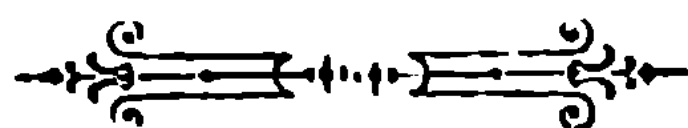


Words of Salvation.

“(He) shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.”—Acts xi. 14.

“Salvation is of the Lord.”—Jonah ii. 9.

VOL. II.



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Words of Salvation.

“STRANGER, BE WISE.”

ON the coast of Dorset, westward from Portland, lies the Chesil (or pebble) Beach, one of the most dangerous shores in the south of England. Here the pebbles of which the beach is composed are washed up by the sea into an enormous bank, extending for many miles along the coast and protecting it from the advance of the sea. An inlet of the sea called the Fleet runs up from Portland harbour between the beach and the land, its smooth waters being often the greatest contrast to the rough seas outside.

This coast has a dreadful record for wrecks and many ships failing to clear Portland Bill with its dangerous shoals have been driven in here and have gone down. When a wreck occurs there is little chance of life being saved, as the waves roll in with such tremendous force and the bottom is so treacherous and so shelving. In the churchyard at Wyke Regis near by,

hundreds of the shipwrecked people were buried. On the side of the church tower is a stone tablet in memory of one hundred and forty people whose lives were lost in the wreck of a ship returning from India, and a headstone commemorates the loss of two hundred and fifteen souls on board some transport ships also wrecked here.

On the other side of the church will be seen the following lines carved in stone :

Stranger, be wise ; examine well thy heart.
Hast thou in Christ a true believer's part ?
If not, consider that a single breath
Is all that keeps thee from eternal death.
Flee from thy vices, let thy follies go ;
There's no repentance in the gulf below.
Art thou exulting in the flower of youth ?
Seek Him who is the life, the way, the truth.
Art thou in manhood talented and strong ?
Thy talents and thy strength to Him belong.
Work while 'tis day : no present help can save
From what may be thy doom, an early grave.
Art thou low journeying in the vale of years,
Thy strength worn down by trials and by tears,
With death's dark chamber opening at thy feet ?
What but the Saviour's voice can now be sweet ?
His blood alone can sanctify from sin,
His Spirit cleanse and comfort thee within,
And make thee o'er the grave the victory win.

A fitting warning indeed as we stand in view of the graves of so many who were suddenly called away. We know not whether those poor people had "the true

believer's part " in Christ. May each one who reads this get it for himself.

A strange thing happened here once. A ship was driven on to the Chesil Beach, but instead of being broken to pieces it was lifted by the waves right over the bank on to the smooth waters of the Fleet, where it floated peacefully. Now the one who really trusts in the Lord Jesus is like that ship with the judgment behind him—so to speak—and in peace with God. Whereas those who have not the Saviour are like men on a ship being driven towards this bank where destruction is inevitable, unless they turn now to Christ who is willing and more than willing to receive them.

J. C. P.

A FEW SOLEMN FACTS WORTH PONDERING.

THERE are facts to be faced by every one, facts which are beyond dispute, and which are accepted by all; not because men desire to believe them, but because they are undeniable. These solemn truths are not only declared by the word of God, but they are confirmed by the events which happen every day. One of these facts is that "WE MUST NEEDS DIE."

(2 Sam. xiv. 14.) "It is appointed unto men once to die." (Heb. ix. 27.) Every one will sooner or later (if the Lord does not come) be called to meet death. So fully are we convinced of this that the old adage says, "Death is a debt we must all pay," and again, we often hear it said, "There is nothing so certain as death." Everything of the earth ends in DEATH. There is also another fact which is closely connected with it, that WHEN DEATH KNOCKS HE MUST BE ADMITTED, as the Bible says, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it." (Eccles. viii. 8.)

We have abundant proof in daily events, that neither goodness, wealth, nor anything else can postpone the day of death. No earthly power can retain the spirit when the summons comes. "Seeing his [man's] days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds *that he cannot pass.*" (Job xiv. 5.) "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years . . . it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (Psa. xc. 10.)

There is yet another fact worthy of our consideration: not only is death certain, but “LIFE IS UNCERTAIN.” “It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” (James iv. 14.) Death comes *suddenly* to the merchant in his office; to the footballer on the field; to the actor on the stage, and it often comes when it is least expected, so that another proverb is commonly used by us, “In the midst of life we are in death.” *Suddenly* men are called into “the world beyond,” from whence there is no return.

Reader, *this night thy soul may be required of thee!* Remember that when death comes you will be compelled to leave behind you everything that you possess. “We brought *nothing into* this world, and it is certain we can carry *nothing out.*” (1 Tim. vi. 7.) The truth of that scripture is seen at every deathbed: *everything that belongs to this world is left behind at death*; even the body, as well as earthly possessions is left, and the spirit alone passes away. Nothing can be carried into the spirit world but that which is spiritual. Let the money-lover know that there is no place there for his gold, neither is there any room for the pleasure-lover’s amusements. How important to remember that *everything* that is of the earth, whether

good or bad, must all be left on this side the border line. Earth's coin is not current in that realm, neither can earth's interests and pleasures be of any service there. Nothing can be taken thither except that which is spiritual, therefore, dear reader, if you have not received forgiveness and life, you will begin eternity in poverty. While you remain in sin you are without God and without hope in *this* world, but if you pass the limits of time without salvation, you will be without Christ for ever. Every householder is wise enough when he intends leaving a house to secure another for occupation so that he may not be left homeless. You may soon be called to leave the earthly house of this tabernacle; have you secured "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"? If not, why do you delay? Be as wise about eternal things as you are about temporal things. "We know," said Paul, "we have a building of God," and you may know too, if you will. Soon, very soon, the "things seen" will give place to the "things unseen." Be wise, take the gift of God, which is CHRIST, NOW, or you may miss it, and instead of spending eternity with the Lord you will be lost. But may God grant that you may be saved!

HOW "OLD PETER" AWOKE THEM.

"**O**LD PETER" was the name given to an old blowing engine at the T—— Ironworks, a town on the Tees side, where it was known for a mile around at least by the loud noise it made with exhaust steam. So loud and incessant was the noise that strangers to the town could not sleep, and many complaints were made about it; but in spite of this it still continued to cough and scream until, strange to say, the inhabitants got so used to it, that they took little notice of it.

This went on for several years until one night "old Peter," in making an extra effort, suddenly stopped; the effect was very startling indeed. People who had gone to bed suddenly awoke, they knew not why. They looked out of their windows, only to find many others doing the same, and each asking: "What has gone wrong?"

At last it dawned upon those living near the works that "old Peter" had stopped, and as one of the workmen who was on duty told me there were soon dozens of men, women and children hurrying to the works to see or hear what was the matter.

Dear reader, let me apply this true incident to your case and that of many others who have heard the gospel message of the love of God—love expressed in the gift of His only begotten Son.

You were moved by this story of love and grace once, so that you were disturbed in mind as to whether you were right with God or not, but instead of yielding to the Spirit's voice, you turned away and joined the stream of this poor, giddy, but doomed world, until, like the people of T——, you have become insensible to your need, and the claims of God upon you. Perhaps you still hear the gospel, but heed it not. Oh, what an awaking it will be to you when it ceases to be preached and you hear it no more.

It was the stopping of "old Peter" that awoke the inhabitants of the town, and I was told by more than one who lived near that it was weeks before the townspeople could get a proper night's sleep.

What will it be to those who hear of the love and grace of God for the last time and refuse it? We read: "My spirit shall not always strive with man." And it is said of Ephraim after years of God's gentle dealings with him: "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." (Hosea iv. 17.) Let him alone! It is an awful moment

in any person's history when God leaves them alone. But this is not the gospel: the gospel is good news concerning God's own blessed Son, who is still offered to men as the only Saviour. It is to them that RECEIVE HIM that power or title is given to become children of God, even to those that believe on His name.

All depends, dear reader, on your receiving or rejecting Him—a living Saviour who is at God's right hand. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 25.)

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) It is not creeds nor good works that save, but Christ—the same glorious Person who was down here in lowly grace, but who is now exalted a *Prince* and a *Saviour*. "There is none other," we read, "none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." J. L.

FACING ETERNITY!

IS it possible to ignore the fact that as one generation is born into time another generation, dying out of time,

passes into eternity? Man, therefore, from his birth to his death is “facing eternity”; and surely, the utmost import attaches to the fact.

If you, my reader, are not a *Christian*, then truly your time-limits are seriously obscured, and your ignorance of how those time-limits are to finish could not be more complete. For your business, the golf-course, the race-course, the theatre, or any other thing, ministering profit or pleasure, you are ready, but you are not ready to die! If this is your condition before God, however amiable and correct before men, you are

“A Syrian *ready* to perish.” (Deut. xxvi. 5.)

You may perhaps object to the nationality; but God has not nationalised the glad tidings. Holy scripture divides the human race into three great groups—*Jews*, *Gentiles*, and *church of God*. (1 Cor. x. 32). Not to be *in* the church of God, therefore, is not to be a member of Christ; and not to be a member of Christ is not to be a Christian at all; and if you are not a Christian then, whatever your nationality, you are “READY TO PERISH.” The only remedy for your condition is Christ—“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-

lieveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus, according to John iii. 16, and to Nehemiah (chap. ix. 17), God is

“ a God *ready* to pardon.”

Nay, more ; Isaiah, in one of his many beautiful gospel utterances, declares that “ He will abundantly pardon.” (Chap. lv. 7.) Indeed He will ! Yea, as is repeatedly shewn in the gospels, it is even great joy to the heart of the blessed God to have the lost sought out and saved. In love and grace He has furnished a table for man, and sinners are His guests. His invitation is world-wide.

“ Come ; for all things are now *ready*.” (Luke xiv. 17.) How much this wonderful invitation implies ! Christ in the parable anticipates the glorious results of His own death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God in heavenly glory. True as to the Jews when the gracious words were spoken, and true universally when the words were written ; true, moreover, in the preaching of the apostles. But there could be no such preaching and no New Testament until the Holy Spirit was sent down by the Father and indwelt men. Now, just as Isaac was “ a son ” whom Abraham his father received in a figure

from the dead, and to whom Abraham gave "all that he had" (Gen. xxiv. 36; xxv. 5; Heb. xi. 17-19), so Jesus declares—"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; and, on the morning of His resurrection, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (John iii. 35, 36; Matt. xxviii. 18.) Thus, "all things are *now* ready." "The great trumpet shall be blown," says Isaiah, "and they shall come which were *ready* to perish." (Chap. xxvii. 13.) Thank God! the great trumpet has been blown since Pentecost, and multitudes have responded—have come and are coming to Christ, with great delight to prove the preciousness of the words—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The supper, which is God's *final* offer of salvation to man, is enjoyed by earnest souls who, coming to Christ, find every need met in Him. Indeed, so great is the satisfaction divinely given, and so real the character of the personal faith, that one involuntarily and exultingly exclaimed, "I am now *ready* to be offered." (2 Tim. iv. 6-8.) Dread of suffering had been vanquished through the knowledge and

certainty of present and eternal gain. (1 Pet. iv. 13; Rev. ii. 10). This is a condition of readiness that is truly perfect. It is only grace—the grace of God, however, that can enable us to say this. The moment is fast approaching when it will be seen to be true of the bride: “His bride hath made herself *ready*.” (Rev. xix. 7.) A long period has elapsed since the bride began to make herself ready for the Bridegroom; a long time during which she has been permitted to prepare herself in fine linen, shining and spotless; the fine linen being the righteous actions of the saints—a long eventful night of nearly two thousand years! It is now early morning; at any moment, therefore, the Lord Jesus, who speaks of Himself as “the bright and morning star,” may appear; and then the words of the parable shall have sudden fulfilment—

“The bridegroom came; and they that were *ready* went in with him to the marriage.” (Matt. xxv. 10.)

Thus, the *ready ones go in with Christ* when He comes; but there *must* be readiness; there *must* be suitability for God’s presence. He insists upon it. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of WATER and the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” “I am the

DOOR: by ME if any man enter in, he shall be saved." My unsaved reader, if such I address, the door is about to be shut; that is, CHRIST, your only available means of access to God and to eternal blessing, will cease to be preached. Where then, for at this moment you are facing eternity—yea, with urgent solicitation I appeal to you—where then will *you* be? Be wise! for "the wise shall inherit glory."

J. M.

IS IT CHRIST, OR SOMETHING ELSE?

IN the locality where I live, from personal talks with one and another, I gather that the great majority regard their eternal interests in much the same way. For instance, let me repeat a conversation:—

"Well, you are getting on in years. What is your prospect when this life is over?"

"Well, I never did any one any harm. I say my prayers, and I hope it will be all right with me."

Do *you*, my reader, think somewhat

like that? Then you are in a very serious position! “Why so,” do you ask? *You leave out two things. First*, the reality of your condition as a guilty sinner before God, with nothing in *His* sight to commend you, for “all our *righteousnesses* are as filthy rags.” (Isa. lxiv. 6); and *second*, the death of Christ, *which* is the only ground of hope for any of us.

Although *you* may hope that a “well-spent life,” as people say, will avail something before God, *nothing* but CHRIST and *His* work, will do for God.

In a recent talk with an old, infirm man I met in the street, I asked, “What are you resting on for eternity?” His answer did me good. Not a word about his good works or prayers, but just two words, “ON CHRIST.” Nothing more needed, nothing besides would do.

Now let me, in all seriousness, ask every reader of this paper, “On what does your hope for eternity rest? Is it your works, or your prayers, your charitable deeds, or a well-spent life, or is it CHRIST—Christ alone, and the value of His blood?” Again, I would say, “Nothing but *Christ* will do for God.” That precious Saviour! Once crucified, and slain, now glorified at God’s right hand. He is still in the gracious attitude of

a Saviour, delighting to receive all who come to Him.

Do not rest another hour with a *false* hope, *you cannot afford to do so*, but may it be yours to say, like the old man to whom I have referred, "I am resting ON CHRIST."

A. H. L.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

A WONDERFUL PROPOSAL.

IT was in the city of Nazareth, in the synagogue, about two thousand years ago that a most wonderful announcement was made. Jesus came to the synagogue, as His custom was, on the sabbath day and stood up to read. The book of the prophet Esaias was given to Him and He opened it at the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And He closed the book and sat down, the eyes of all in the synagogue being fastened on Him. Then He began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." What a moment had come in the affairs of men! God's anointed Servant had appeared, not to proclaim the day of vengeance, but to announce that God was about to intervene in blessing. Sad to say,

the people who heard those blessed words soon rose up in their fury because they did not think that God had acted quite as they thought He should have done, and took the Lord Jesus to the brow of the hill, upon which their city was built, and sought to hurl Him down headlong to destruction.

Now although long years have rolled away, and Christ has been crucified and slain, yet He lives at the right hand of God waiting to do for men what He proposed to do in the synagogue of Nazareth so many years ago.

There can be no doubt that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, for He was justified by the Spirit. The works of power which He wrought were evidence at once that God was there in the greatness of His might come to terminate the reign of Satan, under which poor man had been held in bondage so long.

To the *poor* the gospel was preached! To the proud, self-sufficient sons of men God had nothing to say in the way of good news, but to the poor—the meek, glad tidings were preached.

And what were these glad tidings?

They told how that God had drawn near to men *in a Man*, and He a divine Person, who had dwelt eternally in the courts of light on high, but who had become man,

having brought all the greatness of Godhead into manhood, and as such dwelt among men. But not only so, for the fact that He was on earth in this way could never bring man to God. He must die; for the wages of sin was death, and He did die, presenting to God a sacrifice for sins of such efficacy that all men may approach God in virtue of it. And to the *poor* this message is brought.

That they are sinners they know only too well; that they are helpless they know also, and many of them are broken-hearted. They have tried the pleasures of the world, but these have not satisfied them; those things upon which they set their hearts have failed them and they are broken-hearted. Alas, how bitter the cry which is wrung from the human heart! Heard only and known only by God often, but yet heard and known by Him.

And is He indifferent? Ah, no! Here was His anointed Servant come to heal the broken-hearted; to light up in the sorrow-stricken heart of fallen creatures the sense of the goodness and the love of God.

The captive shall be delivered, for the Son of God has come and all must yield to the touch of *His* hand, and obey the summons of *His* voice.

Captive to sin, unto you is this word brought! God's Servant has come—His Son, to set you free—free from the awful slavery of sin, in whatever form it holds you.

And the blind shall receive their sight! Thousands around have blinded eyes, they grope in the darkness; what they believe to-day they will discard to-morrow; some of them have revived a heresy of the sixth century which had been flung away by those whose eyes were opened, and lo, they exult in the discovery of something new. But is it new? No, poor souls, they are blind, they lack the sight that sees according to God.

And the bruised shall be set at liberty, because the acceptable year of the Lord has come. There is forgiveness, cleansing, deliverance, sight and healing for all now, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And all these blessings may be found in Christ.

As He sat in the synagogue in the days of old waiting to dispense blessing, so now He sits on the throne of God, and His word, to which I pray you to take heed is: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

“IT’S TOO CHEAP.”

AT the close of a gospel preaching the preacher asked a young man, who had been listening to the story of God’s love to sinners and the way in which He has made it known, if he would like to know that salvation was for him. The young man replied: “*It’s too cheap.*”

One is pained to know that after God has given such a testimony that this should be the verdict of a sinner, but, alas! it is so, and there are thousands who think this.

It is quite possible that the reader thinks so. I put it to you in this way: very many *professing* Christians are seeking by some good works to attain their own salvation, they think that God takes account of their actions and places them to their credit, but it is a fatal error, for everything that was necessary for man’s salvation was done at the cross.

It was then that Jesus bowed His head and said: “IT IS FINISHED,” signifying that redemption’s work was completed; and for any man to attempt to add anything such as good works to that great work is a slight upon God and His blessed Son, because by so doing it is inferred that

what. was done upon the cross was insufficient. In other words people say, "*It's too cheap.*"

Dear reader, if you look at salvation from your standpoint it may appear to be a simple matter, but cheap it could not be, for look what it cost the Saviour!

He left those courts of glory, He came to this dark world, and in love He laid down His life. Can you say then that salvation is cheap? I think not. It cost God His only begotten Son. (John iii. 16.) It cost Jesus all that He had; and now He waits to save you. Turn to Him and confess Him.

F. A. P.

NO ROOM.

IT was a sight that impressed me much, and brought vividly to my mind another day.

A crowd of earnest seekers will be seen outside the closed door, beseeching: "Lord, Lord, open to us"! Then will be realised the truth of the words often sung,

"No room, no room,
Oh, woeful cry, no room!"

It was in the city of Gottenborg, in Sweden, that the meaning of the words,

“No room,” was felt by us. It had been an unusually hard winter; the depression in trade had thrown many out of employment, and there was therefore a great deal of need and distress in the city. Many sober, hard-working families had felt the pinch.

Some kind-hearted friends, moved by the compassions of God, had gathered some of these suffering people together, first men, then women, to give them free teas. For three consecutive nights some one hundred and eighty men were seated in the hall to partake of the meal which loving hands had provided. On the last of these evenings a crowd of hungry men filed into the hall, till every available place was occupied. Then came the very sorrowful task of closing the doors. Alas! outside stood a crowd eager to come in. With regret we had to shut the door in the face of need. I can assure you it was no easy task. Men begged and entreated with tears to come in, just to partake of a simple meal. Our sorrowful answer was: “Dear friends, we have no room for you, much as we would like to have you.”

Going out half-an-hour later a dozen men still stood waiting and with tears they begged to come in.

This touching sight greatly impressed

us, and made us think of that day when an eager crowd will be found outside God's banqueting hall, because they would not go in when they were invited. Let us together, dear reader, thank God that that door is not yet shut, for

“Louder and sweeter sounds the loving call,
Come! lingerer come! enter that festal hall.”

May we not learn a lesson from the above narrative?

