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### JUSTIFICATION

AND

## ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD;

OR,

An Inquiry into the Relative Value

OF THE

LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND OF THE LAW.

BY A STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE.

LONDON:

G. MORRISH, 24, WARWICK LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.



### PREFACE.

The Author having been asked by a friend to state in writing what objections he had to make to the doctrine, 'The legal obedience of Christ is the exclusive ground of justification,' began by committing some of these to paper; but finding the subject everywhere canvassed and the minds of many in exercise respecting the standing of the Christian before God, he was led to enter more fully into its various branches. The execution of this has been a good deal interrupted by ill health and various other causes, which will account for the occasionally broken and disconnected character of the argument, and also for other defects, for which the forbearance of the reader is requested.

### INTRODUCTION.

The object of the ensuing pages is not controversy but the elucidation of truth, and the comparison of two opposite systems of doctrines which have lately come into collision, in order that the christian reader may be able to judge which of these systems gives most glory to the Person of our blessed Lord, and is most consistent with the Word of God. Party feeling and prejudice only obscure the glorious light of divine truth, and hinder us from arriving at what is really the whole counsel of God: it is indispensably needful to seek deliverance from their baneful influence by the grace of God and the power of His Spirit, if we wish to be guided by God in our researches after an increasing knowledge of Himself.

"If any man wishes  $(\theta \in \lambda \eta)$  to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," (John vii. 17,) was the reply given by our Lord, when challenged as to what He was teaching; and this regard to the will of God alone is a principle of universal application in the exercise of spiritual judgment, for if our feelings are biassed in any direction we cannot rightly weigh the relation of any subject to the glory of

God, and that alone. Human authorities, however respected, should never, therefore, be allowed to govern our minds when inquiring into, or judging of the truth of God. Educational habits of thought and prescriptive ideas, fondly cherished as if they formed a part of our very being, we have all had to lay aside, and found that the more we did so, and trusted to the guidance of the word of God, the more the mind became expanded, and our apprehension of divine truth cleared and enlarged.

The writer himself has found this to be the case with reference to the truths he here brings forward, and which have gradually, during the course of years as the light afforded by the word of God penetrated his mind, been substituted for the system here opposed; he has found his own soul established, and his confidence increased, and greater nearness to God as the result; and with this assurance, he does not hesitate to commend them to his brethren in a form that may present them distinctly to their minds, notwithstanding the odium some have endeavoured to cast upon them; and not only this, but the bitter and violent attacks made on those who have advocated them.

The charges of heresy and Socinianism\* brought by some

\* The value of these charges may be seen from the following sample, ex uno disce omnes. Mr. Stanley in his tract on "The Justifier" uses the words that it required something "far deeper" than the obedience of Christ to the law to justify the sinner. Mr. Mylne argues thus on this passage of Mr. Stanley, to prove that such views would, if followed out, land men in Socinianism:—"If the life of Christ on earth can be exceeded in holiness even by the life of Christ

against their fellow Christians, because they adhere to, (as the ground of their justification) that part of the glorious work of Christ accomplished on Calvary, rather than to a limited though perfect phase of His life, it is neither our intention nor desire to dwell upon; it is better to leave them and the misrepresentations by which they are accompanied, to Him who judges righteously. They will have little weight with those who know what Socinianism is, and how entirely antagonistic all the views of the writers in question are to that system in all its essential features; and how in every page of their writings statements may be

in heaven, then Christ upon earth could not have been God manifested in the flesh; for what can be more holy than the life of God, whether on earth or in heaven . . . . If, then, it be dangerous error to affirm that Christ came in a nature liable to sin, is it not equally so to affirm that there could be anything more holy than Christ's life on the earth, any perfection more infinite than that of the Word made flesh?" Mr. Stanley's words are first misstated, or misrepresented, and then certain conclusions drawn from the misstatement. Mr. Stanley never "affirmed" that there was anything more holy than Christ's life on earth, nor that there was any perfection more infinite than that which He then exhibited; his statement that something of a much deeper nature took place on the cross is very different, and if Mr. Mylne does not perceive it, he must have lost the sense which every Christian ought to have of the real nature of the death of Christ. However holy and divinely perfect the life of Christ on earth was, there is something far more mysterious and solemn in the Son of God tasting death-which had fallen on man under the judgment of God-for sin, something far deeper-yea unfathomably, awfully deep and not less deep than precious—when that blessed One knew in the depths of His soul what it was to have all our sin between Himself and God, and all that was in God against it had to be gone through by Him to the uttermost; and this is approximating

found concerning the glory of the person of Christ, His atoning work, the operations of the Holy Ghost, and the ruin of man entirely irreconcilable with that system. In reality there is much more resemblance to Socinianism (arising of course from obscurity of views) in putting, as some have done, the value of the life of Christ, in opposition to that of His death, and in denying to so great an extent the efficacy of the latter. It is a pleasure to think, nevertheless, that there is in some minds a real desire for the exaltation of the name of Christ, and that part, at least, of their opposition may arise from a jealousy, lest should they relinquish anything that has seemed to them

to Socinianism! It is expressly and intensely the opposite of it as every christian man knows. If Mr. Stanley referred to the life of Christ in heaven, it never was to speak of it in its personal characteristics as "more holy or perfect" than His life on earth; but, because justification is ascribed in Scripture to the blood of Christ, it was going backward to place it in His life on earth, whilst His life in heaven, being after death, was more suitable and available for our title in the presence of God, where indeed, as we shall see, Scripture places it; but both, of course, are equally holy and perfect in their nature. This charge Mr. Mylne repeats after long advisement in his letter to "The Record" of February 3d, 1863, in which he makes it the leading point of his warning, respecting the incipient Socinianism of those he attacks. Mr. Mylne says it is painful for him thus to write. If such is really the case, the apology which he certainly owes to Mr. Stanley for this glaring injustice will not be ungrateful to him. He gives as another reason for the judgment he expresses, confounding many with one, the fact that some writer, though holding fully the character of the sin and trespass-offering as illustrative of the sin-atoning efficacy of the death of Christ, understated that of the burnt-offering; such is his second proof of Socinian tendencies!

