him, when man was only sin, and that Man is the Son of His bosom.

QUE. I suppose the two lines blend ?

T. H. R. Yes. The blessed Man who glorified God is the Son of the Father.

QUES. You would say the actual reality goes far beyond this chapter ?

T. H. R. Yes, you could not have the revelation of the Father, nor of divine love, until the Son came.

QUES. Must you be intelligent to be a priest ?

T. H. R. It is the privilege of a priest to be intelligent. You get intelligence in the sanctuary, the speaker in Psalm lxxiii. 18 got it there. We have it through association with Christ, as having His Spirit.

QUES. Priesthood is sustained on what is presented to God ?

T. H. R. Yes, they feed on the consecrations ; and another thing, the anointing oil of the Lord was upon them. There is an interesting point in chapter xiv. in connection with the cleansed leper. There you get the individual, and it is a most wonderful thing that the leper gets in type a higher spiritual condition than the priest after Aaron's order.

QUES. In what way

T. H. R. I do not say he gets a higher place of privilege than a priest belonging to the consecrated company, but looking at the man individually he is brought from the outside place of uncleanness, where he was, into the effect of the death and resurrection of Christ ; he is brought step by step until he comes where the fulness of the Spirit's power and presence are known. The priest sprinkles the oil seven times before the Lord, the blood and the oil is put upon the ear, the hand, and the toe ; as in the case of the priests ; but besides this he gets what is never said of the priest, the whole of the oil remaining is poured on his head, he gets the fulness of the Spirit, and he stands there an anointed man. He is brought to the tabernacle, brought to the whole sphere of the Spirit's power, and himself an anointed man.

QUES. Why is that?

T. H. R. Leviticus viii. sets forth the wonderful privilege of the priestly *company*. When you come to the *individual* you get a most blessed spiritual condition and apprehension. It is a wonderful thing to be an anointed man; not only a justified man, but an anointed man, brought into the sphere of the Spirit's power. It is a marvellous thing to me to stand in the sanctuary an anointed man. The leper is brought from the outside place of uncleanness, until he stands, an anointed man, in the full sphere of the Spirit's power! In Ephesians you reach the sphere of the Spirit's operations.

QUE. Do you think the term "great priest" in Hebrews connects the Old Testament worshippers with the New?

T. H. R. What I think is meant by the term "great priest" is the Son. Everything is great in Hebrews, as contrasted with the littleness of Judaism.

REMARKED. It is more the consecration of the priests in the chapter we read.

T. H. R. It is the consecration of the priests, but they are only at the door; the point for us to apprehend is the great privilege of being brought into nearness.

QUE. How do we enter the Holiest?

T. H. R. The Son leads us in as sons. The high priest who carried the blood into the holiest represented his sons and also the people. We have boldness to enter by the blood of Jesus, but we have also a great Priest over the house of God.