(1.) *Our hall was not large enough* for all who wished to come in. Not so with God's banqueting hall. There is room there for all. “My house shall be filled,” and if you do not occupy a place, some one else will occupy it instead of you. “Go out . . . and compel them to come in,” expresses the desire of God's heart for you, my reader, to be there.

(2.) *Our provision was far too small* to meet the wants of all. Unlike the banquet of grace, the supplies of which are unlimited, as boundless as the love of the Giver. The feast of grace has been spread by Him who says, “Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.” God has never sent any away as we were obliged to do because the supplies were short. God will have all men to be saved. Go out and preach the

gospel to EVERY CREATURE was the divine commission. None need be outside. But if you would be a partaker you must come to Christ. You must come now, or the door may close. God wants you, yea, He wants all, for He has that which can meet the need of all, CHRIST for empty sinners.

(3.) *There were people anxious to come in* before the door was closed but could not. This has never been the case in the day of grace. No man has ever pleaded at mercy's door and been sent away. The gladsome news comes ringing from that home where Jesus is: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." What words of tenderest mercy! I will on no condition cast you out. Let your life be blighted with the most heinous crime; your whole being, from head to foot, be polluted with sin, bow at His feet in genuine contrition and repentance, and He will in no wise cast you out.

(4.) *We could only invite a limited number*; this is not so with God. He invites all; but alas! men refuse to come. Oh, think of God's compassion! "He went out and entreated him:" "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." (Luke xv. 31.) Here is grace enough to break a heart of flint. Has it broken yours, my reader? And note, these words

were said to one who was angry and *would not go in*.

May you then, in all haste, turn to the God of all grace, and take your place with those who can say, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." (Song of Sol. ii. 4). I once more urge you to come to Christ, lest that door of mercy close.

J. H. L.

A WORD WITH YOU.

"**H**E [Jesus] came unto his own [the Jew], and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John i. 11, 12.) It is the acceptance of a living Person as Saviour that gives stability to the soul; and in the Gospel by John we have One presented who has every claim upon us, because of who He is, and also what He has done. In fact everything depends upon how you treat Him. Notice how the Jew treated Him, "received him not." This is quite enough to seal their doom. People are saying to-day: "But we do not reject Jesus as the Jew did of old, who crucified Him."

But the question for you and me, dear reader, is this : “ Have we accepted Him as our very own Saviour.” All depends on this. Listen : “ As many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons [or children] of God.” To no others. Scripture puts the test : “ What think ye of Christ ? ” Do not let it be mere speculation with you, dear reader ; sooner or later all must be exposed. Some little time ago I asked the question : “ What think ye of Christ ? ” And the reply was : “ I do not want to say ! ” There is little need to say, for the way you are treating Jesus speaks more loudly than any words. It would have been needless to ask those referred to in Revelation iii. 20 what they thought of Jesus. His very position, standing outside knocking, made that very clear. They did not want Him. They were rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing, not even the Lord Himself. But you may be saying : “ I do need Him, I know I am lost without Him.” If so, dear reader, receive Him at once.

He waits to supply everything you require, and everything He requires from you.

DAVID TRIUMPHANT.

SAUL, King of Israel, and all his men trembled in the presence of the huge giant, Goliath of Gath, and the hosts of the Philistines. (1 Sam. xvii. 1-11.) It is a striking picture of man's position to-day. Sin brought them into this terrible strait. Death stared them all in the face. Fear filled their hearts, as they stood confronted by a dread giant, of some ten feet or so in height, and the outnumbering Philistine host bent upon their destruction. And sin has exposed all men to death and judgment, and Satan and all his demon host are bent upon the utter ruin and the everlasting destruction of the human race.

The mighty giant defied the armies of Israel and cried, "*Choose you a man* for you, and let him come down to me." (Ver. 8.) But all Israel was dismayed and greatly afraid. *No man* was found in all their ranks ready to fight the terrible foe. Even Saul, a man a head and shoulders taller than the rest, and a great warrior, and Jonathan his valiant son also, are silent, fearing to accept the challenge of the great Philistine champion single-handed.

But God knew beforehand the terrible plight that the sin of Saul and his people would bring them into, *and had Himself chosen a man.* David, the son of Jesse of Bethlehem, anointed by Samuel the prophet of God as Israel's future king, had been trained by God in secret, and prepared for this great crisis. A ruddy shepherd youth of beautiful countenance and indomitable courage, he had slain single-handed a lion and a bear in defence of the sheep entrusted to his care. Sent by his father, he comes into the camp with a present of food for his brothers and their captain, and declares his readiness to fight the mighty Philistine. Bearing patiently the rebukes of his brother, he says, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" And he is introduced into the presence of the king.

Now David is a type of a greater than he, Jesus, the Son of God, His sent One to deliver and save His people. He came into this world bringing (in Himself) living bread for His people. Patiently He bore the rebukes and reproaches of a self-satisfied, falsely religious world. Sinless, holy and pure, the faithful and true Witness, the words of David befit His blessed lips in the highest sense, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" He had

undertaken *the great cause of God*, and had come to carry it out at all cost.

Refusing Saul's armour, as a responsible man David chooses five smooth stones from a brook, and with his sling in his hand boldly faces the giant. The curse of his gigantic adversary falls harmless upon this chosen vessel of God, and slinging one stone with unerring aim (for one is enough for God), it sank into the forehead of Goliath. Clad with his brazen armour, he fell clashing ignominiously with his face to the earth in the presence of the assembled hosts. And David ran, stood upon him, slew him, cut off the giant's head with his own sword, and carried it triumphantly into the king's presence, and to Jerusalem. (Vers. 54, 57.)

Jesus, the true David, David's Son and David's Lord, alone in dependence upon God, not by a display of power (though He was and is the Son), but by crucifixion through weakness, suffered for sin, received voluntarily its wage of death, met and overcame him that had its power, Satan, the great adversary. Christ, the stone, smote the foe. He bruised the serpent's head. He death in dying slew. At Calvary He glorified God, bore the judgment of sin and vanquished the whole power of Satan. There the blow was given which

will bring down finally all his power. Soon he will fall from heaven. Soon he will be bound in the abyss. And finally he will be cast into the lake of fire. But Christ rose from the dead, triumphant over all the enemy's power, and sat down as the victorious One at the right hand of God in glory, in the presence of all the heavenly hosts. David finished his work. And Jesus finished the work entrusted to Him, to the everlasting praise of Him who sent Him.

See now the results. "When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, *they fled.*" (Ver. 51.) And the men of Israel *arose, shouted, pursued, chased, and spoiled their tents.* (Ver. 52.)

The death of Goliath was the overthrow of the Philistines and the complete triumph of the people of the living God, whom David saved and whose cause he undertook. And so also to-day. The utter defeat of Satan and his hosts at Calvary is the channel of free blessing *for all*. Having glorified God in His finished work, nothing is left for sinners to do but to reap now and evermore the spoils of His victory. Every question that shut the sinner out from God was raised and met and settled at that moment. Every sinner who reads these lines, hitherto trembling at the consequences of sin, the approach of death,

WORDS OF SALVATION.

and the awful power of Satan, has nought to do but to follow Israel's example, to arise, to shout and triumph with joy at Christ's great victory, to pursue the foe, and to enjoy all the spiritual spoils of true Christianity. Israel reaped all the benefits of the victory of David. And it is our privilege in simple, childlike faith to reap all the benefits of the victory of Christ, and in the power of the Spirit, whom God bestows upon those who believe, to enter upon and enjoy now all the blessings which God sets forth in Christ as the portion of His believing people—pardon, peace, reconciliation, salvation, &c.—in short, all the good things of the blessed gospel of God.

E. H. C.

I CAN'T STOP!

A CALIFORNIAN stage-coach driver lay dying, and one who stood near his bed noticed that he put his leg outside the bed-clothes and swung it to and fro. "Why do you do that?" he asked him.

"The coach is going down hill, and I can't get my foot on the brake!" said the dying man.

Poor fellow, in his delirium his mind wandered, and he fancied himself on his coach again! What he said revealed an awful fact, namely, that he felt himself going somewhere and had no power to stop. And where was he going?

As far as I know, the man was unconverted, without God and without hope. No wonder he tried to find the brake and stop the awful journey which he felt he was taking! But he could not stop, the time had come when he must pass into the presence of God. It was useless to try and make ready now; it was too late. No doubt he had been warned, no doubt he had heard the gospel in some way, but had neglected to hear the warning voice and had refused to turn to God.

God is good, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and

sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," but men must also remember that "God is not mocked." His grace is great and He is longsuffering in mercy and is ever ready to pardon and bless all who turn to Him, but He will be inquired of. Reader, the day *must* come when you and I will have to leave this world, we cannot stay here for ever, and moreover, we must appear before God to give account of the deeds done in the body. Are you ready? You may not feel disposed to answer that question, indeed, you may resent it, but you are either ready or unready, either lost or saved, and let me say also your opportunities of being blessed are becoming fewer and fewer every day.

But now you can turn to God and seek His face. There may be years of sin and rebellion against God behind you, but the moment you acknowledge Him and own your sin that moment He is ready to shew you what His heart is toward you. Oh, wonderful story of the love of God! He loved, He gave—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Reader, if you perish, it is by trampling upon the love of God. I pray you pause and consider.

A CRY FOR MERCY.

WHAT wrong thoughts people have of God, not knowing that He is near to every one of us and ever more ready to hear than we are to ask of Him. He regardeth the prayer of the destitute and is ever the rewarder of those who seek Him. But we must be real in our petitions to be heard. Let me relate the story of a cry that reached the heart of the blessed God and brought an answer of peace to the one who uttered it, and may it please Him to arrest some weary hearts who have often heard the gospel but who have never responded to its call inviting whosoever will to come. It is over twenty years ago that I went for a rest from very active duties to a rural village in C——. I had had very few opportunities of speaking to the mistress of the house where I had apartments until the night of which I write. I had gone up to my room about ten o'clock but a knocking at my door from a daughter of the people of the house aroused me. She said her mother, who had been ill during the day was much worse, she feared she was stricken with cholera, could I suggest any remedy, would I go and see her for she was also in great distress think-

ing she was about to die? Thus appealed to I gave two simple remedies I had with me, and quickly followed into her room.

The father was about going for the doctor, who lived over three miles away, a toilsome journey for the poor, weary farm labourer who had only just returned from heavy harvesting. It was also a question whether the doctor would come. My heart turned to God for help in this the time of trouble—He would not fail us. One glance at the poor woman was sufficient to shew the deep necessity of both body and soul. Her dark, haggard face was drawn with intense pain, and from her parched lips came the words, “O God, have mercy upon my poor soul!” Then in appeal to me she said, “I cannot meet God; I am not ready to die!”

Here was a convicted sinner seeing all the horrid evils within, just ready for a willing, gracious Saviour. How I thanked Him at that moment that He was able and willing to speak the word that should hush the troubled heart that had long resisted His overtures of mercy. Yes, the glorious gospel was very beautiful to tell to an anxious listener, but it was little I could or did say amid the attentions that had to be shewn to her in her sufferings. I prayed and I told God that He who had

produced the need could shew her how He had provided a propitiation, or mercy-seat, through faith in the blood of Jesus. Would He be pleased to give her faith to trust the provision of His mercy. He could righteously forgive and cleanse her so that she could be made suitable for His holy presence. Was there not a living Saviour before Him—One who became dead but was alive again, and that for evermore? The “amen” from the needy one was as a response to all that was said. The long pent up desire of years came out in cries and tears to Him who alone could help her.

He could have said, “Peace, be still,” as in the storm with His disciples on the ship, but He did not do it hurriedly. How wise is the work of God, who works for the good of souls!

It was a dark scene, darker than the midnight which reached us while we looked for relief.

“I have sinned, O Lord have mercy!” cried the suffering woman again and again, as with distorted form she tossed upon the bed.

Blessed be God! He heard our cry, answered our need and as the morning dawned He made His voice to be heard in the secret places of her heart and there

was peace! Truly, the storm became a calm, the winds ceased and she reached her desired haven. No; He did not take her to heaven, He brought her to Himself! Such was the bounty of our God toward her. Sweet it was to hear her say, "I am not afraid now, come life or death all is well with my soul."

"My sin—oh the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sins, not in part but the whole
Were borne on the cross and are gone evermore,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
O my soul!"

Yes, there was a bright sunrise to the ransomed soul, and praise and thanks filled our hearts. And the goodness of our God too came in to relieve the poor body through the very simple means that had been used. When the husband returned from the doctor with some cholera mixture and directions as to treatment which were to be followed by the doctor's coming later on, the crisis was over and our patient lay peacefully and at rest, though very exhausted. I left them then to go to my room to seek for rest with mingled feelings of surprise and gratitude.

What can God the Father not do since He has raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead and given Him glory that our faith and hope might be in God! (1 Pet. i. 19—

21.) This dear woman lived several years after this and was thus enabled not only to tell to her friends what great things the Lord had done for her in His great compassion (Mark v. 19), but to learn more and more of God and His ways among men. A few months after that memorable night I met her in a neighbouring town with her husband and daughters, at a small meeting among some Christian friends. Our interview was a happy one and it was with a glad ring in her voice she said, "The Lord brought me low to help me; He gave me sickness and trouble to bring me to Himself." She is now with Christ until the day when the dead in Christ shall arise and the living are changed, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. My reader, how do you regard yourself toward God? have you felt your need of mercy? If so there is a living Saviour for you.

"We speak of the mercy of God;
So boundless, so rich and so free;
But what will it profit thy soul,
Unless 'tis relied on by thee?"

May His voice be heard in your soul,
giving you to cry to Him for mercy.

E. E. S.

A MID-DAY ARREST.

THE sun was shining in its noontide splendour on the Damascus road when Saul of Tarsus, full of religious hatred and mad with rage, having received power and authority from the chief priests, wended his way to Damascus.

He was no ordinary type of man, he had lived among the straitest sect of his religion, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, blameless in character. But notwithstanding all this, deep down in his heart was hatred to Christ and His people, and he persecuted them even to death. However, God was about to work in his soul; the Lord Jesus was about to make His voice heard; the light from heaven was about to penetrate his soul; he was about to be brought from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, in order that he might be used to turn others to God also.

Behold in him now, after his conversion, a monument of divine grace, a subject of the mighty power of God! And that same grace is for you, it is all at your disposal. Let me ask: Have you ever been truly converted to God, have you ever come under the influence of divine grace?

These are days when many assent to things, but their consciences have never been reached, they have never had to do with a living Person such as Saul met on the Damascus road. He saw Jesus in the glory of God ; it was no ordinary sight that met his gaze that day. It was a revelation to him, and so would it be to you, my reader, if you were suddenly brought to see Jesus as Lord and to confess Him.

With Him you must have to do, to Him you must render an account ; opportunities are passing away ; the time is short ; your soul is precious. The voice which spoke to Saul speaks to you ; the light which arrested him shines for you, through the preaching of the glad tidings. As Saul journeyed the Lord spoke to him from heaven : “ Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? ” He was broken down ; how could he resist such an appeal ? And he answered : “ Who art thou, Lord ? ” It is not the pleasure of God that any should perish, for it is written, “ The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” It is a fact that there is a *Man* in the presence of God to whom you are an object of interest, and He left that scene of glory to journey through this world even unto death in order to gain

men's hearts for God's eternal pleasure. Is He not worthy of the response of your heart? May it be given to you to own Him as Lord even as Saul did, and to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

E. J. E.

AN ACTRESS'S CONVERSION.

WE found her in a neat little room in a Swedish farmhouse a few miles outside the capital. Although not more than thirty-eight years of age her physical frame was a complete wreck. Rheumatism had taken possession of her once lithe limbs, and she lay quite helpless upon her bed, entirely dependent on the services of others. And yet withal she was not only contented, but happy to be in the place where the Lord had put her. She gave us the following details of her conversion.

Five years ago she was a gay young actress. She was very popular and drew large crowds to the theatres. Her income was unusually large, and she was able to indulge in most of the pleasures and luxuries which the world offers. She had no thought of God or eternity, caring only for the frivolous interests of her profession.

But suddenly, without any warning, she

noticed that her knees were giving way and that she could not play her part so well as formerly. She was seized with depression as she contemplated the possibility of having to give up her profession, of which she was passionately fond, as she would thus be left without any means of supporting herself. One Sunday she was in Gothenburg, and being at liberty that day she went for a stroll through the town. As she was passing a large chapel she was attracted by the singing within and recognised a hymn which she used to sing when a child. Prompted by curiosity she went in, although she had not been inside such a place for years. What took place she does not now remember, only she left the place with a deep impression that all was wrong with her, and with a desire to lead a better life.

Her anxiety increased, and her exercises now began to take a definite form. Her frivolous, sinful life rose up before her, and she longed to get away from the sin and empty mirth of the stage and to know Christ as her Saviour. Just at that time she was corresponding with the manager of a Stockholm theatre respecting a renewal of her engagement for the coming season. She saw very clearly that turning to God would mean giving up her profession, and

not as yet having courage to act upon her convictions she determined to demand a very high sum for the next season's engagement, thinking that it would terminate the negotiations and open up a way out of her difficult path. Accordingly she wrote to the manager stating her terms, never for a moment dreaming that they would be accepted. The day following she received a telegram from him saying that the terms were agreed to. She was in despair. Her eternal destiny seemed to hang in the balance. She had sought to make a way out of the difficulty for herself, but had not yet turned to God. She was alone in her room, and yet somehow she felt ashamed to kneel down, as she had not bowed her knees since she was a child. But the need overcame the fear, and she got down before the Lord and told Him everything, asking Him for strength to trust Him and to leave the future in His hands. The Lord met her there and then, and rising from her knees she wrote to the manager saying she had trusted Christ as her Saviour and that she could not go on with the stage. He wrote back begging her to remain; but she had tasted the love of Jesus, and it was an easy matter now to refuse the allurements of this poor world.

After this her health gave way entirely, and she was much cast on the Lord. All her old friends forsook her, and disparaging remarks were made about her even in the public papers, but the Lord raised up new friends, and up to the present moment she has been cared for. There she lies, this once gay and haughty worldling, her pride broken and her heart subdued and attracted to Christ. Now her greatest joy is to hear of the Saviour's love, and as we sat by her bed and looked upon her face, beaming with divine joy, we thought of the words of the good Shepherd: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

What are your prospects for eternity, reader? Like the actress you may be living in circles of mirth and frivolity, but remember, it will all come to an end. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but *know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.* (Eccl. xi. 9.) The pleasures of this world do not last, nor do they satisfy even whilst they last; they are "the pleasures of sin." The day of reckoning is fast approaching; and "every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

But God is desiring to meet us in grace, before the day of judgment comes. This He can do because Christ died for the ungodly. On Calvary's cross He bore the judgment due to sin, and satisfied, yea glorified, God about the whole question. God is not demanding anything from man now ; He is the *giving God*. All our liability has been met, and we have only to receive salvation as a free gift. Now is the day of salvation. It will soon close, and then our opportunities will be over for ever. Oh, face this question now and receive from God's hand this priceless gift.

WH. L——B.

CHANGE OF RAIMENT.

A church minister lay dying, and another visited him, and put this question to him, "What are you doing, brother?" He replied as follows: "I'll tell you what I am doing. I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my good deeds, all my bad deeds; and I am going to throw them all overboard, and swim to glory on the plank of free grace." Wise man that. He doubtless realised in his last days that

neither his prayers, nor good deeds, nor sermons were of any avail in the hour of death. Nothing that you or I can do will secure our eternal blessing. God accepts nothing from a sinner in his sins. In Zechariah iii. 3, 4, we notice that Joshua was clothed with filthy garments. We stand before God as unclean, "and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) Our good deeds may appear all very well before our own eyes, but before God they fade, and we with them. Those that stood by Joshua were commanded to take away the filthy garments from him. His iniquity was caused to pass from him, and he clothed with change of raiment. There must be a moral change before we can be acceptable to God. The prodigal son of Luke xv. was not fit for the father's house in the filthy garments of his own resolutions. "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet" said the father. This done, he is fit for his father's presence and able to take his right place in the house as a son.