to form a part of the truth respecting His person, and however wrongly applied, to be a necessity to their souls from the consciousness of their own sinfulness. Such a feeling is not only right, but to be valued in the present day when many have come to regard all truth as a matter of human opinion instead of divine authority. But it will be seen, it is hoped, in the course of these pages that not less but more of Christ is presented for the apprehension of faith, and that the value of His blessed life is by no means lost, though it be not the formal basis of justifica-It will also be made apparent that we are gainers not losers by understanding the relation of the whole path of Christ to our position before God, and that the object for which these sentiments have been maintained is to enlarge the sphere of christian thought, and strengthen the ground of christian confidence instead of weakening it; and if such is the result in any measure, as has been the case where these truths have been only partially received among Christians generally, as they themselves even testify, that of itself will be sufficient answer to the reproaches of those who are opposed to them, whilst it makes these reproaches comparatively easy to bear.

It is this feeling that has occasioned the publication of this work, because it seemed desirable that some effort should be made to remove the difficulties which surround the subject; that which has already appeared in print taking the same view, having been more directed to the doctrinal point of the justification of the sinner according to the Word of God, than to the satisfying of the collateral enquiries and objections that are likely to present themselves to the mind. Besides this there are many who dislike reading what comes before them in a controversial form, dreading the injury to the spirit which it is so apt to produce; for their sakes and that the truth may be viewed apart from disputation and contention, we have endeavoured to keep clear of this, and to allude as little as possible, consistently with the object in view, to particular writers and their expressions, or inconsistencies; nevertheless, it is believed that the reader will find all the objections founded on the language of Scripture noticed in this work, and all the passages which have been brought forward as in any way favouring that which is the Puritan view of the subject examined, to see how far they will bear the interpretation put upon them.\*

Without doubt, many simple-minded Christians, who have derived their thoughts mainly from the pure fountain of truth, with little admixture of the muddy streams of human theology, will, in their turn, be surprised and perhaps shocked at the way in which the plainest statements of the word of God have been set aside for human dogmas, and still more at the attempt to force the acceptance of these sentiments on others, upon the pain of

\* The reader will excuse the occasional appearance of repetition for this reason, that the argument has frequently first to be drawn out of the passage, and then the structure of the text sifted to show that it will not admit of another or contrary meaning which has been assigned to it.

being decried as heretics and outside the pale of christian truth and brotherhood; whilst the way in which the value of the "precious blood of Christ" has been depreciated, however unintentionally, (as we may be sure was the case with men whose lives were devoted to the Saviour,) they will scarcely be able to credit, but for the unequivocal evidence of their own published and accredited writings.

The doctrine in question was never heard of in the Church till the time of those who are commonly known as the later Puritans. In these, however, they will find it asserted, that the blood of Christ gives no title to heaven, nor to eternal life, nor does it justify; but that all this is due only and solely to the living obedience of Christ rendered to the law. They affirm that the death of Christ was only "passive obedience," whilst His living obedience to the law was "active obedience;" hence they assume that His death procures pardon or relieves from penalty, but nothing more; justification, life, glory, heaven, are obtained only by means of this legal obedience.

The following extracts, from Puritan and modern writers, will suffice to show what these opinions are, and that they are not misrepresented in the following pages.

"Being sinners, we were obnoxious both to the command and curse of the law: and as Christ could not, by His most perfect obedience, satisfy the curse of the law, 'dying thou shalt die;' so by the utmost of His suffering He could not fulfil the command of the law, 'Do this and live.' Wherefore, as we plead that the death of Christ is imputed to us for our justification, (pardon?) so we deny that it is imputed to us for our righteousness.

For by the imputation of the sufferings of Christ our sins are pardoned, and we are delivered from the curse of the law, which He endured, but we are not thence esteemed righteous, nor can we be so, without respect to the fulfilling of the commands of the law."

"These things therefore are distinct—taking away the filthy rags, and clothing us with change of raiment, or the pardon of sins and the robe of righteousness: by the one we are freed from condemnation, by the other we have a right to salvation."—Owen on Justification.

"I believe my person is as really accepted as perfectly righteous by the righteousness of His life imputed to me, as my sins are pardoned by God for the bitterness of the death He suffered for them; His righteousness being as really by faith imputed to me, as my sins were laid upon Him; as these are set upon His, so is that set upon my score; and so everything He did in His life, as well as everything He suffered in His death, is mine. By the latter God looks upon me as perfectly innocent, and therefore not to be thrown down to hell; by the former He looks upon me as perfectly righteous, and therefore to be brought up to heaven..... So that though it is by the death of Christ by which I believe my sins are pardoned, yet it is by the life of Christ by which I believe my person is accepted."—Bishop Beveridge's Private Thoughts.

"If the surety dies only, he only delivers from punishment. But this affords no claim to life, no title to a reward, unless you can produce some such edict from the court of heaven, 'Suffer this, and then you shall live.'.... Whereas, when we join the active and passive obedience of our Lord, the peace-speaking blood with the life-giving righteousness, both made infinitely meritorious and infinitely efficacious, by the divine glory of His person, how full does our justification appear."—Hervey's Theron and Aspasio.

- "In plain words, do you know this, that over the gate of heaven is written up, 'Do this and live?' Do you know that if a man is cleansed from his sin in the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit of God, he cannot then go to heaven? He wants something more still; he must have a perfect obedience. Heaven is suspended on a perfect obedience, not a negative one. God said to Adam, 'Do this and live.' He failed. You must present a perfect obedience when you come to God. Have you got it? It is the active obedience of Christ; it is not His sufferings, that blots out sin; it is not His Spirit, that sanctifies the heart, but it is His perfect righteousness. Listen, 'By his obedience (sic) shall my righteous servant justify many."—
  Sermon preached at Exeter Hall, July 18, 1858, by Mr. Molyneux.
- "He came to lead the life of an unfallen man, that fallen man might plead that life, even Christ's, as his title to glory."
- "But Christ's obedience for us, which was finished in His death, procures not only the sinner's pardon, but his title to glory. As the death of Christ was necessary in order to the forgiveness of sins, so His obedience from Bethlehem to Calvary was alike needful to merit heaven for us."
- "Many call Jesus, Lord, who do not know Him as their righteousness: they see Him as delivering them from perdition but not as entitling them to heaven. They consider Him as a dying but not as a doing Saviour."—The Inquiring Parishioner, by the Rev. Beauchamp Stannus.
- "An exile and an outlaw, by the death of a nobleman, becomes heir to an English dukedom. Before he can take his seat in the House of Lords two different proceedings must take effect. First, his outlawry must be reversed, and then his title to the dukedom must be proved. These two operations are quite independent one of the other. The reversal of outlawry will not make a peer, the title to a peerage will not reverse an outlawry.