We must be clothed according to God, or He cannot accept us.

Adam and Eve thought to clothe themselves, but God had to make coats of

skins and clothe them. He cannot accept the works of our hands. No, we must rely only upon His free grace, as the dying minister did. He offers us change of raiment suitable to Himself, in the Person of His own beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is the reader content with his own filthy garments of good works and prayers and good resolutions?

Take them away, for God cannot and will not allow you to stand before Him in them.

I heard recently of an old lady who had passed away, and I inquired whether she was ready to go, and was told, "I think so, she was a good living woman."

But her good living did not make her ready. Unless she had accepted Christ as her Saviour and relied upon His finished work she was not ready.

It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 9.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." (Titus iii. 5.)

May you, my reader, know what it is to be clothed in all the perfection of what Christ is and thus be acceptable to God.

A. H. C.

“WHERE ART THOU?”

SUCH was the question which God put to Adam when he had sinned, and let me put it to the reader to-day: Where art thou? It is a solemn question, but one which must be gone into before any one can receive the blessing which God has in His heart for all.

What marks people to-day is that there is distance between them and God. And what is this distance? If we turn to the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis, we find that God created man and placed him on this earth in innocence. But man rebelled against his Creator and brought sin into the world, and the result of this was that death came in. Sin has created distance between man and God. No child of Adam is sinless, for we are “born in sin and shapen in iniquity,” and hence all are lost.

From the time that Adam sinned, man's position has been one of an offender against a holy, righteous, sin-hating God. That is the position of every person by nature.

God having been offended, it is clear that before He could come out in *blessing*

to man, He must be met. And who was worthy to meet God? Could you or I, sinners by nature, bear the judgment due to sin? Most assuredly not. If God was to be met, it must be by no less a person than God Himself. And God *has been met* to His infinite satisfaction. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was no less than God (Phil. ii. 6.) came to this earth and bore our sins at Calvary's cross. He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us. He bore all that was against us so that God has for ever removed from before His eye all that we are naturally—all that is contrary to Him, and He accepts us, when we turn to Him, in virtue of the One who has perfectly accomplished His will.

Do not make any mistake, dear reader, God will not accept you on the ground of anything you can be or do, *for He has removed that from before Him* in the death of His Son.

We see a beautiful illustration of reconciliation between the sinner and God in Luke xv. 11–32. The son put distance between himself and his father, but the father in his great love went to meet him just where he was, and where there had been distance there was nearness.

May God in His grace lead you to see

that you are by nature at a distance from Him. But may you also see that He has removed the distance so that you may come near to Him through the finished work of Christ, and being "accepted in the beloved" may there be peace in your soul.

F. E.

SAVED OR LOST, WHICH ?

FAR away in one of the western states of America a young man lay dying. A telegram reached me one morning saying that he was seriously ill, and I started to go to him. On arriving at his home I ventured to speak to him about his soul but he seemed very much unconcerned, saying, "I do not intend to die."

What folly on the part of men to attempt to grapple with death! Those who have had their eyes opened know that there is only One, and He the Lord of life and glory, who has been victorious over death.

"What would become of you," I asked this young man, "if you were to die?" A wild look passed over his face as he said, "I'd be lost," and he sank back

upon his pillow. He remained some time in silence, during which his devoted wife prayed that God would spare him and save him from an eternal night of darkness. He rapidly grew worse; some one spoke in his ear, "L—, do you believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin?" He replied, "Yes, I do."

He requested that they should pray with him. What an anxious moment it was—a precious soul hovering between life and death! But how blessed to pass over from this scene into yonder bright regions of joy. His dear wife comforted him with these words, "Jesus loves you." And he answered, "I know it," and in a few moments he was gone. What a triumph of the grace of God was thus manifested. A man spending his whole life as he had done in self-gratification, living for his own pleasure, regardless of the claims of God, and forgetting that "the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." (Psa. xlix. 8.) And after all this, the sovereign mercy and goodness of God that led to repentance. His love slighted, His mercy refused, yet for all this, "his hand is stretched out still." What patience, yea, what untiring love on the part of the

blessed God. The subject of this paper is not alone, there are multitudes like him. It may be the reader of this paper is one that has often been pleaded with, often been prayed for, and still unsaved ! And if death were to stop the onward march, he would be lost for ever. Terrible thought ! But good news of a full and free salvation is preached in the name of a risen and glorified Saviour—Jesus, the sinners' Friend. He came forth to meet us and has met the claims of a holy God in order to bring us into divine favour. A great salvation is now offered to those who will accept it in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. But if there is such a gracious appeal in the glad tidings, there is also a warning. Listen : “ Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke : then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.”

What stupendous folly to put it off till it is too late, and the door of mercy is for ever closed, and to bewail through all eternity that you had missed such proffered mercy.

E. I. E.

DEATH! WHY DO MEN FEAR IT?

I AM sometimes struck with the way in which various subjects are brought to the notice of the public by the papers and periodicals offered for sale; and how, in order the more readily to attract attention, the headings are presented on the contents bills in the form of questions. In this way the curiosity of the passer-by is aroused, and he is persuaded to look into matters which perhaps have hitherto escaped his notice.

May I be permitted then to turn this practice to a good end in suggesting, for the consideration of the reader, the question at the head of this paper: Why do men fear death? I am convinced that if the question be faced, the solution of it will bring great profit to us all.

Let it be admitted then, as an undeniable fact, that men *do* fear death. This is not the case with the animal creation. The reason for this fear indicates the difference between man and the lower animals.

But in case my reader should be in-

clined to dispute that *all* men fear death, pointing to the brave soldier on the field of battle, the hero who risks his life to save another, or even the poor suicide, let me state that such persons do not fear death because they are so filled with the object they have in hand.

No man would calmly sit down and face death without having such an object as I have suggested. He could not *deliberately* face death if he had no such object.

The animal has no such feeling as man has, for when it has lived out its life, it simply lies down and dies without a struggle.

The reason for this marked difference between man and the lower animals is to be found in the difference in their relation to God ; and it is seen in this, that while the beasts answer to His mind in their sphere, shewing His wisdom, according to their measure, and express their dependence upon Him (see Psa. civ. 21-24), being also the objects of His care (see Matt. vi. 26), men were designed to be His representatives here, to be the objects of His heart and to respond to His love, entering into and appreciating His thoughts as they receive communications from Him.

This leads at once to the conclusion, that while the beasts in this sense retain

the position for which they were designed, man has fallen, and is at a distance from God and must die. The beast dies also, it is true, but in man's case *judgment* follows: "After death the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.)

But God, blessed be His name! has been beforehand, and has provided a way of escape, and it is with delight I commend to you the verse following the one I have just mentioned, and to which I hope to refer later. (Heb. ix. 28.)

In that reckoning which God must have with men after death, there are three great counts, and man stands condemned already, guilty upon each count, and when they are raised against him at that awful assize they will be unanswerable. Men may reason and argue and explain them away to their own satisfaction *now*, but *then* every tongue will be silenced, for already all the world is guilty before God. (Rom. iii. 19.)

The points are these—*First*: every man is debtor to God and absolutely insolvent, not through misfortune, or the fault of others, *but by his own sin*—he has not answered to God in the place of responsibility in which he was set—he is a debtor.

Secondly: he is guilty of the death of God's blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ,

for we have all had our part in rejecting Him, even as those who actually murdered Him rejected Him.

Thirdly : man despises the way of escape which God has provided — the great salvation which God has placed at his disposal. (Read Heb. ii. 3 ; Acts xiii. 40, 41 and Heb. x. 28-31.)

I would now go back to the verses at the end of Hebrews ix., for they contain the good news which God desires every man to know, and it is this, that “as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.”

All who turn to God have no longer any reason to fear death, because it would only usher them into the ante-chamber of the King, so to speak, there to await the day when He shall come forth in His great power and glory to reign, and they with Him. They look for Him to appear, not to take up the question of sin again—that has been settled for ever for them in His death—but to complete their salvation in giving them bodies of glory like His own. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

But if my reader is unconverted he has every reason to fear death, because it will usher him into the presence of God. Were it not for this there would be no

more reason to fear death than an animal knows, whose existence is ended by it.

Satan is allowed to bring death so before the soul of man in all its awful reality causing him to fear exceedingly, and by it to keep him in bondage. But as for the Christian, when he realises that Christ who has died for his sins has risen again out of death, he sees that the power which no mere man could resist nor break has been broken for him in the death and resurrection of his Substitute. So the fear of death is gone in the measure in which he realises that blessed fact.

But the day *will* come when God will deal with the world in judgment. Now, however, He, who will occupy the throne of judgment, is in the attitude of Saviour to the end that men may be saved. (2. Cor. v. 20, 21.) What answer will the reader give to His gracious invitation?

E. D. S.

“REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.”

IN past ages God chose a special nation—the children of Israel—and set them apart for Himself, that in relationship with Him they might reap abundant blessing.

and do His will. As the eventful history plainly shews, in spite of all this they did their own will and rebelled against God. Even as Cain in the early days of this world's history stood up in defiance and rebellion against God, so man ever since has “gone in the way of Cain,” and sinned with a high hand.

The children of Israel rebelled and refused God's word, so when the fulness of time was come God sent forth His Son to redeem. Man had been tried, and proved hopeless, unless God should put forth His hand to redeem him. The verdict had gone forth : “There is none that doeth good, no, not one ;” moreover, “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

“Dead in trespasses and sins” there remained but one thing to be done, and that, that God should come Himself and redeem His creature.

Dear reader, are you ready for such a verdict? Have you ever felt the burden of your sin against God? There may be with you a rigid observance of church services and the like ; but what about your sins—the sin above all others of rejecting Christ and having part with that world which is guilty before God? You may be respectable and religious in the

eyes of your fellows ; but how do you stand before Him who discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart, and before whose eyes all things are naked and open ? God spoke in former days by angels and men, but now He has spoken *His last message* of grace to this world in His Son. He has shewn mercy and withal His own love.

Let me entreat you to ponder these things. You have without doubt sinned against God, but have you ever repented ? “ Godly sorrow worketh repentance.” Here is the point to which you have not come. Sorrow before God, as you see yourself a sinner in His sight, going on “ without God and without hope in the world.” “ The goodness of God leadeth to repentance.” Have you realised His goodness to you ? Often men say, “ God is good ;” and surely it is only right that all should acknowledge it always. He gives us both food and clothing, and grants us the use of what the earth brings forth. God gives these things to lead men to repentance ; but He has shewn His mercy and grace, yea, His perfect love in the gift of His beloved Son. He came into the world with life and power to deliver men from Satan.

“ God commendeth his love toward us,

in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Did you ever consider it : “ *while we were yet sinners* ” — “ *Christ died for us.* ” God sent His Son that He might give life. “ Sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; ” but God’s desire for man was that he might be delivered from the power of sin, so that he might enjoy life everlasting.

God does not now give special blessing to any one nation : “ For God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Yes, *He so loved the world*, and in order to give expression to His love He sent His Son. One thing was necessary in order that when He came God’s blessing might be “ unto all and upon all them that believe.”

“ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must the Son of man be lifted up* : that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” He must needs die, He must give Himself a sacrifice for sin. He went to the cross, and in those hours of darkness He bore the judgment of God. He died as a malefactor at the hands of men, and shed His precious blood. He was put in the grave, but rose again, a mighty

Saviour. He rose the mighty Victor over every foe. He is now exalted at the right hand of God, a "Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance . . . and forgiveness of sins."

He has so satisfied God by that great work of atonement that God can now be known as "Just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. C. S.

SEEKING AND FINDING.

THE gospel by Luke may well be called the "seeking and finding" gospel. The Lord Jesus speaks of Himself as the One who has come to seek and to save the lost. (Chap. xix. 10.) In chapter xv. the shepherd seeks the lost sheep till he finds it, and the woman seeks the piece of silver until it is found. Now it is evident when a person seeks for anything which is lost that it must be of some value, however small. In the two instances quoted this is evidently the case.

But have you thought for a moment of the value of a soul to Christ—your soul?

It was of such great value to Him, that He not only left the heights of glory but

went right down into death to pay the price of redemption.

He answered every claim which God had upon man, and in His death laid a basis upon which God can righteously bless and forgive the person found. What is meant by being found is this, I think : you are brought face to face with the Saviour. We have an illustration of this in chapter xix. 1-10. 'Zacchæus' desire to see Jesus was very real, so real indeed that he overcame every obstacle when he climbed up the tree, knowing that Jesus would pass by. All his thoughts and desires were known to Jesus, who, when He came to the spot, looked up and spoke in such a way that all his doubts were dispelled and comfort was brought to his heart. Jesus said, "Zacchæus, make haste, and come down ; for to-day I must abide at thy house." Notice the response : "And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully."

What a meeting ! No reserve, a full confession ; and Jesus answered : "This day is salvation come to this house." It had come in the acceptance of Himself. Jesus got His place, and we may be sure the found one got his. In chapter xv. we learn what it is to God when sinners repent : "Joy in heaven"—"joy in the

presence of the angels of God.” Zacchæus is a sample one, the woman in chapter vii. another. She takes her true place at Jesus’ feet, she lays her glory there. How He appreciates it all ! And she gets the desire of her heart. But think of it, she is brought to light for the satisfaction of His own heart.

What a meeting, dear reader ! Have you been brought to light in such a way as to own the claims of His love—love so great ?

Let it be repeated, that He died for you, and now lives in the presence of God.

J. I.

THE PRICE OF A SOUL!

QUITE recently a very remarkable announcement appeared on the placard of one of the London papers which possibly was noticed by some reader of these lines. It was to this effect: "A Soul for Sale."

I do not know how the writer treated this extraordinary subject, but it struck me as being a very solemn thing that men could be found who so lightly valued their souls as to barter them away for some temporary advantage.

When the Lord Jesus was here He asked this question: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37.)

It is undoubtedly true that self interest appeals very strongly to every man, indeed, it would *naturally* have the first place with them. Let me then press upon the reader this question—consider it for a moment: Why does a man desire to amass wealth; is it not that he may have the

ability to satisfy every wish during life, and leave behind him a name which shall be extolled among men? Of course I am not thinking of the poor miser who loves wealth for its own sake, but the man who gets it that he may use it for his own enjoyment.

But consider this, the rich man dies as well as the poor man, and in death all are equally poor unless they are rich toward God, that is, have their treasure in heaven. Life here is short, and eternity is long, is it not then the height of folly to seek to provide for the few fleeting years, forgetting the never ending eternity the other side of the grave?

You will do well to ponder the question; do not say that you have no time for these things, but make your soul's welfare *your most pressing concern*.

The Lord Jesus spoke a parable about a certain rich man whose land yielded abundantly, so much so that he found it necessary to enlarge his barns that he might store the produce. He was very busy, too busy to think of the eternal welfare of his soul, proposing only its present enjoyment of that which was perishing (as perhaps you are, my reader, too much engaged with present things to remember that death is stalking abroad,

and laying his icy hand upon one and another, all unexpectedly).

His society would be courted, as perhaps yours may be, his advice sought, his vanity pandered to, and on account of his success he would be regarded as a wise and prudent man. His word would pass current for truth and wisdom, and men would hang upon his lips.

But God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke xii. 16-21.)

All his fine projects shattered in an instant ! The One whom he had left out of his calculations suddenly interfered and his enjoyment of present things was at an end : his riches snatched from his grasp, and he himself launched into eternity, a lost soul, with only a memory of what he had enjoyed, and bitter remorse at the thought of the eternal portion which might have been his. What was he now profited, removed by the irresistible hand of death ?

His own heart would justify God in His pronouncement of "Thou fool," and he would condemn himself, though now too late, having an eternity before him in which to eat the fruit, not of his abundant harvest but of his own folly. Now as to you, dear reader, what would *you* give in exchange for your soul ?

The value of one single soul is so great that all the vast wealth of the whole world would not suffice.

If you will turn to Psalm xlix. you will find a wonderful proclamation, calling upon every inhabitant of the world to hearken, high and low, rich and poor together—it concerns them all—it concerns *you*, my reader.

Here it is stated that there is not a man, be he never so rich, who can redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (ver. 7), and if he could not for another, it is certain that he could not for himself, “that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.” The reason of this is that “the redemption of their soul is precious [or costly], and it ceaseth for ever.”

First, then, we see that man has lost his soul—sold under sin—a slave to it. (Rom. vii. 14.) Secondly, he has no ability to redeem it, its redemption is costly, and the wealth of the whole world would not suffice.

Here then we see how unanswerable the Lord's question is. There is no man living who could return a satisfactory answer. And yet the writer of this psalm could say, “Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels

shall compass me about ? ” (Ver. 5.) (That is in death—the wages of sin.)

Is it not presumption, the reader may ask, for a man to speak like that, in the face of what we have been considering ? Ah, no ! read verse 15, his language is, “ But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave : for he shall receive me.” The fact is, he knew the only One who was able to pay the price of redemption—the only One who could find a ransom for his soul, and who was *willing* to do so !

Yes, God Himself has paid the price for the redemption of every soul in the world. “ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.) He can say concerning every one that believes in Him, “ Deliver him from going down to the pit : I have found a ransom.” (Job xxxiii. 24.) God’s love has provided what His righteousness demanded, and with which demand no one could comply and live.

Consider the immensity of the cost. It cost God His own and only Son—it cost the Son of God His life. No wonder, then, that the Psalmist should say, “ the redemption of their soul is costly.”

But consider on the other hand the infinite value of that "ransom," the life's blood of the holy Son of God, and then you will be prepared for the further statement of the Psalmist, "it ceaseth for ever," or, in other words, can never be repeated. Christ can never die again, He has risen into life beyond death. His resurrection proves that He has conquered death. Consider, further, that wonderful love that moved God to provide so great a salvation for such great sinners. Dwell upon it. He loves *you*, my reader, and desires your greatest blessing. Yield to that patient love that has waited for you to turn to Him and live. God desires to free you from all your sins, and to conform you to the likeness of His own Son, that you might be fitted to be His companion through the endless ages of eternity.

E. D. S.

THE WORLD'S TO-MORROW.

THE world's to-morrow is summed up in two words: "*We die!*" (1 Cor. xv. 32.) They are to the point, are they not? How is it with the reader? You are young and full of expectancy perhaps,

all your life is before you. What then? You die! It will matter not how high you have got, either in your own or the world's estimation. Fame may be yours and abundance of wealth, but you must leave it all.

“To-morrow *we die.*” What then? Done with! Not so.

While watching a funeral procession go past some time ago, I turned to a lady near, and remarked, “Death is God’s judgment upon sin.” “Oh,” she answered, “it is not death that I am afraid of, *it’s after death.*”

What is after death? Judgment. Solemn fact! God says it, “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. (Heb. ix. 27.)

Listen to what Jesus said when here: “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” (John viii. 24.) If you will not have Jesus as your Saviour—God’s blessed Son, come here as God’s *Lamb* to take away the sin of the world, you must die in your sins. He has died “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” He who knew no sin was made sin, “that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” His blood has been shed, so now we read, “The blood of Jesus Christ his [God’s] Son

cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Do you bow to this? If not, you will die in your sins. Awful fact! Buried with them and raised to give an account to the holy and righteous God.

How will you do it? You cannot. No, nor can any other person. What is to be done? Let us repeat it. What you cannot do, Jesus, by His death, has done. In His death He answered to God as to every question of sin and guilt. God has accepted that answer, and He has taken Him out of death and the grave, and put Him at His own right hand in glory. Now God says to every one who puts their trust and confidence in Him, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more." The precious blood blots them out for ever.

Then again Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

So you see that instead of having the world's to-morrow the believer has a present joy of knowing forgiveness, and in contrast with "to-morrow we die," he knows that he will not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life.