And in such a case, disability and the claims of broken law take precedence of the conferring of privilege. The exile's peerage cannot be allowed till the slur of outlawry is taken off. 'Tis thus with man. Atonement for sin is a different thing from the bestowment of everlasting life. The blood of Jesus must put sin away ere the merit of Jesus' obedience can attach to the believer..... Jesus' death puts away sin, but it does not give title to eternal life. That springs only, as has just been noticed, from observance of law."

"But is the absence of sin all that the law demands? Is the absence of sin righteousness? Mr. Darby tacitly admits the difference. If one can call innocence righteousness, it must be with a qualification, as 'negative righteousness,' but the law demands 'positive righteousness,' or obedience." (Pages 53, 54.)

"The only righteousness which could free the apostle from law was the righteousness which satisfied the claims of law: and that is to be found only in Christ's life of obedience." (Page 81.)

"Jesus' death removes sin: sets us externally on the ground we had lost by transgression, and God might have bade the receivers of Christ's death to seek for eternal life by their obedience to law." (Page 108.)

"Atonement is not righteousness, and cannot by itself constitute our justification, though it is necessary to it. It clears the ground for a perfect righteousness, but it can do no more."

"Thus the two parts of our justification cohere. Without atonement perfect righteousness could not be made applicable to us. Without a perfect obedience, while we might possess innocence in the eyes of the law, we could not be well-doers entitled to a prize." (Page 109.)

"It is not merely the making innocent in law by sins put away; it is righteousness positive, the clothing with the merit of obedience, the bestowing of the law's prize of eternal life."

- "What shall make them righteous? Not the bearing away of their offences, necessary though that be as a preliminary step, but the transfer to them of the merit of obedience." (Pages 154-5.)
- "As condemnation came in through an offence against law, so justification comes in through obedience to law. We are justified by Christ's blood; for without it sin stands recorded against us to condemn. We are justified also by Christ's "righteousness" or "obedience:" for without that we are not meritorious in the law's eyes." (Page 167.)—The Righteousness of Christ, by R. Govett.
- "C. S. fails to see, or at all events fails to state, that though I am pardoned I am not justified. Mere pardon is not justification. It is no part of his gospel that the law has a precept as well as a penalty. He does not teach that after I have been punished (in my Surety) for all the breaches I have made in the law, and thus so far stand clear with it, the law still has a demand on me and that for a perfect obedience. I was bound not only not to break, but perfectly to keep the law, the whole law. have broken the law; Christ's death is the penalty for that guilt of mine; but to the law's positive iterated demand for my obedience, the gospel of C. S. has no answer, while, blessed be God, the glorious gospel has. The whole work of obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ is excluded from this new gospel. As an example to us for obedience, it is not referred to; as a positive keeping of the law in our place and so working for us and bringing in for us an everlasting righteousness, it is substantially, if not in express terms, ignored and denied. The gospel with him, is God coming to a sinner, offering him pardon; not with a righteousness that is spotless, complete, to make him altogether just; he does not see, that, to be just, means not only not to have broken but actually to have kept the law. It not only says, 'Thou shalt not do this, but thou shalt not do that.' It commands as well as prohibits. It says, 'If you do this you

must be punished;' and it says, moreover, 'Thou shalt also do these things and always do them.' We must continue to do all things that are written in the book of the law. The essence of the glorious gospel lies in this: that the Lord Jesus not only bore our penalty but did our work; that He bore the curse of the broken law, and also at the same time magnified and made it honourable. He was obedient unto death, and this whole work of His, His obedience unto death, is called in the Scripture and proclaimed in the gospel, as the righteousness of God.

"We who believe in Christ are not only pardoned and justified men, obedient in His obedience, righteous in Him with all the righteousness of God. We have in the person of our Surety suffered all the law's penalty, and fully and perfectly obeyed all its precepts."\*—Extract from the Record, Nov. 13, 1861.

"The righteousness of Christ on earth had no other meaning, no other purpose, but that it should be imparted, as a ground of merit, to them that believe, being an effectual substitute for their responsibilities, a more than sufficient equivalent for their lack of service.... The holy nature and sinless walk of Jesus, were intended as a substitute for your unholy nature, and your numberless shortcomings, that in like manner as your sins are pardoned through the blood of Jesus, so you might be accounted not passively but actually righteous, in virtue of the righteousness of Jesus."—Reposing in Jesus, by Mylne.

• It is evident here not only by the separation of pardon and justification, but by making the death of Christ only the bearing of our penalty, and the assertion that Mr. Stanley has no righteousness to offer, because he proclaims only the value of the death of Christ, and not that of His legal obedience, that though the writer like Mr. Hervey joins both together at the close of the passage, the whole efficacy of that which justifies, is really ascribed to the law being kept by Christ in His life.

The italics we have inserted in these extracts are intended to shew the salient points of these doctrines.

In all these extracts the Ultra-puritan doctrine, which makes the fulfilment of the law by Christ the ground of righteousness, separating between pardon and justification, and depriving the death of Christ of all real share in the latter, is more or less evident. For the most part the death of Christ is limited in its value to bearing and so freeing us from the penalty of the law; it can procure pardon, but nothing more.

We have not been able to trace these views formally and dogmatically expressed earlier than Dr. Sibbs and Dr. Owen, the celebrated Independent Preacher of the commonwealth, who accompanied Cromwell in his expedition to Ireland as his chaplain, and they are thoroughly suited in their hard, rigid features to the well-known characteristics of the Puritan age, with its repulsive dogmatism, and its legal and combative spirit, which amalgamated a sort of bastard Judaism with Christianity, and as a consequence led men into lines of action and scenes of conflict which the light of the present day has taught, even mere professors, to judge as inconsistent with the genius of Christianity, and the lowly, gracious spirit of Christ. They have, alas, found modern imitators both of their spirit and of their doctrines.

Some of the Reformers held in a vague way that Christ fulfilled the law for us, but they never make that the exclusive or even chief ground of justification; and if this obedience to the law or the life of Christ is brought in by them, the value of His sufferings and death on our behalf

always has the more prominent place; whilst justification and forgiveness of sins are always identified, and the expression, "the righteousness of Christ" by no means signifies His obedience to the law exclusively, but generally the value of His life and death. Luther and Calvin, in using the expression "the righteousness of Christ," do not include the law at all, as will presently appear; the latter refers the obedience of Christ in Romans v. 21 to the satisfaction rendered in His death. Thus the distinctly objectionable features of this system are entirely wanting. Indeed, as has been said already, it was unheard of in its formal character in the Church before the time of the later Puritans, with whom it appears to have originated.

That the reader may judge of the extent to which the views of the Reformers differed from these Puritan writers, the following quotations from the writings of the former are subjoined:—

"Wherefore Paul here beginneth afresh to entreat of the law and defineth what it is, taking occasion of that which he said before: to wit, that the law justifieth not. There is no law, saith he, that is of itself necessary to justification. Therefore when we reason as touching righteousness, life, and everlasting salvation, the law must be utterly out of sight, as if it had never been, or never should be, but as though it were nothing at all. For in the matter of justification, no man can remove the law far enough out of his sight, or behold the only promise of God sufficiently, and as he should do." \* \* \* \*

"But, contrariwise, we affirm with Paul, that there is no law, whether it be man's law or God's law, that giveth life. There-

fore we put as great difference between the law and righteousness as it is between life and death, between heaven and hell. And the cause that moveth us so to affirm, is that plain and evident plan of Paul where he saith that the law is not given to justify, to give life, or to save, but only to kill and to destroy, contrary to the opinion of all men; for naturally they can judge no otherwise of the law, but that it is given to work righteousness, and to give life and salvation."—Luther's Commentary on Epistle to the Galatians. Chap. iii. 19, 21.

"Let us now consider the truth of what was said in the definition, viz., that justification by faith is reconciliation with God, and that this consists solely in the remission of sins.... so that this justification may be termed in one word, remission of sins."

"This is his (the Apostle Paul's) language to the Romans, chap. iii. 23. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace;' here we have the original source of our salvation, which is the gratuitous mercy of God towards us. It follows, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:' here we have the matter of our justification. 'Through faith in His blood:' here he points ont the instrumental cause, by which the righteousness of Christ is revealed to us. Lastly, he subjoins the end of all when he says, 'To declare his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' And to suggest by the way, that this righteousness consists in reconciliation or propitiation. he expressly asserts that Christ was 'set forth to be a propitiation.'"—Calvin's Christian Institutes.

"St. Paul, when he sayth that we be justified by faith, meaneth, we have remission of sin, reconciliation and acceptance into the favour of God."

"To be justified by faith in Christ is as much as to say, we obtain remission of sins and are accepted into the favour of God

by the merits of Christ."—Bishop Hooper, born end of Fifteenth Century, martyred 1555.

- "Our righteousness and salvation is the work of mere grace because we are redeemed...... For the heavenly Father did by His eternal council set forth His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to be our propitiation, to wit, that He might be our reconciliation, for whose sake only, the Father being pacified, adopteth us into the number of the sons of God; which is accomplished by none other way but through faith in His blood, that is, if we believe that the Son, being sent of the Father, did shed His blood, thereby to set us cleansed, justified, sanctified before the heavenly Father."—Bullinger, Decad. IV., Sermon I. p. 41.
- "Justification is taken in Scripture for the forgiveness of sins and consisteth in the forgiveness of sins."—Bradford, 1548. Election and Free Will. (Page 217.) Parker's Society Edition.
- "Again, it (Christ's death) furthered our salvation by purchasing the remission of our sins and justifying our persons; our freedom from condemnation and punishment, our appearance as upright and acceptable in God's sight; upon the condition of faith and repentance propounded in the gospel, in regard to which effect He is said to redeem us from our sins, to bear them and take them away, to expiate them; to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them, Rom. viii. 34; that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation."—Barrow's Works, Vol. IV., Sermon XXVII., on the Creed.
- "Being justified will imply that which a mere embracing the gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy, viz., an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittal from his debts, a state of innocence, of guiltlessness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punishment; all that which by Paul sometimes, and by the other apostles, is couched under the phrases, remission of sins, having sins blotted

out and washed away, being cleansed from all sin, and the like; thus considering the nature of the matter and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word."—Vol. IV., Sermon V., Justification by Faith. (Page 375.)

"Justification there (Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26) we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon, so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating His justice and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversely expressed, or having several names according to some diverse formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes justification and sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion, (see Rom. v. 5, 9; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14,) which argueth the equivalence of these terms."—Same Sermon. (Page 375.)

"Thus the word justifie doth signifie variously according to the subject or matter it is applied to; but when it is applied to a sinner it signifieth nothing else but pardon of his sin. Nor can I possibly apprehend what other notion men can frame to themselves of a sinner's being justified, distinct from pardon or remission."—Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons. Vol. XII. Sermon 8.

"Because all men be sinners and offenders against God and breakers of His law and commandments, therefore can no man by his own acts, works and deeds, (seem they never so good,) be justified and made righteous before God: but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness of justification, to be received at God's own hands, that is to say, the forgiveness of his sins and trespasses in such things as he hath offended. And this justification or righteousness which we so receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full

justification; for (latter part of the same Homily) it pleased our heavenly Father, of His infinite mercy, without any our desert or deserving, to prepare for us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood whereby our ransom might be fully paid, the law fulfilled, and His justice fully satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in Him."—Homily on the Salvation of Mankind.