The Christian's “ to-morrow ” is to be *with* Christ and *like* Him for ever. What a hope ! Let me ask : Is it yours ?

J. L.

“ SINNERS SHALL BE
CONVERTED UNTO THEE.”

(PSA. LI. 13 ; JOHN III. 14-17.)

THE gospel of God is a marvellous exposition of God's own heart, and it will be a theme of wonder and praise to all eternity. It is *good news* which God, hundreds of years before the New Testament Scriptures were written, had “promised by his prophets in the holy scriptures.” It is *good news* because it is “concerning his Son.” It is *trustworthy news* because it has come from God Himself. It is *gracious news* because it is the means by which He could righteously have *sinners*, the needy objects of its wonderful provision, brought to Himself.

By the sweet Psalmist of Israel, the Spirit of Christ has declared, “I will teach transgressors thy ways ; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” The truth here prophetically told has, in the New

Testament, been fully established. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (1 Tim. i. 15.) And surely each of the four gospels is, as it were, a golden cup running over with the new wine of divine love to man, each inspired writer in his own way presenting the wonderful words of Christ Jesus, the blessed Son of God. And what do these precious utterances shew? They confirm the words of the prophets; for God’s beloved Son was here teaching transgressors and sinners the tender yearnings of God’s heart towards them.

The Lord Jesus during the three years of His wondrous ministry was constantly found among transgressors and sinners; so much so, indeed, that the blind leaders of Judaism were the bitterest opponents of His teaching. They did not know what God was doing, and so had betaken themselves to fault-finding; such as—“Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?” “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” “They all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.” Why was all this? Jesus Himself shews—“They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I

came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Matt. ix. 11 ; Luke xv. 2 ; xix. 7 ; Mark ii. 17.)

Sinner ! if such I address, hearken to the following statement, through which multitudes of sinners have been brought to the knowledge of God :

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up : that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved.”

These words are God’s words—words in which the heart of God is expressed. How they should lay hold on the souls of men !

In this very connection the Psalmist has once more to say to us : “The entrance of thy words giveth light ; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” (Psa. cxix. 130.) As *divine light* the word of God, when it reaches the conscience and heart of a sinner, does two things : it *removes* moral darkness, and

thus *exposes* moral state before God. Now, if the Spirit of God is not hindered from completing His blessed work, *divine understanding* follows immediately, with the further result that the words and ways of Christ are apprehended in the soul and *seen* to be the words and ways of God; and the sinner is thus converted to God.

This, I think, is what the apostle means when he says, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The full result being, "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." (1 Thess. i. 5, 9, 10.)

If my reader is unsaved, God grant that his or her understanding may be opened to understand the scriptures. (Luke xxiv. 45-47.)

J. M.

A GOSPEL OF POWER.

“ For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. (1 THESS. I. 5.)

WHAT a contrast to all that is of man and connected with his ways ! The blessed Son of God who came to reveal God's heart could say when speaking of the ways of men, “ Ye know not,” but “ we know.”

The Apostle Paul who spoke of himself as the chief of sinners could say, “ I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ : for it is the *power of God* unto salvation to every one that believeth.” (Rom. i. 16.) Many gospels (so called) are current at the present time. Men set up systems and organisations, claiming the ear of their fellows : some speaking of a better state of things coming to pass in time, others occupied with reformation in some form or another, while numbers think that by changes made in the governments of this world all will come into order and presently be what it should be.

This world is full of “ gospels ” of one kind and another, but they keep man at a distance from God and allow him to sin

as much as ever. They lack the essential power to deliver men from evil and bring them to a state of happiness in the presence of God. Let me ask you if any means that man has put forth so far has ever produced results such as are shewn by "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God," which was first proclaimed by God's own Son when here as a Man.

It is the one gospel that comes to man "in power . . . and in much assurance." No delusive hopes of a possible salvation; no groaning over the bondage—the continual bondage—to which fallen man is enslaved; no, it is a gospel of power, proclaimed now by the blessed God by His servants.

"The precious blood of Christ" is of such value that God says it "cleanseth from ALL sin." When Christ died He bore the judgment of God which sin rightly deserved. God is righteous and holy, He can have nothing to do with sin, but because of the atoning sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross, "He can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." He now offers you a Saviour, a Deliverer!

Believe in this Saviour, accept the gospel, and turn to Him in true repentance and acknowledge your true state.

You will find that “ He waits that he may be gracious,” and will give you to know His power in delivering from the bondage of sin and Satan. His gospel will come to you in “ much assurance,” giving you the certainty of sins forgiven, and causing you to rejoice in all His love, and the preciousness of Him who has saved you.

“ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.” (Titus ii. 11–14.)

H. C. S.

“ I have a Message for You.”

A MAN lay in one of the wards of the — hospital in a very critical condition. His injuries were so serious that it was doubtful whether he would recover. And, sad to say, there was some doubt as to whether his injuries were self-inflicted.

A friend of mine, who was the official

visitor on the day of which I speak, came to the door of the ward where the sick man lay, and as he was about to enter the constable who watched by his bedside rose and said quietly: "It isn't any good speaking to him, Sir, there isn't anything to make any impression on." "But," said the visitor, "I should like to speak to him for a moment, if you will withdraw."

The policeman got up and left the room. When the door was closed my friend went up to the bedside of the sick man, and taking him by the hand, said: "I have a message for you; I want to tell you of the love of God. He gave His only Son to die for sinners like you and me. Think, friend, of God's love for you."

Great tears began to roll down the man's cheeks: could it be true that God loved a sinner such as he was? Yes, it was true: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

Whether the man of whom I speak truly believed the gospel, I cannot say, but this I can say, he was not too bad for God to save him. Reader, are you saved, are your sins forgiven? If not, let me urge you to turn to God.

“ RICH IN MERCY.”

A STORY is told of a soldier who, hearing of the illness of his wife, applied for leave of absence, but was refused. He deserted, but was caught and arrested. He was tried and found guilty, and sentenced. He stood perfectly unmoved as the officer read his fearful doom—“To be shot to death on the next Friday.” Not a muscle twitched, not a limb quivered. “I deserted my colours ; I deserve it. Is that all, sir ? ” “No,” replied the officer, “there is something more” ; and unfolding a paper, he read aloud the doomed man’s pardon.

The undaunted spirit which severity had failed to move, was completely broken down by mercy. He dropped to the ground shaking, sobbing and overcome. He was, however, restored to the ranks and in process of time proved his gratitude by his good conduct.

Many a one has heard of the day of judgment, but although he dreads it his heart remains unmoved. If he stops to think **HE KNOWS** that he has sinned and he knows that he deserves to die ; but if he

only realised how great the mercy of God is his heart must be touched.

The proclamation from the throne of God announces forgiveness of sins to all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. As it was with the deserter, so with us, we deserve to die, but GOD IS RICH IN MERCY. There is no one throughout the great world but to whom the message is sent : " Be it known unto you that through this man [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

It must be a hard heart indeed that is not moved by hearing of the mercy of God.

And yet, alas ! there are many who have heard of God's mercy, but who are untouched by it. How is this ? With many they are too proud to accept mercy. They would gladly do something to atone for their sins, BUT GOD WILL NOT ALLOW THAT. He has concluded all in unbelief and every mouth is stopped. ALL THE WORLD is guilty before God. Yes ! but He has shewn MERCY TO ALL. He has a right to do so. None may question what He does. No ! the fact remains that if we will not come to Him on the ground of mercy, we must appear before Him in judgment. But judgment is His strange work. God delights to bless.

Reader, you may be one who has had

hard thoughts of God, most of us have at some time. But if we consider His goodness in meeting us in His mercy, providing a Saviour, shewing us a way out of death in the resurrection of Jesus, can we have hard thoughts of God? Surely not.

In the case of the poor soldier he could face death unmoved in the presence of severity, but when he realised the mercy which gave him a pardon he broke down.

I do not wonder that he did; and I trust that as the reader sees how God has acted in mercy to him he also may break down and submit himself.

“ There is forgiveness with THEE.”
Thank God for that! Oh, my reader, I pray you to turn to God, WITH WHOM THERE IS FORGIVENESS.

He will have mercy, and will abundantly pardon. The greatest sinner need have no fear in turning to Him. His mercy is great and it is towards all. The work accomplished by Jesus on the cross renders it possible for God to shew mercy to all, and freely pardon the worst person on earth. In mercy God has appealed to all and granted space in which they may repent. Reader, you must meet God either as Justifier or Judge! Now you may meet Him as the Just One, and the

Justifier of him which believeth. That you may believe is my earnest prayer.

GOOD INTENTIONS.

IT is by no means an uncommon thing to find people who intend to go to heaven, and share the good time that is coming, but they also mean to make the best of their time here, as they say.

I should like to call the attention of such people to a sad example which occurred several hundred years ago.

No doubt you have read of it before, but it is worth repeating as it may prove a warning to some reader.

David had returned from the victory over Goliath, and the slaughter of the Philistines, and as he stood before king Saul and his son Jonathan, it is said that Jonathan's heart was knit to David's, so much so, that he took his own robe and invested David with it, and told David of the secret he had learned. He had learned that David was soon to sit upon the throne, the throne which, as the king's son, Jonathan himself should have occupied. Jealousy did not turn him against David, far otherwise; he was willing to take the second place, for he

said: "Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee." (1 Sam. xxiii. 17.)

So far, so good, it was really a wonderful secret which God had shewn Jonathan, but his heart was not set free from the kingdom which man had set up. He was, in heart, as thousands are to-day, wanting to make the best of his time in Saul's kingdom, and then when David came into power he would cast in his lot with him. His heart was knit to David's, we read, but it did not detach him from the kingdom which God had refused. Jonathan was not a man of faith, for his heart was interested in that which he could see.

In looking through the list of David's valiant men, Jonathan's name is absent. He intended to be one of them, and in the eyes of his fellow-men he was one, but the men who gained reward were the men who had thrown in their lot with David *when he was in rejection*.

Jonathan was content to be with Saul, and when God visited Saul in judgment, Jonathan perished with him. Thus, with all his good intentions, he never realised that to which he looked forward, for when David sat upon the throne Jonathan had perished among those with whom he had identified himself.

Now, what was true in Jonathan's case is perfectly true with many persons to-day. Scripture speaks very decidedly about that time which is coming when the Lord Jesus Christ will sit upon His throne in universal power; it also says that those who suffer with him *now*, will reign with him *then*. But there are very many who are not prepared to take the path of rejection with a rejected Christ, but yet desire to share His glory.

Dear reader, if you are content to cast in your lot with the world which rejected Christ, you must be prepared to suffer the punishment which is to be meted out to this world. If you are not prepared to own Christ now, in that day of judgment He will say to *you* : "Depart, for I never knew you." Your intentions may be good, but it is most necessary to assure oneself that it does not stop at that. If it is your desire (and surely it is) to be with Him, and like Him *for ever*, confess His name *now*, take your place on His side *now*, and let the world (the system which hates Him) go its way.

Sinner, the day of God's grace cloeth fast,
Linger not, linger not, doom comes at last ;
Soon will the dark night of judgment be here,
Hasten, oh ! hasten, while Christ still is near.

RESPONSE.

“**A**ND God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.” (Gen. i. 11.) The one object God had in creation was to get a response to His own love. God is love, and love always looks for a return. Man has never appreciated God’s love, therefore has never thought of returning it.

Have you, dear reader? It can only be secured for God by our becoming acquainted with Him—“Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace” is the divine injunction; but “the world by wisdom knew not God.” Thus, it never has, and never can render to Him the response of heart for which He is looking. How many in this world live practically

without any thought of God,

and yet He gives us “life, and breath, and all things”! “The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.”

His first righteous requirement from His creature man is: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut. vi. 5), and He has a right to re-

quire this. But has He ever obtained it? Never. Men seem to think they have come into this world simply to please themselves and that they owe no allegiance to the Author of their being. We, alas, do not treat God as we expect to be treated ourselves. If a man, for instance, buys a horse, he has no thought of allowing him to spend all his days roaming about the paddock for his own amusement. Do we think then God created us merely to do our own will and please ourselves?

“Even Christ pleased not himself.” (Rom. xv. 3.) ‘There is nothing in all man’s thoughts, words or ways responsive to the love of God’s heart. If He is to obtain man’s love, He must first shew His own, and love man into loving Him. This He has done. What matchless grace!

“God SO loved the world,
that he *gave* his only begotten Son.”
“God commendeth his [own] love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

But He has risen again, and in that new and risen life has commenced a new creation where there can be and is response to the love of God’s heart.

From the solid land, which had come into being in creation’s days, there sprang the vegetable life which soon clothed the

earth with verdure for the Creator's delight, and as food for the living creatures which were soon to inhabit it. Thus in the risen life of Christ, new flowers and fruits spring up for God's satisfaction and for the blessing of man around us. "He spared not his own Son." "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son the propitiation for our sins."

Our life has been a life of sins, sins against the God who loves us, and these sins must be removed before He can get any response to all His love. He put them all away in such a manner as to win our love in the doing of it. "He [Jesus] gave *himself* for our sins." What love was this! "Who *his own self* bare our sins in *his own body* on the tree."

Man's sin, God's love, the devil's hatred and the perfect obedience of the blessed Lord all meet at the cross of Calvary. Here we learn the love of God toward us. God provided His own Son to be the sacrificial Lamb and has accepted the sacrifice He has Himself provided.

"What love to Thee we owe,
Our God, for all Thy grace!"

Our hearts may well o'erflow
 With everlasting praise.
 Make us, O God, to praise Thee thus
 For all Thy boundless love to us."

Thus in the new creation established in the resurrection of Christ, and from the new life He has given in the power of the Holy Ghost, come down from Him, the risen Lord, there springs the fruit of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"; and all to the praise of God. The Lord said: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." He provides and prepares the soil, sows the seed, waters and ripens the fruit, and thus brings response to His own heart.

Dear reader, is He getting this response from your heart, lips, and life? J: V.

TREASURE!—ON EARTH OR IN HEAVEN?

HOW evident it is that a man's ways are moulded by the treasure upon which he sets his heart. Either he has treasure in heaven, that faileth not, or on earth, where moth and rust corrupt and where thieves break through and steal.

Looking at the Lord Jesus as a man here, we see in Him one who had His

heart upon a treasure which He knew perfectly how to value and before which everything gave place. In the greatness of His joy at finding "the treasure in the field," He sold all that He had as Man here ; as we read in another scripture : "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."

From such a Person, the contemplation of whom causes every loyal heart to praise, we will turn to one who thought everything of that which was upon earth, where corruption and deceit are marked.

Judas Iscariot was the one spoken of as the "familiar friend" of the Lord Jesus. He had his heart upon the treasure (if such it might be called) of the world. Little did he realise the corruption and misery to which it would lead him. It was he who "kept the bag," and for him everything gave place to the treasure of the world. He accompanied the blessed Son of God in His pathway, seeing the power of His hand and the love of His heart, yet he remained unmoved. What a contrast to Peter, who said : "To whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life." He knew not where to turn apart from that blessed One ; but Judas coveted thirty pieces of silver in preference to Him who fills all heaven with delight.

In the Gospel by Mark, chapter x. 17 we read of one who came *running* and *kneeled* to the Lord Jesus, asking Him what he might do to inherit eternal life. He was in great earnest and living a correct life before men ; but in the presence of the Son of God he hears that he lacks *one thing*. He was near to the kingdom, but was hindered because he lacked "*treasure in heaven*."

He failed to realise the glory of the One to whom he spoke, and that he himself was a sinner needing a Saviour.

He did not realise, as the dying thief did, that he was in need of mercy and that He to whom he spoke was God's Son who had come to tell forth God's heart of love. Hence, when the Lord tells him what he lacked, he "went away *grieved* : for he had, *great possessions*." He chose his great possessions which last but for a season, to the Son of God and an eternal inheritance. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God !" Truly the gospel comes to poor and needy sinners, those who have little or no possessions here to which their hearts can be attached, while those who have riches are found clinging to them and rejecting all the blessings of God.

In His path of goodness and blessing to

men the Son of God moves on. "And they came to Jericho." It was the place of a curse, and there sitting by the highway was a blind man begging. He was indeed poor. To the pressing crowds Jesus was a despised Nazarene, but the blind beggar knew more than that. He had heard of Jesus and in the faith of his soul he cried out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He found in Jesus the very One who could meet him in all his need. He was conscious of his need and now he had found a Saviour. Dear reader, are you in deep earnest about your soul? You need a Saviour, your many sins are upon you, and the Saviour sits at the right hand of God waiting that He may be gracious. The blessed God has been satisfied by the death of Jesus, which has enabled Him to reveal Himself in all the reality of His heart of infinite love, and to righteously bless the vilest sinner on earth and bring him into relationship with Himself.

Where is your treasure? Do you cling to things here in a world that will ere long be put out of sight, and because of sin will be burnt up in judgment?

The rich young man clung to his possessions and rejected the blessing of God. The blind man even cast away his

garment and found in Jesus all that he needed. He had all his need met and his heart fixed upon the Treasure of the heavens, and he followed Jesus in the way.

Reader, what and where is your treasure? Is it in heaven or on earth?

H. C. S.

ABOUT GOING TO HEAVEN.

WHAT would you think of a man who said, when the only remaining hindrance was removed, that it was his settled intention to go to live in some foreign country; that relatives whom he dearly loved were living there, and he fully intended to go there too—and yet who never took the slightest interest in any news of that country, nor in the letters which his friends sent him? And who had not cared to learn anything about the government or the occupations of the country! Would you not doubt whether he really wanted to go there at all, or would be happy if he got there?

Yet, are there not thousands upon thousands who say they want to go to heaven (but not as long as they can stay here), and who have those they love already there, but who do not care to know any-

thing about heaven, or about God, or what occupies those who go to heaven.

Is the reader one of this very numerous class? Does he, to put it plainly, want to do his own will while he lives, and go to heaven when he dies? Then there is awful danger of not going there at all! Five minutes there would probably be five minutes too long.

In all seriousness I would say: If God and Christ are far from your thoughts, if you have never yet felt you are a *sinner*, and your need of a Saviour; if Christ's blood has not become precious in your eyes; if the prospect of being for ever in God's presence is distasteful, *then you are not on the way to heaven at all*. And if you just remain as you are till life's journey is over (and how soon that may be!) you will find yourself far removed for eternity from the joys of heaven.

What makes home dear to our hearts is that *those we love* are there, and the chief joy of heaven is to be in the presence of those we have learned to love on earth; even God, who has expressed the rich love of His heart in giving His Son to die; and Christ, who once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring sinners back to God. The Apostle Paul did not say, "To depart and go to *heaven*

is far better," but, "To depart, and to be WITH CHRIST; which is far better."

If my reader has, until now, had these loose notions about heaven and how to get there, that are so prevalent in this day, let me beseech him not to entertain them any longer. The matter is too serious to be trifled with. Heaven or hell, as God is true, will be our eternal portion.

Face the question of your real state *as before God*, that of a lost sinner, without a shadow of hope in yourself, your prayers, or in anything that you can do. Let people say what they will, the scriptures make it abundantly clear that there is NO HOPE for any one apart from CHRIST.

Look well to it then, my reader, and rest not with the vague hope of going to heaven when you die, that thousands go on with—a hope WITHOUT A FOUNDATION—but let CHRIST, and Christ alone in all the value of His finished work, be your hope. Take your true place before God as a lost sinner, and accept the rich provision that He in His great love has made for us. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?

THE UNKNOWN GOD!

IT must have been a remarkable scene in the city of Athens, somewhere about the year 53, when the altar stood there bearing the following inscription: "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Here in the first city of art and learning men confessed that God was unknown to them, verifying the statement, well known to many: "The world by wisdom knew not God."

But is God unknown; has He never revealed Himself? He has. In creation He has declared His power and greatness: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Reader, if God is unknown to you, give me a hearing for a moment.

God is GREAT. See His power and might set forth in all His works.

God is GOOD. Consider all His many gifts to the children of men.