These quotations will suffice to show the doctrine here opposed was unknown at the period of the Reformation.\* The fulfilment of the law as the ground of justification in most of them is not brought forward at all, justification being ascribed to the efficacy of the death of Christ. Luther positively rejects the idea of legal righteousness. Homily seems to include it here and in several other places, but not at all by giving it the chief, still less an exclusive, place in procuring righteousness, whilst it calls the whole of His life and death, the righteousness of Christ, and does not admit that justification is not pardon; indeed the identification of justification with pardon, common to all of them, though not strictly correct, is subversive of the whole puritanical system of justification, the essence of which lies in the distinction it makes between them, and assigning to them severally and in contrast, the one to the death, the other to the legal obedience of Christ. The Reformers mostly had in view the Romish doctrine of inherent righteousness; but they oppose this doctrine in terms which

• Even after its introduction by the Puritans, it was by no means universally accepted amongst standard theological writers, as the extracts from Barrow and Tillotson, of a later date, indicate.



eannot be reconciled with these opinions. Luther also proclaims the Christian's entire freedom from the law.

These extracts, we need scarcely say, are not given as having any authority or being binding on the conscience of the Christian, for the Word of God alone, not that of man, is entitled to such reverence; but they exhibit the difference which exists between the teaching of the Reformers and that of the Puritans and the modern inheritors of their doctrines. The Reformation, blessed as it was in many respects as a work of God and as the means of the religious liberty and privileges we now enjoy, while it left many points of christian truth in obscurity, exhibits a far fuller gospel and better understanding of the grace of God and more expansive christian spirit than the narrow system of puritanism which was, as we have said, the occasion of many, if not most, of these well-known errors and mistakes, as well as their rigid and censorious spirit. To this system, from which Christians in England are becoming increasingly emancipated, the effort is now being made to recall them; but it will be in vain for those who have tasted the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, and have found other truths which the Holy Ghost has brought out for the edification of the Church of God in these last days, which are far too precious to be relinquished, because they were unknown to their predecessors. Besides which, the Word of God has been allowed to speak for itself, and men who own its sovereign claim will, as it enjoins, "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good," (1 Thess. v. 21,) if it is to

be found in that unerring, infallible standard of truth, however much man may gainsay such inquiries, knowing that with lowly, reverential hearts, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit to guide into all truth, that blessed book will never lead them astray, while they can place the same dependence on no fallible men or system of doctrine, as either sure or containing all that they require.

To that standard we now proceed to appeal for the truth or falsehood of the doctrines already cited. Let the christian reader judge for himself what is taught therein, whilst we endeavour to elicit from the unerring pages of inspiration what God has Himself declared upon the points at issue. We may be well assured that He knows best what is for the profit of our souls and for His own glory, whilst on our part the spirit of the little child is the only safe or right one, in seeking to consider that which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

#### CHAPTER I.

# OUR PRESENT ACCEPTANCE AND TITLE TO HEAVEN.

THE subject before us for consideration is the value of the death of Christ according to the word of God, whether it can justify or give a title to heaven, and life, and glory—or only procure a bare pardon and nothing more; so that we have to look to a certain effect of the law in Christ's obedience to it, for all the rest. In the one case it will be evident that the title to these blessings rests on the law, (as fulfilled by Christ,) in the other on the efficacy of the death of Christ alone; in the former the law has the chief prominence as the ground of our standing before God, in the latter the Person of Christ in heaven.

The scriptures which are to be examined will decide this question for us. Those which relate to our title to heaven and our place before God seem most suitable to be considered first, and afterwards those which speak of justification and of the work of Christ and His obedience in death; for the strange supposition upon which this doctrine is, for the most part, built, is, that Christ's obedience to the law alone deserves to be called "active obedience," whilst that which He rendered in dying is in contradistinction and as if of a lower order, termed "passive," and the conclusion

drawn from this, is that the former alone could procure for us, anything of an active or positive character.

The first effect of the work of Christ therefore which has to be noticed as displaying its value, is the way in which it brings us near to God, not only as being the means of securing even now, our eternal acceptance before Him, but admitting us in title and enjoyment, so far as the measure of our faith reaches, to the same privileged access to His presence that we shall have hereafter as saints in glory. This of course disposes of the notion, happily for the most part abandoned among Christians, that we have to wait for the day of judgment, in order to have our ultimate condition settled, or to know how we stand with God through time and in eternity.

It is to be feared, however, that though it is generally admitted amongst evangelical Christians, that acceptance is a thing to be known here, through faith in the word of God and the witness of the Spirit, yet that there is in some minds a lack of the apprehension of that certainty with which the word of God speaks respecting this, viz., that having once come to God, the soul is accepted of Him, with whom there is "no variableness nor shadow of turning," for ever.

We shall find there, that Christ has already gone through the judgment of God for us individually and for our sins, and that in consequence we are already brought to God and accepted by Him as to our persons, instead of having to wait for the judgment day. For that judgment having been fully endured by Christ, when He suffered on the cross, there is no more remaining for those who believe. Thus the Apostle Peter says, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh." (1 Peter iii. 18.) It is this suffering for sins "once" by the Just One for the unjust—not in His life, but when He was "put to death"—which has answered and settled the question of sin by His having borne all the suffering due to it under the hand of God. This enabled Him, who so suffered, to bring us to God, who has already received us according to this title which Christ has so gained to present us to Him. For He took our place before God and what was due to us that we might have in exchange what was due to Him and His worth, instead of eternal misery, the just desert of our sin. Thus He brings us to God, according to the value of what He has done and suffered for us.

In Hebrews xii., the Apostle Paul, drawing a contrast between the law and the gospel-Mount Sinai with its judgment, and the blessings of Christianity-says, "Ye are not come to mount Sinai," with its curses and condemnation, but "ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 22-24.) without waiting till we are actually glorified, the apostle declares we are now put in possession of all these blessings, our title to them being, as this shows, absolutely complete Hence faith enables us to say, these are our already. rights and privileges in the sight of God: for they have been already presented to us, and we, by faith, introduced into them, inclusive as they are of all the honours and

glories and blessings of the redeemed. But not only we do not wait for a future day to be brought to or associated with mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the firstborn enrolled in heaven; but, through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel, we are already "come to God the judge of all;" and He who is such, has now accepted us and welcomed us into His presence for ever; for what He has done as Judge of all, through the efficacy of the blood of Christ, is absolutely final and unchangeable.

Besides this acceptance and presentation of our persons to God, according to the efficacy of the precious work of Christ, we may learn from the last passage and others which will be adduced, that it has acquired for us, in anticipation of our future position and privileges, a place of special nearness and access to His presence. Doubtless, we look forward to the time when we shall be presented, body, soul, and spirit, "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy;" but as we have seen that there is a sense in which we do not wait for a future day for a partial realization of it, so we shall find, with the corresponding truth of the nearness to God, to which we are called.

The Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, after treating of man's natural condition of distance from God, and reminding them that they were both morally and nationally far off from Him, says, "Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. ii. 13.) This nearness to God being due to the efficacy of the blood of Christ, is nothing

less than eternal nearness, and what we shall enjoy as our portion in heaven, and which even there will be reckoned our brightest and most precious privilege.

The apostle, after showing how peace has been made, goes on to say, "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father:" and again, "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him." (Eph. ii. 18; chap. iii. 12.) In like manner, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh . . . . . . let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." (Heb. x. 22.) What blessedness there is in knowing that God would have us there near Himself, for He has made the way for us into His presence, and rent the vail in the death of Christ, in order that we may approach (sin being put away) consistently with His glory. Such statements as these, "access with confidence," "boldness to enter into the holiest," coupled with the invitation "to draw near," show us unmistakably that God delights in this exercise of His grace towards us, as displayed in bringing us into the holiest; and in the witness, which the admission to this privilege gives, of the value of the blood of Christ in His sight. He would have us, therefore, accept the place He gives us, according to the gracious intention of His heart, as unreservedly as it is bestowed; and make use of it without fear or hesitation, for He has Himself provided the means of our approach, and it is His word which says to us, "draw near."

All this is of great importance, so far as the peace and comfort of the Christian is concerned; and however much

his faith may fall short of the full apprehension of it, this does not interfere with the place God has really given him already for the sake of the work of Christ; though when rightly understood and entered into, he can glorify God for it, whilst it attaches his heart to Him through whom it has been acquired. This was not the case under the law, nor even during the lifetime of our blessed Lord, who expressly tells His disciples, when referring to His resurrection and the consequent indwelling of the Holy Ghost, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John xiv. 20.) And the apostle says of those who were under the law, that "through fear of death," which had not then been overcome, they "were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Sin also, not having been atoned for, nor the offering accepted, God could not admit to the same nearness, or give the same liberty of approach to Himself as He did subsequently, when, Christ having offered Himself without spot to God, the rending of the vail typified the blessed change which had taken place in this respect, and the intimate access to Himself to which His saints were now admitted. (Comp. John xvi. 23-25.)

We affirm, then, that we have the same acceptance, the same nearness, the same liberty of approach to God now, that we shall have in heaven, though the measure in which this is realized by us is infinitely feeble compared with what it will be then. But our title to these blessings is as good now as it will be then, and the Holy Ghost has been sent down from Christ in heaven, to enable us to enter now by faith into the enjoyment of this position, which will be our everlasting delight in glory in the presence of God.

That our final acceptance in glory before God is due to the same cause as our present blessing, is distinctly shown in the Epistle to the Colossians, to whom the apostle thus writes: "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; and you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." (Col. i. 20—23.) Here the ultimate presentation of the saints in full eternal acceptance, "holy, unblamable, and unreprovable" in the presence of God, is ascribed to the sole sufficient efficacy of the death of Christ, and that in the plainest and most unequivocal terms, "in the body of his flesh through death."

The next passage, which may be cited in confirmation of this. carries us, in the vision of the Apostle John, directly into the place where redeemed saints are seen in heaven before the throne of God. "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number of all nations. and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice saving, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev. vii. 9, 10.) Such is the position of glory and triumph before the throne of these redeemed. who give the glory of the salvation they enjoy to God and the Lamb, that is, Christ who had died for them. are not left to conjecture even from this, what is their title to the place they occupy, for the statement of the elder in reply to the enquiry, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" settles this beyond the possibility of dispute. "These are they which have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." (Rev. vii. 14.) This declares that both the whiteness of their robes and their place in heaven before the throne are to be ascribed entirely to the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb.

Let us now turn to Revelation v., where no man is found worthy to open or to look upon the sealed book in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne until the appearance on the scene of One who is styled "the Lamb as it had been slain." who is seen in the midst of the throne. Upon the signal being given by His taking the book, all in heaven and ultimately all creation own His title and His worthiness as the Lamb slain; i.e., as the One who had suffered and died for the glory of God. So that we have His place on the throne, as well as the portion of glorified saints redeemed to God by His blood, and His right to everything in heaven and earth ascribed to the sacrificial value of His death; and this is shown, not only by the place and action of Christ Himself who (in answer to the · challenge of the angel, "Who is worthy?") appears in this character on the throne and takes the book, but it is, moreover, distinctly witnessed by the lips of the enthroned elders, all the angelic hosts, and finally all creation. us listen for a moment to the language of the elders whilst they fall with their harps of gold and vials full of odours before Him, celebrating His title, "Thou art worthy to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," Or again, to the voices of ten thousand times ten thousand of angels around the throne, who carry on the tribute of praise commenced by the redeemed on His taking the book out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," as His taking the book shows that He is about to do. The praise of creation re-echoes whilst it closes this glorious recognition of the title of Christ, once humbled and rejected here, which God Himself delights to hear and heaven alike to render. Is it not strange that this worthiness thus owned and proclaimed as giving the very highest title and place in heaven—which is the means of reconciling all things in heaven and in earth (Col. i. 29), and removing the defilement of sin from all creation, (Heb. ix. 23, 24,) restoring all to God and bringing all into blessing—is denied by sinners upon earth to give a title to heaven at all. In the face of such testimony, that of God Himself who owns the Lamb as it had been slain, by giving to Him the sealed book out of His own right hand, that of all the redeemed, glorified saints in heaven and all the angelic hosts before the throne of God, the opposition of all human authority that ever existed could be of little weight.