God is HOLY. The death of Christ, in lonely anguish on the cross, crying: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is potent witness to this.

God is RIGHTEOUS. Jesus bearing our

sins in His own body on the tree, and passing under the awful judgment of the Almighty throne indicates, as nothing else could, that this is so.

God is LOVE. The only begotten Son given in love to the world, and His death and blood-shedding is the marvellous revelation of the love of God.

If that altar stood to-day we should have to take it down; it could not be allowed to stand. *God has revealed Himself* and, marvel of marvels, He has revealed Himself in a MAN—the Man Christ Jesus. Of Himself that glorious person said: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.”

He lives in the heavens a Prince and a Saviour; and whosoever shall call upon His name shall be saved.

CHOOSING OR CHOSEN.

THE last night of the old year had come, and many were hurrying off to the watch-night service, to watch the new year in. The door-keeper met each with a pleasant word although his heart ached over his sins, great and unforgiven.

His faithful christian wife often called his attention to his state.

When the time was up and the service began, he took his seat among the others. The preacher chose for his text part of Joshua xxiv. 15 : " Choose you this day whom ye will serve." The caretaker listened to every word, and said to himself ; when I go home I *will* choose. He needed forgiveness and wanted God's salvation, in fact, all that God had to give. At last the service was over, and with pleasant words for all as they passed out he locked up the place and went home to his invalid wife. After supper, and having attended to all her needs, telling her to go to sleep, as he had some business which should be settled that night, he went into the next room. Here he fell on his knees and in an agony of mind and heart poured forth the confession of his sins to the Saviour. He also told Him all that he had heard that evening and concluded by saying, " Lord, I am now choosing Thee"! He arose from his knees, but no peace filled his heart, and in his anxiety he thought, I have made some mistake, I will go over it all again before the Lord ; he did so, but no peace came to him.

Then his wife began calling him and he replied : " It is impossible for me to lie

down until this business is finished ; I will tell you all about it in the morning." Then all his need of the Saviour's forgiveness came more clearly before him and falling on his knees again, he reminded the Lord of what He had done for his brother, how He had given him such peace and joy which he had never lost. "Now Lord," said he, "Thou canst do the same for me as Thou hast done for him, and I do make my choice again, Lord, I *am* choosing Thee." Up he got, weary, sad and worn out with his own efforts ; no peace came and he sat down in his armchair ; no thought of bed, but only his great agony over his sins.

Presently he thought he heard a voice say, and the voice seemed so near as if some one stood at his chair : "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It came as a great revelation ; peace filled his heart at last, coming from One whose voice he had never heard before. What grace ! It was doubtless the work of God in his soul. Many years have now passed, the aged couple are still alive and always praising Him, and they say they will do so in glory. Reader, have you turned to the Lord about your sins ? He is rich in mercy.

H. P.

CHRIST EVERYTHING.

IT is quite possible that the reader of this little paper is not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He may say: "I do believe about Him, in fact, who does not?" But that is not the point. It is one thing to know that He is Lord and Saviour, but it is a totally different thing to know Him as *your own* Lord and Saviour, He who died for all. It is a wonderful moment when a soul can say (and there are thousands who can to-day): "Thank God, He died for me!" It is indeed the beginning of a new life.

The life which we live as natural men is not to God's glory, but for our own pleasure and satisfaction, but when we have been brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour there is a new motive in life: we desire to please Him.

Now it is that Christ is everything, the soul needs nothing but what is found in Christ.

To begin with we must have LIFE, and that is found in Him, for He says, "I am the resurrection, and the life." (John xi. 25.)

Then in order to enjoy LIFE we need

LIGHT; *life* is little pleasure to a man without *light*. Christ also said, "I am the LIGHT of the world." (John viii. 12.)

Then to be kept in health and strength one needs food; and the Lord said also: "I am the BREAD of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John vi. 35.)

Dear reader, what a blessed thing to know that Christ is everything; without Him this world is empty, not that there is nothing for the worldly man here, but everything which can give him any pleasure must soon pass away. On the other hand a Christian's joy is Christ: He is everything to him, for He will abide throughout eternity. He is his only source of strength.

If you know Him not you are poor indeed. I beseech you to "seek him while he may be found," for soon He will come and take His own to be with Himself, then those who know Him *not* will be shut out and have to stand before His judgment throne.

Would you not like to say:

"Let others boast of heaps of gold,
Christ for me.
His riches never can be told,
Christ for me.

Your gold will waste and wear away,
Your honours perish in a day,
My portion never can decay,
Christ for me.”

May God grant that you may know Him
as your Saviour, Lord and Deliverer!

F. A. P.

“THANK HIM KINDLY
FOR IT.”

EIGHTY TWO, and yet in her sins! Such was the sad state of one of our neighbours, but when spoken to of the Saviour and His love, and His power to save, she had no ear for the wondrous story of grace, her only answer was: “Aye! Aye!” and she would turn away. This state of things went on for two or three years, until at last she began to think of the past, then of the future, and of her present position. It is no wonder that she became alarmed and very anxious. It was now a very easy matter to speak of Jesus as the only Saviour, and of His willingness to save; yea, His yearnings to save for ever those who turn to Him. As the light of this came into her soul, with tears of joy streaming from her eyes she kept on saying: “And I always thought

I had to get myself ready, and I could not"; then she bowed her head in submission and said: "Thank Him kindly for doing it; thank Him kindly!" And she meant every word as her after life proved.

If left for a few days without a word about the Lord Jesus and His grace she would come and knock at the door and plead for a talk about Him and that we might read out of His book. "Come and tell me more about Him," she would say, and when this was done and some fresh token of His love was mentioned, she would say, "Thank Him kindly for it; thank Him kindly for it!"

How is it with you, dear reader; are you ready to meet God, or are you hiding behind something of your own providing in the hope that God will overlook your sin. God's word to you to-day is: "Where art thou?" and "what hast thou done?" Where are you? Away from God! What have you done? Sinned! What are you doing? Trying to hide the fact from God. How foolish! You may do it from your fellow man, but not from God. You are conscious that what you are doing will not stand. Then stop it at once; own to God what you have done and listen to what He would say to you in His wondrous grace.

As with Adam and Eve their fig leaves were useless, God in mercy clothed them with skins. Death came in and as the result of the death of another, the covering is provided suited not only to Adam and Eve but to God, for He it was who covered them. God would have you learn from this that it is because of the death of Jesus the garments of salvation are now provided. You get a picture of this in the prodigal. After the first meeting the Father's word is: “Bring forth the *best* robe, and put it on him.” This done, he is now fit for his father's house and to eat of the fatted calf and enter into the joy that then began and never ended. Think of what God has done for you, dear reader, and accept the Saviour whom He has provided, and then thank Him for it all.

J. L——N.

**“ SALVATION IS OF THE
LORD.”**

(JONAH II. 9.)

IN the history of Jonah, we get an illustration of the sinner's condition and of God's dealings with him in order that He may bring him into salvation, and

teach him that salvation is not in himself, but that it is "of the Lord."

When the word of the Lord came to Jonah it detected an inward principle, which is also in every one born into this world—except One—and that is, will—"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. viii. 7.) God told Jonah to go to Nineveh—due *east*, and Jonah decided to go *west*. The *will of man* never leads him *to* God, or to do what is pleasing to God, but always *from* God. God makes a demand, man refuses to answer to it, this has been the sad history from the fall. There has been only One who ever said, "Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. xl. 7, 8.) This was Jesus, of whom it was said when He was brought to the judgment seat of the world's power of His day: "*no fault in this man*"—yet the voices of the religious men and rulers prevailed and Pilate delivered Him *to their will*, and their will was to "crucify him."

God said to Jonah: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is *come up before me*. But Jonah rose to *flee* unto Tarshish *from the presence of the Lord*." Why? God

was prepared to use him for the blessing of others, but it is very clearly evident that before Jonah runs on God's errands there must be a complete change wrought *in his soul*.

The word of God *detects* and *exposes* us, and we resist as far as we are able to do so. The word of God not only tells man what he has *done*, but what *he is*. It brings *light* to bear upon his *actions* and searches him through and through, and the effect is that he seeks to hide away from God. Adam, *after he had sinned*, hid behind the trees of the garden *from the presence of the Lord*. Conscience made him a coward, and although God came to commune with him, his sin made him afraid, and instead of seeking the company of God, he hid himself, as he thought, from God. But God's voice was heard,

“ Where art THOU ? ”

and Adam had to stand as a naked, undone sinner in the presence of God to hear, on the one hand, the promise of a Saviour and on the other to reap what he had sown by being turned out of the earthly paradise. . Cain, the murderer, *went out from the presence of the Lord*, so that in the history of man there are three steps—*hiding away, going out and*

fleeing from the presence of the Lord, as recorded in Genesis iii. 8; Genesis iv. 16; Jonah i. 3.

It is not only true that man is a *wilful* sinner, but he is an *independent* one. If Jonah had gone to Nineveh he would have had God's support, but he is prepared to be quite *independent and pay his own fare*. In Jonah's case his money was utterly lost, he never reached his destination: at first he had his eye on Joppa (beautiful), and secondly upon Tarshish (destruction); and he pays the price. The desire was implanted by Satan, whose object was not only to encourage Jonah in a path of disobedience, but to land him in destruction ultimately. Enemy of God as he is, he not only seeks to dishonour God but to ruin the creature eternally that he has caused to rebel against his Creator. Jonah little knew whose desire he was fulfilling when he stepped on board the ship at Joppa; certainly not God's, he was really controlled by Satan, who was leading him captive.

Jonah's history is like the history of every other sinner, his course was a *downward* one—he went *down* to Joppa, and *down* into the ship and later was found *down* in the sides of the ship. Having found out that your course is a downward

one, that instead of your course being toward God you are getting further and further from God, and that unless there is a full stop in your present course and a complete “right about face,” you will land sooner or later in the “lake of fire ;” stop and turn round.

Later, the *indifference* of Jonah is seen, when, the sailors were in deep distress because of the tempest, and fearing destruction, *he* was fast asleep. Such is man ! God gives *warning*. “Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.” (Ezek. iii. 17.) “God *commands all men every where to repent.*” (Acts xvii. 30.) “God *beseeches.*”

“Be ye reconciled to God.”

(2 Cor. v. 20.) Yet man, as such, is *indifferent*. If God *warns*, man is *heedless* ; if God *commands*, man *resists* ; if God *beseeches*, man is *indifferent*. Man, on his side, is utterly ruined, he has ruined himself. He is *lost* and needs to be *sought and found*, he is *bankrupt* and with “*nothing to pay.*” He is a moral *wreck*, so that he is helpless and needs not only a Helper, but what is more he needs a *Saviour*. He will be lost for ever unless he is altogether saved by another.

But God’s purpose was to bless, and if

Jonah was determined to go on his pathway of *self-will, independence and indifference*, God was equally determined to bless Jonah and use him as a *vessel of His pleasure*. In order to accomplish this it was necessary that God should work to set Jonah free and bring him into *salvation*.

The first thing that God does is to send out a *great wind*. Many a wind had doubtless passed over that sea before, but this wind was a special one, and it was brought by God to bear upon the circumstances in which Jonah was, and was the first link in the chain to bring about his blessing.

Though Jonah was "fast asleep" and the tempest did not appear to affect him, it had very great effect upon his companions in trouble. Idolaters though they were, they *prayed* and they *worked*, but their prayers were to their gods. Jehovah, the Saviour-God, was unknown to them. They cast their belongings into the sea, but still the storm raged and the object to be reached was fast asleep. If a storm of such a character does not awake a soul, God can use an earthquake to arouse a man to his lost condition as He did at another time. (See Acts xvi.)

But,

God loves and God works :

and can use any instrument for furthering His purpose. First, He uses the ship-master to arouse Jonah; a violent shake and a voice is heard, “What meanest thou, O sleeper?” Sinner, eternal judgment is before thee—darkness and despair—weeping and wailing. Awake! Awake!! thou hast a soul—a precious soul—and where will you spend eternity; will it be in the blackness of eternal night, with others who are lost in that place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched?

How often a sinner resents being spoken to about his soul! But when danger is perceived, death and judgment stand in view, eternal perdition beyond, things are serious and the soul is prepared to listen.

Jonah had to be singled out as *the* sinner. Lots are cast and Jonah is marked out, “Thou art the man.” The eye of God was upon him, and the eye of God is upon you, *whoever* you are, *wherever* you are, and *whatever* you may be doing. “*Thou God seest me*” is as true to-day as when uttered some four thousand years ago. Man may talk boldly now and defy his Maker, and neglect his Saviour, and go into the presence of God on his own footing; but the eye of a holy God will *search* him through and through and a

righteous God will pronounce sentence upon him.

Jonah, however, makes a clean breast, and tells them *who he was, whom he feared, and what he had done*, and proposes a remedy.

The sailors by their own exertions sought to bring the ship to land, but they were powerless against the gale of God's ordering until Jonah was cast into the sea, and although God did not allow them to perish, there was no peace or safety for them till this was done. In His great mercy

God saved Jonah,

but it was a dangerous thing to run away from God and refuse to do His bidding. If you are doing this, my reader, I pray you turn to God, instead of FROM Him. He alone can save you.

E. G.

IT IS FINISHED!

BEFORE the Lord Jesus bowed His head and died He uttered these memorable words. To what did He refer, what was finished? The whole work which He came to do was finished, so that salvation could be brought to us. And remember, the work was DONE by Him, nothing remained for us to do. "To him that WORKETH NOT, but believeth!"

In the days of old if a man sinned he had to bring his offering and the priest had to prepare the sacrifice and offer it for him, but since Christ has died, and finished the work of redemption there is nothing for us to do. It is very wonderful that any one of us can draw near to God through Him our Lord Jesus Christ, and in virtue of the work which He did on the cross we are forgiven, and cleansed from the guilt of our sins. It may be said that we surely have to improve ourselves in some way, for as we are we could never draw near to God.

But let me ask: how can we improve ourselves? We may present a better appearance outwardly, but God looks at

the heart, and does not judge by the outward appearance. And we cannot change our hearts ; no labour of our hands can do this, no penance, no prayers. Why should we try to improve ourselves, when the work for our acceptance is FINISHED? It is finished and finished by Jesus on the cross, and in virtue of what HE HAS done we may draw nigh to God. Every one who does so is forgiven and justified, not because of what they are, or can do, or bring, but only on account of what He has done and He is. Having died He is risen again from among the dead and lives in the heavens. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

FIT TO DIE.

WHETHER we are fit to die or not should be a matter of great concern to us all.

In the sight of man I may not be fit to live, I might be capable of every evil ; in fact we each one possess a heart which is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and wickedness often breaks out from it which makes one unfit company for others.

That is the effect of sin which has

wrought such sad havoc, for with sin came condemnation - God's word saying: "'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'" And who is bold enough to assume that he is not tainted with sin? Therefore, to admit what one is bound to admit is to find oneself under the condemnation of which God's word speaks, which in effect means —I am *unfit to live*.

But if *sin* has done so much for my ruin, *grace* has done much more for my blessing. Satan, seeking to spoil the handiwork of the Creator, caused the creature to sin; but God in His wonderful love has shewn forth His wondrous grace. God said to Satan, who had just caused Adam to sin in the garden where God had placed him: He (Christ) "shall bruise thy head," which meant that God had in His mind a moment when Satan and his power would be overthrown.

If sin was brought in by one man, then by one Man will the effect of sin be removed, for by going into death Christ has met the righteous requirements of God: He has broken the power of Satan. Death could not hold that sinless One: *He is risen*; He has paid that mighty debt due on account of sin, and now by faith in Him the sinner is made *fit to live*, and also *fit to die*, for judgment having been

met and exhausted by Jesus, He has become my fitness for God's presence.

It is not then a question of what man thinks of me. I may be reprobate in his sight, but by believing in God's anointed One I am brought into a place of nearness and acceptance.

The thief on the cross was in the sight of man unfit to live, but in his dying moments God opened his eyes to see perfection in Jesus, and he confessed Him as Lord; his fitness was complete; he owned Jesus as his Lord, and heard the blessed words: "To day shalt thou be *with me* in paradise."

May God, dear reader, give you to own Jesus as Lord, for, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth *Jesus as Lord*, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.*" (Rom. x. 9.)

F. A. P.

"BLESSED ARE THEY."

MANY classes of persons and many individuals in the scripture are pronounced "*blessed.*" We would call the attention of our readers to four instances.

The Lord Himself has said, "*Blessed are they* that have not seen, and *yet have*

believed.” (John xx. 29.) This precious passage applies to all who believe the testimony of God concerning His Son in this day of wondrous grace. It was Christ risen who uttered these words, after He had glorified God perfectly as to the question of sin. Shortly afterwards He ascended to glory, and has been hidden to the natural eye of man from that moment to this. He is presented in the gospel as the Object of faith to souls ; and all who believe are pronounced “ *blessed.*” The Holy Ghost is working, and drawing hearts to an invisible Christ in glory, the Son of God, the holy Man who sits at God’s right hand. Wheresoever there is faith in the heart in Him, there is the blessing of God. We are called upon to believe in One whom we have not seen. (1 Pet. i. 8.) “ Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. xi. 1.) Speaking of Christ Peter says, “ Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see him not, *yet believing*, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Dear reader, have *you* believed on Him ? Not merely about Him. Thousands do that, but are scarcely affected by it. But *on Him* ? Is it the faith of the heart ? Is Christ the Object and delight of your soul ? Can you say truly before God that you *be-*

lieve on Him, who died for God's glory and our salvation? Can you join with the apostle in saying, "who loved me, and gave himself for me"? Then is this wondrous blessing pronounced by our Lord *yours*.

Paul, in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, citing from the psalms, says, "*Blessed are they* whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. iv. 7, 8.) "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith* is counted for righteousness." And *this blessing is his also*. The ungodly are justified by faith without works, their sins are all forgiven for Christ's name sake. He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." (1 Pet. ii. 24.) The judgment of the sins of every one that believeth was borne by Him. He was charged with sin on our account, Himself being absolutely sinless. And He met and discharged the whole claim: God remembers our sins and iniquities *no more*. There is no charge, no imputation of sin against the believer.

"Every charge our God refuseth,
Christ has answered with His blood."

With our iniquities forgiven, our sins

covered, and no imputation of sin, *nothing but blessing remains*. David, who had proved it by experience, is a chosen vessel of God to describe its blessedness. As it is written, “ Even as David also describeth *the blessedness of the man*, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.” (Rom. iv. 6.) Mark that. Not only sin is *not* imputed, but righteousness *is* imputed. Every one that *believeth* is *accounted righteous* by God before Himself, apart from all his own works and righteousness altogether. Wondrous grace! Who can fathom the blessedness thereof!

Again, in Luke xi. 28, in answer to a woman who, listening to His teaching, pronounced blessing upon our Lord’s mother, Jesus said, “ *Yea rather, blessed are they* that hear the word of God, and keep it.” Alas, how many there are whose ears and hearts are closed to His word, and who disobey it! The one who believes on Him whom he has not seen, and whose sins are forgiven for His sake, is the one who listens to the word of God. And as it sinks into his heart, obedience thereto flows out in his life. All is inseparably bound up together, and this third blessing follows upon the other two. To profess to believe and to talk about the forgiveness of sins is nothing worth, if the

life does not correspond. But faith in an unseen Saviour in glory, and in His love, and the joy of the knowledge of forgiveness for His name's sake, produce love in return, which expresses itself in delight in the word of God. Faith worketh by love. (Gal. v. 6.) Without works it is dead, being alone. (Jas. ii. 17.) But having faith in a living Saviour produces delight in the living word, and shews itself in a life in accord with its precepts. The pardoned believer, set free, hearkens to God's voice and keeps His word. *Jesus pronounces that man blessed.*

And "*Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.*" (Psa. lxxxiv. 4.) This also is morally true to-day. To him that believeth God gives the Spirit. And He leads us into the house of God, where He in Spirit dwells. There we are privileged to dwell also. It is a glorious sphere of holiness and love. It is our new dwelling-place. In communion with Him, where His banner of love is spread over us, we sit down in His banqueting house, and feast upon the fatness of His house, a feast of fat things and wine upon the lees well refined. *All are blessed there.* What a gospel is the gospel of our God! In love He gave His Son, who died for His glory and our bless-

ing. By faith in Him we are taught of God, with every question settled in our souls for ever, with the Spirit in us to enable us to keep His word, and we sit down and enjoy His love and feast our souls in His house. *And His blessing rests upon it all.* We are blessed in believing in His Son, blessed in the knowledge of forgiveness, blessed in keeping His word, and blessed in feasting upon the riches of His grace in Christ. All is the fruit of *perfect love.*

Dear reader, have you come into this wondrous range of blessing? If not, why not? *Now* is His moment for *you* to bow to and *believe* on the precious Saviour of God's providing, and *henceforth all this blessing is yours.*

E. H. C.

READY, AYE READY !

“**F**—— passed away at 10.30 p.m.!”

Many of us have at some time in our life's history been bowed with sorrow on receiving such a message as this. None but those who have passed through such trials can understand the anguish of heart when natural ties are thus severed ; but, “As for God, his way is perfect.”

The day may come, dear reader, when

such a message may be spoken of you ! What then, would it be the everlasting joy and blessedness of “ absent from the body, present with the Lord,” or “ blackness of darkness ” for ever ?

Thank God, the former was the blessed experience of the dear one referred to. Led to the Lord at an early age she “ adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour ” in her life here, and went to be with Christ (with almost a sudden call) just when life looked fairest, at the age of twenty-one. Her own words in a letter written some time before were : “ Oh ! to think that He will come, arrayed in splendour and glory from on high, to claim us *His*. For ever with the Lord ! ”

Could you say this, dear reader ? Oh, pause and consider !

We marvel not when the aged are taken, and talk lightly of old age and senile decay, regarding it as the course of nature, the natural order of things as it were, *but the young are called also*. What would the call mean to you ? It may be that you are glowing with life and health, and think you can afford to wait a few years longer before giving these things your earnest consideration.

But do not make too sure. F—— was as strong and healthy, apparently, as you

may consider yourself, eight weeks before her death, and no one knew how serious her illness was until a day or two before she passed away. What can you say to that, my reader? A similar chain of circumstances may precede your decease. Would it mean "for ever with the Lord" for you? Oh! do not rest till you too can make this answer. Think of the deep joy and peace that will be the result. To know that "come weal or woe all is well." The blessed One at God's right hand, the risen, glorified Jesus, is your certain assurance of a risen life with Him, if you have bowed to His blessed name now.

If not, we again entreat you to pause *and consider*. Weigh the matter carefully, and decide which is the better: the peace that passeth all understanding at present, and after the everlasting joy of being in the presence of your Redeemer for ever, or the pleasures of sin for a season, and then an eternity shut out from God's presence.

May you know no rest till you can say, in the words of the hymn F—— was so fond of singing,

"Now none but Christ can satisfy,
None other name for me;
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

“THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

THE coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a subject frequently dealt with in scripture, and it is of great importance, for when once it is rightly understood by any one, it is bound to have an effect upon the conscience, heart and life.

That the Lord Jesus should come again is imperative, because it is a public answer on the part of God to His having been put to death so ignominiously by man. He *was* crowned with a crown of thorns in mockery, but He is coming again in glory, crowned with many crowns—King of kings and Lord of lords. (Rev. xix.)

In Acts i. 11 we find the

promise of His coming.

“This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” The One whom the apostles beheld go into heaven is coming again—the same Jesus.

In 1 Thessalonians iv. the Apostle Paul writes about this second coming of Christ. In every chapter of this little epistle this wonderful fact is alluded to. The Thessalonians had been converted from serving

idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven—even Jesus, their deliverer. The thought might have naturally arisen in their hearts as to whether those who had died—or “fallen asleep,” as scripture says—would lose all the blessings to be ushered in by the coming of the Lord Jesus. And so the apostle writes to explain the

manner of Christ's coming.

Far from those who had fallen asleep losing anything, we are told that when Jesus comes again they will come with Him, and we are shewn how this will be brought about.

Let me urge my reader to consider these striking but simple verses. The passage is quoted at length so that we may have it clearly before us.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [or go before] them which are asleep. For

the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thess. iv. 13–17.)

Nothing can be plainer than that which is stated.

The Lord Jesus is first coming *for* His people. The dead will be raised, and those who are alive when He comes will be changed; and together they will rise to meet their Lord; and then when He comes in glory they will come *with* Him.

It will be noticed that there are two distinct parts to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. First He comes *for* His people and then He will come *with* them to reign.

The OBJECT of Christ's coming

is first of all to take all His blood-bought people home. “If I go away,” the Lord said, “I will come again” (John xiv.), and He has gone—gone to the Father's house to prepare a place for us, and as surely is coming again.

Christ's work on the cross has so com-

pletely settled every question as to our sins, and has made us fit for the place He has prepared, that it is said of believers—of us—“as he is, so are we *in this world*.” (1 John iv. 17.) We are accepted before God in all the favour in which Christ stands. (Eph. i. 6.) One thing remains—we are to be taken to heaven. At any moment our Lord may come, and in the twinkling of an eye we shall be for ever with Him. (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.)

Reader, are you ready for the coming of Christ?

If unforgiven, unsaved, if not Christ's, the coming of Christ will bring no joy to you. Those that are Christ's will go, no others. (1 Cor. xv. 23.)

The RESULT of the coming of Christ is thus evident.

There will be some ready—as the wise virgins were, spoken of in Matthew xxv.—who will go in when the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes; but alas, there will be those who are unready and who will be shut out even as the foolish virgins were.

An important point then is: when will this great event take place; what is

the time of Christ's coming.

Now as to the exact moment we are not

told, indeed our Lord distinctly said Himself that no one knows the hour.

How important then that we should be ready! Reader, may you turn to the Lord Jesus now in the day of His grace and know Him as a Saviour, and then with what joy will you look forward to His coming again. May it be so indeed for His name's sake.

M. W. B.

NONE EXCLUDED.

ALL have sinned and all come short,
Thus 'tis in the scriptures taught;
Under judgment all are found,
By the power of Satan bound.

All in unbelief He shews,
Yet for all His mercy flows:
Since the Ransom has been given,
All may have their sins forgiv'n.

Justified are they from all,
Who upon the Saviour call;
And believing each may know
Peace with God, while here below.

God's salvation is for all:
Listen to the Saviour's call!
"Whosoever will," saith He.
"Freely let him take of me."

All shall soon the Saviour see,
All to Him must bow the knee;
Each must then His name confess,
Each must own His worthiness.

F. J. W.

SEASONS.

IT is important to notice the different seasons mentioned in the scriptures.

A long Godless season.

This is to be found in 2 Chronicles xv. 3, 4. Israel had been without the true God for a long season, yet God in His mercy was found of them when they sought Him. Some have lived many years without God, but it is still the day of grace, and the oldest sinner who turns to Him will find Him waiting to shew mercy. But this will not always be so. Presently God will be sought and not found. May every reader seek Him while He may be found.

The night season.

In Psalm xxii. 2 we read that the Psalmist cried to God in the night season, but it really refers to the Lord Jesus when on Calvary's cross. There was darkness over the place for three hours, from the sixth to the ninth hour, and about the ninth hour Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (See Matt. xxvii. 46.) In the psalm the ques-

tion is answered by Jesus Himself (ver. 3), "But thou art holy." God, because of His holiness, had to forsake Jesus, who was there as the great sin-bearer. He who knew no sin, was made sin, and sin cannot enter God's presence. Do we realise what sin is in the sight of God? Jesus did, and bore the judgment due to it on the cross. None could share this night season with Him. It was His alone. One disciple had betrayed him with a kiss, another denied Him with oaths and curses, and they all forsook Him and fled.

"Alone He bare the cross,
Alone its grief sustained."

The pleasure season.

However, notwithstanding all that Jesus passed through on account of sin, man prefers to do without Him, and would rather enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. In Hebrews xi. 25 it is recorded that Moses chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." Whilst Jesus walked through this world He found His joy in God's presence. And He Himself is now seated at God's right hand, and in Him are pleasures for evermore. Not only for a season, to pass away in a few short hours. He will be the eternal pleasure of all who put their trust in Him during this

day of God's grace. May this be your portion. How passing and trifling are the pleasures of this world. Perhaps you intend thinking about the welfare of your soul at

a convenient season.

There is a record in scripture of one who was on those lines. (Acts xxiv. 25.) But, sad to say, we never read that that season came. Although he trembled as the Apostle Paul reasoned concerning righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, his answer was—"Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Many, alas, have said the same, "Go thy way for this time," but have never had another opportunity. Well might we tremble when hearing of "judgment to come" if still in our sins. The only season which is a convenient one is

God's season,

found in 2 Corinthians vi. 2—NOW. In consequence of the night season which Jesus passed through God can offer salvation to all, and He offers it now, to-day, while you read these lines. The writer has said, when speaking to others, "God never guarantees blessing to-morrow."

“To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” (Heb. iii. 7.) If we would have the blessing, the pleasures for evermore, we must accept them in God’s time, or miss them for eternity. May God’s season be yours, dear reader.

A. H. C.

S I N .

MOST people, no doubt, who read a gospel address, expect to hear about sins and guilt, and rightly so ; for though the gospel is not about sins, but the Sin-bearer, it is the very fact of our sinfulness which necessitated the coming of the Saviour, who saves from sins and their consequences.

It is not our purpose now to dwell upon our sins, but rather upon a matter which is more serious, namely, that which produces the sins.

Sin is one thing, sins are another ; one is the root, the other is the fruit.

Just in the same way, apples and an apple tree are distinct things, although, of course, one has a relation to the other. Fruit comes out more fully on one tree than another, but we all estimate quality more highly than quantity. One tree may

be covered with fruit which, on being tasted, shews by its bitterness that the tree is a crab. Another tree has to be searched before even a single fruit is found, but when that is tasted a familiar flavour indicates that the tree is a genuine apple tree.

We may apply the illustration to ourselves, and to the kind of fruit which we produce. We are not only sinners in practice, but, worse still,

sinners by nature.

And it is on this *nature*, and on God's provision for dealing with it, that I desire now to say a few words.

In Luke xvii. 11-18 we read of a little company of lepers who met the Lord Jesus Christ as He entered a certain village on His way to Jerusalem, through "the midst of Samaria and Galilee," on His way to die at Jerusalem. In scripture leprosy is used as a figure for sinful human nature. It is incurable by man; and the leper is not allowed to come near other men; he must stand apart and cry: "Unclean! unclean!" In the death of Jesus, God has provided a remedy for the terrible condition of which leprosy is a type.

The ten lepers, finding themselves close to the great Healer whose fame had reached them in their isolation, lifted up

their voices and cried: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." At once there came a gracious response, and a beneficent act of healing. The lepers were told to shew themselves unto the priests; and, "as they went, they were cleansed."

Only one of the ten—and he, a despised Samaritan—returned, when he found himself cleansed and restored, to give glory to God. We will not dwell upon the case of this one man—interesting and instructive though it is—but just remark that he who has the deepest sense of his hopeless condition by nature, will have also the fullest appreciation of the grace which has reached and rescued him. In connection with our Lord's miracle on behalf of these ten afflicted men, let us consider the ceremonial cleansing of lepers as described in the Book of Leviticus.

Note, first (Lev. xiii. 13) that it is the leper whose flesh is entirely covered from head to foot who is fit to be ceremonially cleansed.

From head to foot!

Remember that leprosy is a type of sin! Then let me assure you, dear reader, that nothing in this paper will be of help or service to you if you have not learned the

solemn truth of Romans vii. 18, that in your flesh dwelleth no good thing.

For the cleansing of the leper by the priest two birds were, first of all, required; one bird represents the death and the other the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then there were other symbols, such as cedar wood and hyssop, which stand for natural attributes, from the highest to the lowest, and scarlet, which typifies all that ministers to human importance. The symbolic articles were taken by the priest, and one of the birds was killed over running water—this water symbolising the energy of the Spirit of God. Under the blood of the slain bird all that stands for human nature and human grandeur must go; all must, in other words, be *ended in death*. The blood is then sprinkled upon the living bird, which is set free in the open field and soars aloft—a beautiful type of Christ ascended into the heavens in the value of

His own shed blood.

These types have, of course, their lessons for us. There is no question, you see, of bettering the condition of the leper. He is regarded as typically dying in the death of the first bird, and then, by the Spirit,

united to Him, the risen Saviour, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who has conquered death.

We will now turn to a concrete example of the cleansing of a leprous man. In 2 Kings v. the case of Naaman, the Syrian, is brought before us. He is a celebrated and successful general, a worthy administrator, a brave and honourable man, but—ah, how much that short word “but” can convey!—he is a leper.

I, too, may possibly win distinction and success, and the high opinion of my fellow-men; but before the help of God can reach me, I must learn, if I am ignorant of the fact, that, figuratively speaking, I am, like Naaman, *a leper*.

Imagine Naaman's discovery of his leprous condition. The disease spreads slowly, insiduously. Perhaps he notices a spot on his person, but thinks little of the matter. Gradually that spot increases in size, until it is plain that Naaman, “captain of the host of the king of Syria, a great man with his master . . . and a mighty man in valour,” is a leper.

It is very interesting to notice how the opportunity comes about for Naaman's cure. A little captive maid from the land of Israel waited on Naaman's wife. The captive had absolute confidence in the

Jehovah of her nation. "Would God," she said to her mistress, "my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." The words of unquestioning assurance were repeated to Naaman. "One went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel."

The king of Syria shewed praiseworthy solicitude for the recovery of his faithful servant. When a report reached him of a possible cure, to be wrought in some manner or another through the agency of the king of Israel, he sent Naaman with

a very large sum of money

and other presents to the king, and requested that the healing might be accomplished.

And so Naaman was sent to the wrong man, and the wrong place, and in accordance with a wrong method!

The king of Israel, whilst recognising that God alone can cure, yet shews a sad lack of faith in Jehovah, whom he nominally acknowledges; his thought is for himself, and he fears that the king of Syria "seeks a quarrel with him."

But Elisha, the man of God, jealous for the honour of the Lord his God, and hearing what had taken place, requests that

Naaman may be sent to him, that he may learn that THERE IS A PROPHET IN ISRAEL.

We know the graphically told story. Naaman arrives with an imposing retinue, "with his horses and with his chariot," at the prophet's humble abode. Elisha does not even go out to see his visitor, he simply sends the message, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times . . . and thou shalt be clean."

Naaman has to learn humility—has to realise his actual condition. And so those who suffer from the leprosy of sin have to learn that no imposing externals, no outward good conduct can change *that which is within*. We may try to conceal what we really are, but the sooner we acknowledge our needy condition the sooner shall we obtain the remedy.

To take a subordinate position is not pleasant to any one, assuredly it was not so to Naaman. He had expected the prophet to treat him differently; he had looked for a reception marked by deep respect. "*Behold, I thought*," he said, and then goes on to relate his pre-conceived idea of an interview suited to the importance of his position.

Behold, I thought!

Ah, these thoughts of ours! how seldom

they are in accord with the thought and will of God !

Naaman was not the first, and will not prove the last, who has regarded as an affront a message revealing the way of salvation.

The servants of the great man—impelled apparently by kindness which he had shewn them—venture on a remonstrance. Addressing him as “my father,” they intreat him to put the prophet’s advice to a practical proof. “If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing,” they wisely urge, “wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, *Wash, and be clean?*”

Naaman comes to his senses; he resolves to make the experiment. But, with a true touch of human nature which makes us all kin in our belief in our own importance and our regard for the opinion of others, he seeks to conceal his retreat. First of all, he dismisses his escort; then he bids his personal attendant to depart; and when all have gone, he whispers to his charioteer the order to drive to Jordan.

Happy order! Jordan typically represents death.

The death of Christ
is the only cure for the leprosy from which mankind suffers.

We picture to ourselves Naaman, as he arrives, still half-reluctant, at the bank of the Jordan. He leaves his chariot, and descending the bank of the river, reaches the brink. He divests himself of all his garments, and stands—as he has always stood before the eye of God—*naked, and a leper from head to foot.*

Into the stream Naaman plunges, and *is lost from sight in its tide.* Seven times—the number of perfection—he repeats the experience, thus all unconsciously shewing forth a perfect application, by faith, of all the benefits of the death of Christ.

Seven times Naaman is lost to sight beneath the waters of Jordan. God's remedy for the leprosy of sin is figuratively revealed. As a child of Adam my condition is incurable. I must go, for ever, out of sight. In the death of Christ I discover the momentous fact that *I died with Him.* In Romans vi. 5 we have the apostolic assurance that “we have been planted together in the likeness of his death.” I avail myself by faith of the provision of God's love, the death of His Christ; I see myself associated, by God, with His Son in His death; and I know myself now as risen before God. “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto

sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. vi. 11.)

Naaman was restored. “His flesh came again as the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.”

In the cleansing of that famous leper we have our lesson and our stimulus to assurance.

The second bird—the bird of resurrection—in the account of ceremonial cleansing is now full of meaning for us. As I see it aloft in the blue vault of heaven, I know my place before God in Christ; and I learn to say, “I am crucified with Christ: *nevertheless I live*; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Gal. ii. 20.)

No mere understanding in the head of the method of Naaman’s cure will avail us anything. What is needed is reception by faith of all that it implies. The Holy Ghost will make the truth powerful in our soul.

It was a grand day for us when we learned that our sins had for ever gone from God’s eye by virtue of the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin. But it is a no less happy day when I receive in my soul the truth that I, myself, have gone from God’s sight as a child of Adam in the death of His Son, and that now I live unto God in *Christ risen*.

Naaman knew himself cleansed from leprosy, and went on his way rejoicing. May the truth, represented in his seven-fold disappearance from sight under the waters of Jordan, be very real in our souls. May we be enabled to answer the question: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and say with fervent assurance, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

E. C——P.

FIVE WORDS. (No. 1.)

IT is striking to notice when reading the scriptures the number of sentences containing *five words*, and being impressed with the import of some of them, I think it may be helpful to look at them together.

The first at which we will look is a question, asked by the Lord Jesus Himself, when a man upon earth:

• "What think ye of Christ?"

Now if there is a verse in scripture more searching than another this is it.

I suppose it is almost impossible to find in this country a person who has *no* opinion

of Christ. It is quite possible that plenty of people do not trouble themselves about Him; and on the other hand there are many who think much of Him and own He is everything to them. But, leaving other people alone for a while, I put the question *to you*, "What think ye of Christ?"

Space would not permit to tell of what scripture says of Him. He is and will be for ever the object of heaven's delight. God's concern throughout eternity will be for His Son. "What think ye of Christ?"

If God thinks so much of Him surely there is something attractive in Him.

There is a time coming when He will be the centre of the whole universe; when everything that hath breath will praise Him. He is the only One worthy to be praised.

What makes the question of extreme importance to every one, therefore, is that our future eternity depends on what we think of God's Christ.

The death of Jesus is no new story: God saw that this world must come under judgment, and that man could not meet that judgment, therefore He sent His only-begotten Son who bore that judgment; for He went into death but rose

again, and now, in order to shew His good pleasure, God has exalted Him at His own right hand. (Phil. ii. 9-11.)

What do you think of Him, reader? Surely this question concerns *you*, for God's word says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; so that if your hopeless condition has been taken account of by God's own Son—He having paid that great debt which was against you, it becomes you, at least, to value that work and much more the Person who did it.

He was everything to the dying thief, that rebel who was suffering the due reward of his deeds. God had opened his eyes in his dying hour to see His blessed Son as the sinless One: "This man hath done nothing amiss," said the dying man. He was attracted to Christ, and knowing that he had to live after death, and that Jesus was going to have a kingdom, he desired to be with Him and said: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

• May you also be brought to such a sense of your need that this cry may arise in your heart: "Lord, remember me!"