But further light is afforded as to the nature of our title to heaven, in Hebrews ix., where the apostle refers to the great transaction performed every year, when expiation for sin was made by the high priest of Israel entering the most holy place, and sprinkling the blood upon the mercy-seat.\* This maintained the connexion between God and His people

\* This sprinkling the mercy-seat, which was the covering of the ark, with blood, shows that the fact of the tables of the law being placed within it had nothing to do with justifying the people of Israel, for God could not have required atonement to be made upon that which justified. It was a type of Christ, who says of Himself, "Thy law is within my heart;" but of what He was personally, and not in reference to His standing before God for others.

for the year, but had to be repeated as often as the year came round, "because it was not possible that the blood of bulls or goats could put away sin." The place where the blood was put shows us typically, in the most striking way, the value that God attached to the blood of Christ. mercy-seat was nothing less than the throne of God, in the midst of His people, and Aaron was not to approach it without blood, for God had said, "I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." (Comp. Exodus xxv, 22.) By this ordinance God signified that He must have always under His eye and upon His very throne, the blood, as the sole ground of His dwelling among His people and their intercourse with Him-however partial and imperfect in that dispensation such intercourse might be. The blood being put upon the throne of God, shows that it met and answered all the claims of the divine glory and majesty, for it must have been suitable to the place on which it was put, or it would not have been sprinkled there, and thus have been the foundation of the relationship existing between God and His people. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle tells us, that all this typical action has been fulfilled by Christ, who "being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made. with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. ix. 11, 12.) For, as we learn in the same chapter, it is "heaven itself" thus prefigured into which Christ has so entered. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Ver. 24.) The redemption thus

accomplished by Christ by His own blood is not, as we are here told, temporal, but "eternal," and in consequence needs no repetition, as the use of the word "once" also shows. Hence the apostle, in chapter ix. speaks of the way into the holiest of all, which was not made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing, being now laid open for us, and in chapter x. he exhorts us to draw nigh to the mercyseat, "having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," through the veil which has been rent by His death, to invite our entrance. The holiest, into which Christ has entered by His own blood, and where He appears for us, is, as the apostle has said, heaven itself, which has become consequently the place of our worship and intercourse with God. If then the throne of God has so honoured the blood of Christ, and proclaimed in this way to us its value, God Himself inviting our approach consequent upon its being sprinkled on it and on the conscience, and if we have the title to enter heaven now by faith and worship there in Spirit, it is evident that the denial of its power to confer a right to enter heaven at all, is a miserable undervaluing of the blessed privilege which its preciousness in God's sight has procured for us, as well as of the way in which He has been glorified by it.

After the clear and unequivocal testimony of these scriptures, it seems needless to quote any more to show upon what ground we are entitled to a place in heaven, and not only that, but to a place the highest and nearest to God in which creatures can stand; for we see, from the position of the elders in Revelation v., that this precious blood of Christ has conferred on saved sinners the privilege of greater nearness to the throne than the angelic hosts. It has been pleaded, and justly, that they love God and their

neighbour perfectly, though certainly not by an external law, but by constitution of nature. But there the angels are "round about the throne and the beasts and the elders;" that is, they form an outer circle, and are necessarily further off from the throne. Nor do they sit upon thrones or wear crowns upon their heads, as kings and priests to God, honours reserved exclusively for the redeemed, the world to come not being put in subjection to angels.

But the reader will look in vain through the word of God for any evidence that the obedience of Christ to the law is our title to heaven; there is no statement of the sort to be found there; and, after being told in the Revelation that it is the blood-washed robe that entitles a sinner to be before the throne of God, what warrant is there for saying that anything else is needful, in the absence of one distinct passage to that effect?

### CHAPTER II.

## THE VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST, AND ITS RESULTS.

It is quite evident, that what has been adduced, is utterly irreconcilable with the view of the death of Christ having a "negative" value, or giving a "bare pardon and nothing else;" but we may further examine with the same object the definite statements of Scripture respecting the Levitical offerings which will have more weight on this point, because they depict before us in a manner suited to our comprehension, the way in which God Himself looks upon that blessed work of Christ. In fact, He tells us by means of them what is His own estimate of it, and they are constantly so applied in the New Testament.

These sacrifices are referred to as a whole in Hebrews x. and the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ is contrasted with their insufficiency to put away sin or give peace to the conscience. In making this contrast the Apostle quotes Psalm xl., which describes prospectively in the language of Christ the thoughts of God respecting those sacrifices, their intrinsic weakness, and the consequent offer and action of the Son in taking flesh, to fulfil the will of God in accomplishing our salvation. Now there can be no doubt that as regards the position assumed by Christ on His coming into the world, of which this psalm also speaks—His lowly subjection as a servant, having His ear opened, and

undertaking the fulfilment of the law—was most important, but not as forming an integral part of that work by which we are saved, which is the subject of Hebrews x. The apostle, therefore, when treating of our salvation and the bearing of Christ's coming into the world in order to effect this, omits that part of the psalm which refers to the law, even though in the psalm itself, it forms a part of the same prophetic expression of the Spirit of Christ, touching what is proposed by the Lord, when assuming the body prepared for Him.\*

In the great work undertaken by Christ on entering into the world, His chief purpose was to meet the whole mind or counsel of God respecting sin and our sanctification, or setting apart to God in full acceptance as worshippers, everything from beginning to end respecting our being perfected in the presence of God, being taken into account. But how was it done, and where? By "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." God had neither desire for, nor pleasure in the offerings made under the law, but a body being prepared for Him, Christ says, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;" and the apostle adds, "by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." So that looked at from the eternal point of view from which our acceptance is there contemplated, the apostle brings not the life of Jesus forward, nor His having the law in His heart, but the full, perfect, and everlasting accomplishment of the will of God in all its infinite perfection, by the offering of this body so

<sup>•</sup> The reader must refer for himself to the passage in the Psalm, if he would see the difference here noticed, and how the apostle, in the Hebrews, connects so distinctly the purpose of our Lord's birth with the cessation of all sacrifice by the accomplishment of His own.

prepared, and which He assumed for this end, "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."\* (Heb. x. 14.)