F. A. P.

A LIVING MAN.

IN this short paper it is desired to call the reader's attention to the Lord Jesus Christ as a LIVING MAN.

In Revelation i. the Lord Jesus presents Himself to His servant, the Apostle John, saying : "I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." He speaks of Himself as the One who died and rose again, and who lives for ever. He is the risen One, beyond the reach of death.

Now if we consider for a moment the condition of things in this world, it is evident that everything here is under death ; all have to die. Why is this ?

Let us turn to the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. There we find that God created Adam in His own likeness, an innocent man, and placed him in an innocent world surrounded by every blessing. But although in such a blessed position, Adam hearkened to the lie of Satan and ate of the tree in reference to which God had said : "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt *surely die*."

As a consequence of Adam's sin the sentence of death was passed upon him. He was no longer fit for God—he had to die. This is the position of every one naturally. As children of Adam all are sinners and are under death as the penalty of sin.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. v. 12.)

Now in the Lord Jesus Christ we see the One who has met all the sin and guilt which fell upon man in consequence of Adam's sin. Though He was God, yet He became man, and though sinless yet He was made sin for us. He suffered the penalty of sin by going into death.

Having died for sin He rose again, the victorious One, a living witness to the fact that God's righteous requirements were fully met. He has ascended to heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of God crowned with glory and honour. By His Spirit, which He has given, the believer has the assurance that sin has for ever been put away from before the eye of God and the power of death broken. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are *brought into life*—not this life which is terminated by death, but

a resurrection life in Christ which death cannot touch.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might *LIVE through him.*” (1 John iv. 9.)

May it be yours, dear reader, to behold the Lord Jesus Christ a risen, glorified Man—a *living* Man—at the right hand of God. May you thus be brought into the consciousness of the fact that your sins have been washed away by His blood and that He has paid the full penalty of sin, so that you may have peace in your soul, and, being drawn by the Holy Spirit to Him on the other side of death, you may hear His voice saying to you, “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

F. E.

THE POOR WISE MAN.

SOLOMON, the richest and wisest man of Adam's fallen race, tells us a remarkable story of a poor wise man. It is a striking illustration of the gospel. He commences by saying, “This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me.” (Eccles. ix. 13.) This is a clear indication of that to which it refers, so that, when we read next,

“There was a little city, and few men within it,” there is no doubt as to its meaning. He is speaking of *this world*.

Now men look upon this globe revolving under the sun as great, and at its population as vast, and so it is from the mere human standpoint. But when we think of

God, and His greatness,

a little city and a few men within it is an apt figure to set it forth. The earth is but a very small place in comparison with the millions of mighty orbs of God’s creation, and He compares its inhabitants to grasshoppers, and the nations to a drop of a bucket, or the small dust of the balance. (Isa. xl. 15.) But in comparison with the *innumerable* company of the angelic hosts, the 1,600,000,000 or so of the human race are but few indeed!

Now, “there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.” (Ver. 14.) And in looking into scripture, we find that Satan, the enemy of God, the great prince of this world and of the power of the air, has laid siege to the city of this world, building the vast and strong bulwarks of sin all around, in order to destroy God’s creature, man. So mighty is his power, that all the efforts of the few men within it have ever

been utterly unavailing to overcome it, and to escape the threatened destruction.

But Solomon continues, "Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." (Ver. 15.) And nearly nineteen centuries ago there was found in this world the *poor* and needy man of Psalm xl. 17. Born in Bethlehem, the child increased in *wisdom* and stature, and in favour with God and men. (Luke ii. 52.) His name is *Jesus*. Born in the household of a carpenter in God's inscrutable ways, He is also declared to be the Son of God. Solomon was endowed with wondrous wisdom, but "a greater than Solomon is here." (Luke xi. 31.) All the wisdom of God was found in that poor Man. And by His wisdom He has wrought deliverance for this world. No great general, no valiant captain of mighty prowess broke through the bulwarks of the foe. His wisdom did not display itself by an act of almighty power. But with the blessed will of God hidden in His heart, which was His delight, He broke down the enemy's otherwise impregnable fortress, by offering Himself upon the cross of Calvary. Crucified through weakness, a sacrifice for sin (Heb. ix. 14), He slew

death by dying, robbed it of its sting, and completely annulled the power of the foe. (Heb. ii. 14.)

Christ has wrought a perfect deliverance. The blow given to Satan's power at the cross will finally and eternally bring all that power down. God has been glorified in Him. There is a present way of escape for every sinner in the beleaguered city who believes on the name of Him who died. He said, "*I am the way.*" Sinner, escape for thy life. The city of this world is a scene of death and judgment, and in your own strength it is impossible to scale the bulwarks of Satan and of sin. But Christ has borne the judgment of God, and His precious blood cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John i. 7.) He is now risen indeed, the almighty Victor over all the mighty power of the foe. He lives a present, perfect and everlasting Saviour at the right hand of God for any and every sinner who believeth. Have *you* believed on Him?

But, alas, Solomon added a solemn truism in the figure: "yet no man remembered that same poor man." Never was statement more true. When Christ was taken by wicked hands, even all His disciples forsook Him and fled. Naturally no soul of man remembers Him. The

natural heart and mind are enmity against God and His Christ. But for His sovereign grace and power, every soul of man pursues his own self-willed course *without Him*. All in the unconverted state are without God, without Christ and without hope in this world. (Eph. ii. 12.)

“Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.” (Ver. 16.) What man’s strength could not do, Christ’s wisdom has done. And it is better. “When we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. v. 6.) And He of God is made wisdom unto us. (1 Cor. i. 30.) But the wisdom of the poor man, Christ, is despised. He Himself was and is despised and rejected of men. His cross is to them that perish, foolishness. It is wisdom only to those who believe and are saved. (1 Cor. ii. 21–24.) His words are not heard. The wise of this world are listened to, whilst His words only too often fall to the ground. The works of fiction, science, travel, history are devoured ravenously; the blessed book that contains His golden words lies oft neglected on the shelf. And only too oft in religious circles are His words made of none effect by human tradition.

Nevertheless, "The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools." In the busy circles of men without God how oft are the mass of the foolish ready to listen to the cry of every one more or less who has a stronger mind and will to rule than themselves. But let the hand of affliction come upon men, let them be laid aside in quiet through sickness, then it is that they are oft more ready to hear the words of the wise. When life, which is but a vapour, is fast vanishing away, when earth with its vanities and gilded baits and baubles is rapidly receding, and the realities of God and death and judgment and eternity come crowding upon the soul, then in quiet the ear and heart and conscience of many may be reached.

And, "Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good." (Ver. 18.) Yes, weapons of war turn life into death, but the wisdom of God shining out in Christ and His finished work bring life out of death. The nations arm for mutual destruction under the false cry of peace. Vast armies and navies are armed to the teeth on all hands with weapons of war ever increasing in intensity of power for the destruction of life. But wisdom triumphed over death. Christ,

who is life, overcame it. And He has said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is passed out of death into life.*" (John v. 24.) "Wisdom is better than weapons of war." Surely life for eternity in the Son of God (1 John v. 11, 12) is better than a violent death through a gun or cannon, and after death, judgment and the lake of fire!

But, alas, "one sinner destroyeth much good." The world in its misery, and the misery of man is great upon him (Eccles. viii. 6), is a standing witness of good destroyed. One man sinned, Adam, and the whole world is a vast hospital and graveyard to this day! But Christ, the last Adam, the Man after God's own heart, His Son, has wrought deliverance for the beleaguered city. What think ye of Christ, the poor wise man? Is He *your* Saviour? Have you through His wisdom, His finished work at the cross, escaped? Now is the moment. To-morrow may be too late. "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but *have everlasting life.*" (John iii. 16.)

E. H. C.

FIVE WORDS. (No. 2.)

“Not this man, but Barabbas.” (John xviii. 40.)

IN our last paper we looked at the question which the Lord Jesus Christ asked his disciples, namely: “What⁷ think ye of Christ?” It was a question put to His own followers, and certainly a very pointed one, and one of great importance.

We shall all have to give an answer to it, as all God’s counsels are to be fulfilled in Christ; and if there is no appreciation of that perfect One who always did good, and made God known, no one can benefit by the great work God has done for man through Him.

Now when that question was put to the disciples, they answered it according to God’s mind, for the world was nothing to them; Christ had attracted them and filled their hearts, and it is He *alone* who can satisfy the heart of any man. But let me put this question to you, my reader, What think you of Christ?

In that judgment hall with Pilate there was a company which represented the whole world, which is under the power of Satan; they were supposed to be religious, and as far as profession goes they were so, but the great test came as to what they

thought of Christ. Was there any appreciation of God's blessed Son? In other words Pilate said, "What think ye of Christ?" and with one accord they answered in their own five words: "Not this man, but Barabbas"! And scripture is very quick to remind us that Barabbas was a robber (John xviii. 40), and elsewhere it says he was in prison for insurrection and murder. Thus it is clear that the heart of man has naturally no appreciation for what is of God, but chooses rather all that is evil.

Now, has it ever occurred to you, my reader, that every man naturally has no desire for Christ, but that Barabbas is preferred, the robber, the murderer? And if *you* know not that perfect One as your Saviour you are of that class who cried: "Not this man, but Barabbas." There are only two classes, those who accept and those who reject. I beseech you in the presence of God, if you are amongst the rejecters, to cross over to the other side and accept Christ as your Saviour.

There is a day coming when, instead of standing before the throne of Pilate listening to His false accusers, Christ will sit upon His own throne judging *righteous* judgment, then the rejecters will be rejected, and those who have learned to

appreciate Him *now* will spend eternity in His presence.

May it be your portion, dear reader, to be with Him, saved and eternally blest in the knowledge of God!

F. A. P.

THEY DWELT CARELESS.

“**T**HEN the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man.” (Judges xviii. 7.) What is depicted in this verse before us is seen abroad to-day. The people were doing what they thought right in their own eyes, there was no king in Israel at that time, and no magistrate in the land to put them to shame in any thing. They had departed from the living God, and had set up idols as objects of worship. The children of Dan sent five men of valour from their coasts to spy and search out the land.

At length they reached Laish, a fertile and well-watered place, suitable to the taste of those who dwelt there, but their

city was soon to be destroyed and burnt with fire, and they smitten with the edge of the sword. Judgment was about to overtake them and disturb the false security upon which they were resting. Six hundred men armed with weapons of warfare broke in upon them at the moment when things appeared favourable. It was written in a later day: "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. v. 3.) Such is the emphatic statement of holy scripture concerning these earth-dwellers.

Reader, you would not like to be broken in upon after this fashion, you prefer not to have your plans and schemes interrupted in such a manner as this, but it must come sooner or later. For "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.) Escape it you cannot; disbelieve it you dare not, for you know it is true. God cannot lie: every thought, word and deed must come under His all-seeing eye, for it is written: "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" The people in Noah's day little dreamed of the deluge; still it came. The people that lived in the land of Sodom little dreamed that destruction was coming; but it came. And so

certainly will judgment come upon this present scene. Well will it be for those who have fled for refuge to Christ, who bore the judgment due to us, and bowed His blessed head in death, and endured the wrath of a sin-hating God, crying with a loud voice: "It is finished"; He arose from the grave triumphant; the flood-gates of eternal love have been thrown open. The mighty love of God can now be told out in all its fulness, for Jesus has died and risen again and has gone on high "exalted . . . a Prince and a Saviour." Thus the glorious news of a risen and living Saviour can be preached. I would point you to Him and say: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) Believe in Him now, to-day, make Him your choice, for He is worthy.

E. I. E.

J E S U S .

"**T**HOU shalt call his name JESUS!"
Why? For He shall save His people from their sins.

How gracious of God to send into this poor sin-ridden world One who was

great enough to save people from their sins !

Many others had been used of God to save His people from the power of their enemies, but no one who could touch the very root matter—sins—nor save from the penalty of sin—death. This has been a momentous question ever since sin came into the world, but no one but Jesus could solve it.

How was it done? Jesus had to bow and meet the law's just demands. Every question was raised by God when Jesus hung upon Calvary's cross. "He was made sin": "He bare the sin of many": He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

He went into the death that our sins deserved, and thereby destroyed "him that had the power of death."

“ By weakness and defeat,
He won the meed and crown ;
Trode all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.
He Satan's power laid low ;
Made sin, sin's reign o'erthrew ;
Bow'd to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew.”

Jesus established His right to the title of Saviour. Have you been saved from your *sins* and the awful consequences that

must follow them? Sins, death, judgment!

“I would give everything I possess,” said a gentleman one day, clutching my arm in his nervous anxiety, “if only I could be sure God would forgive my sins and save me from their consequences.” How many there are to-day like him. How is it with you? Jesus is the only One who can and will save you thus, but you must turn to Him. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.) It is Jesus who is the Saviour, and He will save you, first, from your sins; secondly, all along the way; thirdly, bring you safe home to glory. He saves from the penalty because He has borne it; He saves from the judgment because He went into it; He saves from hell, and saves for heaven—the Father’s house and all its joys. He is the triumphant Saviour—the mighty Victor. He now shares the spoils of His victory with those who come to Him. He “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. iv. 25; v. 1–11.)

J. L.

THE VINDICATION OF CHRIST.

READER, let your mind travel back two thousand years.

It is a great public festival in Jerusalem. The city is crowded with men of every nationality.

An event is taking place, the far-reaching effect of which will be felt through the whole universe.

Amid the taunts and jeers of the populace the Son of God is being led through the streets of the city

to be crucified.

Outside the city walls three crosses are erected, and on the central one they place the Son of God, a malefactor on either side.

Beneath that cross are gathered the representatives of every class—priests, scribes and elders from the religious world—Roman soldiers—and the degraded mob unite in mocking and deriding the Son of God.

The two malefactors also join the railing crowd and mock the holy Sufferer. The only response it draws from His lips is

“Father, forgive them;
for they know not what they do.”

All at once one of the malefactors rebukes his fellow saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." Having thus condemned himself and justified Jesus he said,

"Lord, remember me
when thou comest into thy kingdom."
What a marvellous change has been wrought in a few moments!

In the One hanging beside him the thief discerns a glorious King.

In vision he sees Him no longer crucified, spit upon, mocked, but coming in all the power and majesty of His kingdom. He asks for a place in that scene of glory—to be remembered then. The Lord answers, "To day shalt thou be

with me in paradise."

That thief was taken straight from a malefactor's gibbet into the paradise of God, the first witness to the triumph of grace after redemption was accomplished.

The only voice that bore witness to Christ at that moment was the dying robber; with his latest breath he seeks to vindicate the holy One who hung at his side.

Reader, we would now direct your attention, no longer to One with thorn-crowned brow, desolate, betrayed and forsaken, on a malefactor's gibbet, but to Him who is placed by God on the highest pinnacle of fame and glory.

Upon the throne of God, a diadem of glory encircles His blessed brow, clothed with garments of glory and beauty, all heaven bowing before His greatness and glory.

The gates of glory have been opened wide, and the

King of glory

has entered in with bursts of acclamation. The moment is soon coming when God will publicly vindicate the name which men covered here with shame and dishonour.

The decree has gone forth from the throne of God that every knee shall bow to that peerless name, and confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. May the Lord grant that the reader may own His authority in the day of His rejection, so that when the day of His power and kingdom dawns, he may be with Him.

FIVE IMPOSSIBILITIES.

THE Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, in laying down His life upon the cross of Calvary, has wrought a work whereby He has glorified God, broken the power of Satan, met and settled the whole question of sin.

God has shewn publicly His estimate of that work, and of Him who wrought it, in that He has raised Him from the dead and glorified Him. He sits to-day at God's right hand, the work done, a victorious and triumphant Saviour. And God offers a free and full and eternal salvation to all in His blessed name.

Every sinner who in self-judgment owns to his guilty and lost state and from the heart believes on Him, and confesses Him as his Saviour and Lord, receives the forgiveness of his sins, is justified by God from everything, and is saved with His everlasting salvation. (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) And His great grace brings us through to everlasting glory.

If we may be permitted so to express it, in order that believing souls may be established in the truth, and set free from every doubt as to their everlasting salvation, we would say that there are five impossibilities which must become possi-

bilities before a true believer could be eternally lost.

The first is that

the finished work of Christ

(we write it with all reverence) should be *undone*. This is *utterly impossible*. In anticipation of that work the Son of God said, "I have glorified thee on the earth : I have *finished the work* which thou gavest me to do." (John xvii. 3.) And upon the cross, having been made sin, and having borne the judgment of God, He cried, "*It is finished.*" (John xix. 30.) The work He undertook is accomplished, and God has glorified Him, and all the power of Satan and man can never touch Him or it. As the little hymn simply and blessedly puts it,

"Thine, surely, is a faithful word,
And Thine *a finished work.*"

Satan's apparent victory in the death of Christ was his greatest defeat. His mighty power was overcome by the almighty power of God : when the Son of God rose Satan's power was overcome, and do what he may he can never touch Christ in glory, or the feeblest soul who believes in Him. It is *impossible* for the enemy to touch His finished work. When he does, it will be time enough for the be-

lieving reader of these lines to doubt his eternal salvation!

The second is, that

the precious blood of Christ,

infinitely and eternally valuable in the sight of God, should lose its value. This is also, need we say, *utterly impossible*. Shed upon the cross, God called it precious, and it cleanses from all sin. In the death and blood-shedding of Christ, God's Son, He has laid a righteous foundation to His own glory, whereby He can righteously and freely pardon every and any self-judged sinner who believes on Him, cleansing him from all sin, and making him whiter than snow in His holy and blessed presence. When the Israelite took shelter under the blood of the pass-over lamb, his life was spared in the hour of Jehovah's righteous judgment. He had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." And faithful to His word, He passed him over. So also to-day. God's eye rests on the blood of Christ, and the moment the poor sinner, guilty, ruined and lost, takes shelter under it in simple, childlike faith, he too is passed over. "When I see the blood, *I will* pass over *you*." Reader, have you taken that to heart? Have *you now* found eternal

shelter under the precious blood of Christ, the holy Lamb of God's providing? All the power of Satan and the will of man can never touch in any way whatever its infinite and eternally-abiding value in God's holy sight on behalf of the feeblest heart that trusts therein. For Christ's blood to lose its value is *a second impossibility*.

The third is, that

the righteousness of God

should become unrighteousness! The very thought of such a thing shews the folly of him who thinks it. God sought righteousness from man under law, but could not obtain it. In the cross of Christ He gave man's righteousness up, set him aside once and for ever, and revealed His own righteousness through and in another Man altogether, Christ, His well-beloved Son. The righteousness of God, based on the sure foundation of the death and blood-shedding of Christ, is now revealed. Christ, raised from the dead, and glorified, is God's righteousness, and is so made unto us. (1 Cor. i. 30.) God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that *we might become* His righteousness in Him. (2 Cor. v. 21.) Every one that believeth is *accounted righteous* on the

principle of faith, without works, is *made* God's righteousness in Christ, and is *created by Him in righteousness* and holiness of truth. (Rom. iv. 5, 6; 2 Cor. v. 21; Eph. iv. 24.) God has set forth His righteousness in Christ, the risen Man, at His right hand, who is completely beyond the reach of Satan, who can never plant his foot across His empty grave. Every believer is righteous before God in Christ for eternity. It is God's righteousness, and His work is perfect. There can be no flaw in it. His righteousness never can become unrighteousness. It is an utter impossibility.

The fourth

impossibility is that God could lie!

He not only does not lie, but He *cannot*. The salvation of every one that believeth is based on the infallible, eternal word of Him who has sworn by two immutable things, Himself and His oath, in which it is *impossible* for Him to lie. (Heb. vi. 18.) What then could be more sure? His word is for ever settled in heaven. He has magnified it above all His name. Where then is there room for a single doubt? He says precisely what He means. He means precisely what He says. He pledged His word willingly. Grace to the

repentant sinner is the conception of His own heart of love. He takes us up in grace, when there is nothing but sin and enmity in us, He sets His heart upon us, He gives His word as to our security, and He is waiting to satisfy His own heart by having us in glory. If a single believer did not arrive there, His word has failed, which like the other points we have looked at is *utterly impossible*. We cost too much, we are too valuable in His eyes, to be lost. All glory be to His great name, upon whose faithful word our eternal security is based; the word of the One who never has lied and never can lie.

The fifth is

that Satan can speak the truth!

Impossible! He is a liar and a murderer from the beginning; he never speaks truth but to cover deceit or a lie; and it is impossible for his character to be changed. He is a liar, and the father of it. You may depend upon it, he will use every effort to keep the soul from enjoying the assurance of eternal salvation by questioning in one way or another those truths which we have been dwelling upon, and which cannot possibly be altered. If Satan could speak the truth, well might one doubt. But this is another impossibility,

unless, as I have said, he would cover a lie. He is a defeated foe, and he knows it. His power will all come down, fruit of Christ's finished work. Meanwhile, though he may harass you, if you are foolish enough to listen to him, never forget that he is the father of lies. He will seek to occupy you with yourself, to obscure your vision of Christ, and to make you believe your arrival in glory depends after all upon *you*. Liar, murderer, soul-destroyer! Let the reader understand that his present communion and joy, and future approval and reward depend upon his conduct after he believes. But your eternal salvation was wrought at Calvary and is found in a glorified Saviour and Lord at God's right hand, and Satan knows it. It is impossible for his character to be changed, utterly impossible.

Hence, until five impossibilities become possibilities, there is no room for a doubt in any one who from the heart believes in Jesus. It is impossible for the work of Christ to be undone, it is impossible for the blood of Christ to lose its value, it is impossible for God's righteousness to become unrighteousness, it is impossible for God to lie, it is impossible for Satan to speak the truth. Dost *thou* believe?

THE FOUR SUPPERS.

IN Luke xiv. we get the

supper of salvation,

when God is inviting “whosoever will.” It is not those who have a right, but those who have none.

If you or I were to invite a number of friends to supper we should not say to ourselves—“Here are a number of people coming, and I must get something to satisfy their hunger. Bread would do this, I’ll get some common food like bread.” No, we think of spreading a table that will do us credit.

So God in providing His great supper not only gives forgiveness of sins but brings a sinner into the place and circumstances that will bring glory to Himself and that will cover with crowns the head of the One whom He delights to honour, the One who was down in the lowest and lowliest place.

He shewed His righteousness against sin in the cross, and now His righteousness is shewn in placing the Man on the throne who glorified Him about sin.

In Luke xv. when the poor wanderer

returned to the father, he thought of only a piece of bread to satisfy his hunger, but the moment he returns he gets what he had never counted on. The father falls on his neck and covers him with kisses.

Bread would have satisfied his hunger, but the father brings out the choicest of his store—the fatted calf, and spreads a table worthy of his own heart, because of his own joy in receiving the returning prodigal.

The supper of communion.

In 1 Corinthians xi. we get the supper of communion. Who has a right to partake of the supper of communion?

Only those who have already partaken of the supper of salvation, and those who have not have no right to be there.

If you were going to Australia and had a dear friend by whom you wanted to be remembered—if you gave him a keepsake you would say, “When you look at that, think of me.”

The blessed Lord has given us this supper of remembrance—this bread and cup—to recall Him to our hearts while He is absent, and if you, when away in Australia, would rejoice in the thought that the one to whom you had given the keepsake would remember you when he

looked at it, how much more does the Lord's loving heart rejoice when He looks down and sees His people around His table remembering Him in the hour of His sorrow and death here.

The supper of joy.

Next we come to the supper of joy. (Rev. xix.) The marriage supper of the Lamb. Beloved friends, bear in mind that all who have tasted the supper of salvation must be there, not one whose sins have been washed away will be wanting there.

In vain we look round now in this scene of confusion to see the bride of Christ. Where is she? We must be humbled as we look around and fail to see her amidst all the ruin and confusion of the present day.

But the "Lord knoweth them that are his," and in that coming day she will be there in all her perfection. She will be presented by Christ to Himself as "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

When we remember His sorrow for us, do not our hearts long for that day, when we shall be with Him. Oh! beloved friends, if the remembrance of all He suffered does not draw out all our love

to Him, nothing ever will. He longs for the day when He shall have His bride with Himself on His throne, yea, with Him for ever.

The supper of judgment.

There is one other supper. The supper of judgment in Revelation xx. Is there one reader of these lines who will be there? If you reject the invitation of the supper of salvation you will be there. I pray God you never may.

I trust you will not refuse the invitation given this day to the “supper of salvation,” then you will have a right to come to the “supper of communion,” and nothing can prevent your presence at the “supper of joy”; thus you can never appear at the “supper of judgment” which shall be prepared for those who have risen in red-handed rebellion against the God who is now beseeching them to come and partake of His best thing—His fatted calf at the supper of salvation. I pray God you may not refuse to come.

W. M.

(Notes of an address by the late Wm. Moore.)

FIVE WORDS. (No. 3.)

“He had compassion on him.” (Luke x. 33.)

THE story which is connected with this passage is well worthy of our notice and study.

There are few who will not own that this chapter contains one of the stories of scripture which we learned first, but it is very easy to learn a story by heart and yet not understand one bit the true meaning of it.

The Lord Jesus Christ was seeking to put before the young lawyer his true need, and the only One who could meet it.

It is most solemn that it is so difficult to awaken souls to their true condition and their deep need. Once a soul is impressed that it needs a Saviour, then God can point that one to Christ, but the reason why so many continue in their wretchedness and sin, is that they do not like to think that their condition is as bad as scripture says it is.

Now the point in this parable is, the condition of man in God's sight: it is illustrated by the man who fell among thieves. The good Samaritan is a figure of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Man in his journey through this world has fallen under Satan's power and he has

been treated shamefully. Satan has done his utmost against him and has left him for death to end his miserable condition.

Now in all his misery it was impossible to relieve him under the old condition of things with the law of Moses. The Levite and the priest came and looked upon him, but they could offer no relief; they had to pass by. The man's condition was so terrible that their service was unavailing. But if they failed to relieve even in a small measure there was One who could not only relieve, but *SAVE*, and *He had compassion on him* and came where he was.

Everything failed to meet the ruined state of man; but the Lord Jesus Christ *had compassion* on us and came to this world to go to the cross, in order that He might undo the work of Satan and save us.

Did you ever see before that you are pictured in this story. Many have not done so and thus have missed the blessing which God intends we should enjoy.

If you have not trusted Jesus your condition is pitiable: the Saviour has had compassion on you and has come where you are, in order to bring you into a place where you will be cared for under His protection. Turn in faith to Him to-day.

F. A. P.



FAMOUS, BUT DYING.

THE name of George Chavez will ever be remembered in connection with his famous flight over the Alps in a flying machine in the month of September, 1910. Sad to relate he was fatally injured when descending, and died shortly afterwards from his injuries. As he lay dying those who stood by reminded him how famous his name had become and that all the world was speaking of him. "But," said poor Chavez, "I am dying, and I don't want to die."

Of what value was fame to him now; of what use his wonderful exploit. None. Was there no comfort to be found in the admiration in which his fellows held him; was there no joy in the recollection that he had all but accomplished the task he had set himself? No, none. He was dying, and, as he said, he did not want to die. One can understand his feelings in a way. He had, as far as I know, no hope beyond this life except possibly some vague idea of the mercy of God. Reader, it has often awakened me from my reverie that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Must I die, and if so when? Ask

yourself that question. To fully answer it is beyond you, but that you must die is certain. And, tell me, what hope have you beyond the grave? When one has the sense that sooner or later *we must* appear before God, and we remember that we have sinned against Him, who can remain unmoved? Do you ask me what we have done? I will tell you. We have disobeyed Him, and in our proud self-will have denied Him His rights over ourselves. And what are those rights, do you ask? That He should have our loyalty, our confidence and our love. But we have refused Him these things. As we consider the subject and think of His goodness to us, is there no response in our hearts? He has given us health, and home, and happiness; He has saved us from dangers unknown, and cared for us all the days of our life. And more wonderful than all He has given His only begotten Son to die for our sins, to the end that we may be forgiven.

Reader, I think you will confess that we have cause to be ashamed of ourselves as we think of these things, and see what sinners we have been, but instead of being afraid of God, let us draw near to Him, for there is a way of approach even for a

guilty sinner through the shed blood of Christ. And now need we fear to die? Why should we? 'There is no reason why we should be afraid. The same Lord Jesus Christ in whom multitudes have found a Saviour is rich unto all that call upon Him.

Let me urge you at least to consider these things. I have found a Saviour, and I long that you may know Him too. I have found happiness in the knowledge of that blessed Person which I did not think could ever be enjoyed in this life, and it is only very natural that I should long for others to know it also. The Lord Jesus Christ is accessible to all. True, He has ascended up and sits in the throne of the heavens, but for all that He is not indifferent to the cry of human need nor the faith of a trusting soul. Those memorable words which He uttered so long ago are true to-day: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.)

A GREAT OVERTHROW PREVENTED.

IT was a very great city with a population of over one hundred and twenty thousand. Its wickedness had come up

before God and He had sent His servant, not as a herald of mercy, but with a message of judgment from the presence of the Lord. But God did not act thus without a warning. He gave them forty days to repent, and this they did; were they not wise in so doing? assuredly they were! They began to reflect upon the situation both with regard to themselves and their evil doings. Friend, let us pause here a moment, would it not be wise for you to reflect a moment? You may be a scoffer or a sceptic, or perhaps you intend to give the matter your serious attention *some day*, but remember, "procrastination is the thief of time." God is gracious, you say, and slow to anger, but do not forget He is righteous and can in no wise clear the guilty, unless "he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him." (2 Sam. xiv. 14.) This He has done, blessed be His name! But what about the people in the great city called Nineveh of whom I spoke, did they refuse the message, did they turn away from the voice of the prophet? Nay, they were too wise to disregard the voice of God. For the record of scripture is: "They believed God" (Jonah iii. 5) from the greatest to the least, from the king upon the throne to the meanest subject in his realm; they

turned from their evil way and from the violence that was in their hands. (Jonah iii. 8.) Thus they repented at the preaching of Jonah. And God took account of it when He saw they repented. Thus a great overthrow was prevented. But, says some one, it is a historical incident referring to what happened many centuries ago, which has no direct application to us in this day. Stay, friend; the God who caused such a message to be sounded in the ears of those Ninevites but turned from His fierce anger is the God who has declared the whole world guilty before Him. (Rom. iii. 19.) That the complete overthrow of the present state of things is yet to take place which the unalterable word of God has plainly predicted is unmistakable. He spared a hundred and twenty thousand people in Nineveh, but take care lest He spare not thee! Only Noah and his family were saved in the ark, although a multitude had ample opportunity of turning to God in repentance, but they made light of it. But the flood came. Listen to-day, God sends forth His invitation shewing the terms upon which you can receive it, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." That blessed One went beneath the floods of God's judgment and rose from the dead

in mighty and glorious victory and has gone up far above all heavens, and God has placed on divine record His eternal joy and satisfaction in Him in the place where He lives to die no more, and where a mighty host will presently praise Him who is so worthy. As for the believer in Christ judgment will never overwhelm him. The waters may roar and be troubled and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea and shake with the swelling thereof, but he knows the One who has gone on high and is mightier than the judgment. Death has no terror for him, Christ has broken its power, there is not a power or an evil in the universe that He has not vanquished. Can He do more? He would not do less. Oh, that you might make His acquaintance before it is too late!

E. I. E.

THREE REQUESTS.

(MARK V.)

THIS incident presents to us a solemn picture of the awful power of sin; the devil possessed man is completely under Satan's power, and possessed by superhuman energy.

He stood by the seashore as the boat

landed in which Jesus was sitting. How little he thought as he met their boat that his deliverer was there, and that a mightier power had visited the Gadarenes than that which ruled him: we may regard him as a representative man.

However much he may boast of his freedom, man is not a free agent, he is under the moral sway of the god and prince of this world. It may be noticed further that the man of Gadara had his dwelling among the tombs. In spite of the outward appearance, the world when stripped of all its glory is one vast cemetery.

We are surrounded by dying men and women; they may cover their coffins with flowers, but the naked truth remains, "Death, and after death, the judgment." But again, this man had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces, neither could any man tame him.

He was beyond all hope of reformation. Men seek to bind their fellows with chains; our reformatories and measures for the uplifting of the masses are only efforts to tame humanity.

Another thing is to be noticed, there is here the outward recognition of Jesus, for

he says, "Jesus, thou Son of the most high God," but at the same time he shewed great unwillingness to have anything to do with Jesus.

Reader, you may be amiable, cultured, refined and religious. Yet like this man, do you shun personal contact with the Lord Jesus? There was all the wealth of grace and fulness of power present to meet him in his terrible condition, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit" said the Lord. Then there is a personal question: "What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many."

Here is the secret of all blessing from God; the whole truth must be faced, and like Jacob of old, when he owned his name as Jacob—the cheat, the liar and the bargain maker, his name was changed to Israel—a prince.

There is a moral dignity about a man who bottoms the whole question of what he is with God.

2B&C

Then comes the first request—"The devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them."

The Lord accedes to this request, and entering in they ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked: the keepers of the swine fled, and told it

in the city and the country, and they went out to see what was done.

They see the once devil-possessed man seated in the most sacred spot in God's universe—at the feet of Jesus.

He needed no fetters now, he is bound to his Deliverer by the golden chain of affection. He was no longer naked but clothed, which is suggestive to us of the robe of righteousness, the moral fitness for the divine presence in which the sinner may appear before God.

Next it is said of him that he is in his right mind. To men of unsound mind everything is out of proportion, but now the Lord has His true place as the object of this man's affection.

The result is—God gets His true place—man gets his. This brings from the Gadarenes the *second* request: “They began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.” The presence of the Lord was intolerable to them; and He answers their desire.

Reader, has the world changed from that day to this? Christianity has brought untold blessings to men, but the same spirit animates every unconverted soul. If the Lord's name is mentioned in a railway carriage, one can sometimes see the look of scorn and hatred. It was the

same before the flood. Job tells us wicked men said to God—"Depart."

And when the Lord Jesus had ascended to heaven, He sent His servants to preach. Paul and Silas went to Phillipi, the same reception met them—the magistrates besought them to depart out of their city. This brings before us the *third* request: the man prayed Him that he might be with Him; but this is refused. We can understand how ardently he longed to be with the Lord; but he is left to be a witness of the love and power of his Deliverer. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

If we have been the subjects of redeeming grace, we are left here for a purpose, that we may spread the Saviour's fame abroad.

We might have been taken straight from grace to glory (like the thief on the cross), but instead we are given the privilege of witnessing for our absent Lord.

Later on the Lord returns to Decapolis, a great welcome awaits Him; we cannot doubt but that it was the result of the testimony he uttered: "He published how great things Jesus had done for him."

May the reader receive a like blessing for His name's sake.

H. F. N.

THE LONELY TOMBSTONE.

OUTSIDE the gate of the cemetery in Drumcondra, a suburb of Dublin, all by itself, stands a tombstone. The inscription on it reads thus : “ Erected by Frances Connor, in loving memory of her mother, Margaret McMerney Connor, who died 11th April, 1900. *Requiescat in pace.* Our Lady of the sacred heart, pray for her. Virgin, most merciful, intercede.” Mrs. Connor was buried in the cemetery, and some time afterwards a headstone arrived with orders for it to be placed over the grave ; but when Mr. Connell, the rector of the parish, read the inscription, he would not allow it to be erected. The friends of the woman then, as a witness to the intolerance of Protestants, had it placed outside the entrance gate with these words added below in italics : “ ‘This stone has been refused admittance to Drumcondra cemetery on account of the above prayer to the blessed Virgin, deceased being a Roman Catholic.’ ”

Poor deluded people ! if they would only read their Bibles, they would see that the virgin, though so highly honoured as to be the mother of our Lord, has no power to intercede for either the dead or living.

We read : “ For there is *one* God, and *one* mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus ; who gave himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due time ” (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6), (Douay Version, used by Roman Catholics), and there is not a single verse in the Bible to lead us to suppose that she or any of the departed saints act as mediators for us in the presence of God. How blessed to know the Lord Jesus as the Holy One who went into death for us, “ the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,” bearing all the judgment that was due to us in “ his own body on the tree ” ; then as our great High Priest and Advocate with the Father, who has passed into the heavens, ever living there to make intercession for His people who have been redeemed by His precious blood !

“ Th’ atoning work is done,
The Victim’s blood is shed ;
And Jesus now is gone
His people’s cause to plead :
He lives in heaven, their great High Priest,
And bears their names upon His breast.

“ See sprinkled with His blood
The mercy seat above,
For Justice had withstood
The purposes of Love ;
But Justice now withstands no more
And Mercy yields her boundless store.”

M. S. S.

“FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.”

THOMAS E—— was looked upon as an honest, straightforward kind of man by all who knew him, yet for all that he was ranked among those who “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

He was the husband of a converted wife and the father of converted children, therefore many prayers had gone up to God on his behalf, prayers, too, that were to be answered in His own time. Oh, the value of fervent, believing prayer! Let us, who know the Lord, pray on.

Many times God had spoken to him through the death of some who were near and dear to him, still he hardened his neck in pride and selfwill. But God, who is rich in mercy, was going to make him a monument of grace by laying him upon a bed of sickness from which he would never recover.

It was while lying there that he experienced something of the words of Job. “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.” (Job xxxiii. 19.)

Friend after friend entered his bedroom and “persuaded him concerning Jesus.”

Facing the bed where he lay was a text

written in bold black type : “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.)

Many a time his attention was called to it as it hung upon the wall, until the words seemed to haunt him, and at last, unable to bear the penetrating power of such words any longer, he requested his son to take it down. But somehow or other the nail could not be got out, and it had therefore to remain there still, that by its means the Spirit of God might do His own work in his precious soul. We shall see that if the word could not be taken down it could be taken in. And this is what really took place.

One evening he lay there all alone. A servant of God who had often called to see him, though getting little response, called again, still trusting the Lord would be pleased to open the sick man’s eyes. Once more taking his seat by his side he pointedly asked him if it was well with his soul. To this he replied, “ Yes, it is well,” and the calm look that lit up his countenance told of peace within.

“ How did it come about ? ” he was asked. “ Why, it was that text that did

it!” said he. As he had drunk in the simplicity of the words, they had filled him with assurance. God says, “I have passed from death unto life,” was his emphatic reply.

Space would not permit us to relate all that took place from the time that the Lord met him until He called him home to be with Himself—about six months. But the night he died will ever be remembered by those who gathered around his bed. It was an impressive sight. Fixing his eyes upon one who was present he said, “Pray to God for me!” But there was no time for prayer, only room for praise and thanksgiving to Him who alone is worthy to be praised for His great salvation. As his strength had become weaker, his faith had grown stronger, so that he was able to testify to those around him of God’s saving grace.

His awakening seemed to be caused by the doctor’s words. Reluctantly yet candidly he had told him that he had a disease from which he could not possibly recover. Man’s extremity was once more God’s opportunity.

Many times, it may be, my reader, you have heard the voice of God. It may have been “in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men,

in slumberings upon the bed"; for "then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." (Job xxxiii. 15-17.) God works thus with man that He may be "gracious unto him," and says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." (Job xxxiii. 24.)

What better news could fall upon the ears of sinful men, than that God has found a ransom in the Person of His beloved Son! He who came forth from His presence to accomplish redemption's work cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." God is now eternally satisfied with that atoning work. He has raised Him from the dead and acclaimed Him worthy to ascend the throne. Well might we sing, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!"

Soon will He come from those courts on high and claim every blood-washed sinner. Then those who are left behind will bewail throughout a lost eternity that they let their last opportunity slip by. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

E. I. E.