This is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the incarnation is so distinctly referred to, but the object for which He takes this body is declared by Himself to be in order that it may be so offered up when He comes into the world, to supersede all the offerings of the law by His own, and to fulfil the will of God respecting our being brought nigh to Him, the life He lived on earth in this body being completely dropped out of view as not having immediate reference to this object. All this, moreover, is according to counsels which existed from all eternity, as he says, "In the volume of the book it is written of me." (Heb. x. 7.) Whether, therefore, we consider the eternal nature of these counsels—the one by whom the fulfilment of them was undertaken and afterwards accomplished—the glory of the divine will thus perfected, or the losing sight of everything else in effecting all this—the work of Christ in His death upon the cross is put in the most exalted place possible and everything is attributed to it, and so far is the obedience thus rendered from being treated as merely passive obedience, that it is on the contrary represented as the result of the highest and most perfect devotedness on the part of the Son to the will of God, so much so that that which is in this unscriptural theology called in contrast with it "active obedience," is not so much as named; but the "offering of



<sup>\*</sup> The setting apart (sanctification) or consecration to God, so frequently alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews as accomplished by the blood of Christ, is further illustrated by what is said in chapter xiii. 12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the camp."

the body of Jesus Christ once for all," with the assumption of this body for this purpose, is the whole obedience in view in the passage. This corresponds with the end which that blessed One had ever before Him, as He says Himself elsewhere, looking forward to His death: "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour;" (John xii. 27;) so that instead of confounding His death, as some have done with His life, as if they were all one and of the same propitiatory character and value, His own statement distinguishes His death as the great object for which He had come—and come to that hour, through varied forms of the world's evil and Satan's power.

When the flood had destroyed the old world and its inhabitants, and Noah emerged from the ark, which had carried him safely through its waters, to enjoy the restored beauties of the new world, we are told "he built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar." doing this Noah showed—as Abel's sacrifice had done before, with reference to his own personal acceptance—that he recognized that sin had come in, and death as the consequence of sin, and that redemption was needed; for the Lord had taught, in addition to the loss of Paradise and the sentence then pronounced—that life, the earth, and all other blessings, had been forfeited by the sin of man. is in the acknowledgment of this, that he offers on the altar, not only what might be suitable merely for himself, but of every clean beast and of every clean fowl. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;

neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." And God blessed Noah and his sons." (Gen. viii. 20-22; ix. 1.) This covenant with the earth now made by God-the blessing He bestowed upon Noah and his sons-and His promise as regards the future, that He would not again curse the ground for man's sake-are all described as effects of Noah's sacrifice, which, being typical of the offering of Christ, ascended as a sweet savour to God, and reached His heart. All being put on this ground, was sufficient to change the aspect of the whole scene in God's sight, from one of defilement and consequent curse and judgment, to one of acceptance and blessing on His part, and enabled Him to establish His covenant with man and the earth, upon which it subsists to this day. Such was even the prospective efficacy of this blessed sacrifice as applied by God to the external condition of the world; the proof of how He delighted in it and of its positive value before Him, even so long a time before it was actually offered. In after ages, when He established His worship among a people set apart from the nations for Himself. He had the value of this sacrifice—as the means of approach to Himself, and the ground and centre of all worship-perpetually kept in view throughout successive generations by means of types and shadows, by daily and weekly, monthly and yearly offerings; indeed, concerning the altar of burnt-offering, the direction was "the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall never go out." (Lev. vi. 13.) For he chose to have the prospect of this sacrifice, and that which witnessed the efficacy of it, always under His eye. Thus, the eternal counsels, the position of

the world as it now stands, the ordinances prescribed of God on His chosen people as the manner after which He was to be worshipped, agree in impressing on us the same great truth, viz., the value which God attaches to this sacrifice, and how far He has been from regarding it as merely "negative" in its effects.

When it is said that the Lord smelled a sweet savour, or a savour of rest, in the sacrifice of Noah, and said in His heart, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," the peculiar character the sacrifice of Christ had in the sight of God—going far beyond the mere putting away of sin—becomes apparent in the full satisfaction which the thought of it afforded to His mind; so that He who had said before that He was "grieved at his heart" at the condition of man, and the state into which the whole earth had been brought by him, now finds something to obliterate the remembrance of this sin and folly, which had occasioned Him even to regret He had made man on the earth.

The language of this passage may remind us of what the Apostle Paul says, in addressing the Ephesian saints, "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (Eph. v. 2.) The reference of the apostle in this, is evidently to the offerings under the law, which were of "sweet savour," in contrast with those which were for sin. But we will first examine the latter, (the sin-offering,) for even in them we shall discover, in order to guard against a supposition so deteriorating as that they were merely "negative" in character, that whilst they distinctly express the dealings of God with sin, and what it was in His sight,—even when His own Son was

under the imputation of it for our sakes on the cross,there was always a part, the choicest part, of the victim taken out and burnt upon the altar; and the remainder, on the great day of atonement, was burned "without the camp." (Heb. xiii, 11; Lev. xvi. 25-27; iv. 8, 10, 13; compare also Lev. vi. 25-30.) The burning outside the camp—the entire consumption by fire there (Lev. vi. 30) mark the severity and extent of the holy judgment of God against sin, with which the victim was looked on as identified, and the reality of distance from God when "He who knew no sin was made sin for us;" whilst the full answer to the justice and holiness of that judgment-in all the feelings and thoughts of Him who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God-is expressed in the burning on the altar of the choicest part; and at the same time is seen how acceptable Christ was in doing this, and how precious to God was that perfect devotedness to His glory which led Him to take this place, and even to be made an offering for sin, in order to glorify God. over, if the man who burnt the sin-offering outside the camp was defiled because sin was there, the sin-offering in itself, even in its mere ordinary use, was so exquisitely holy, that it had the effect of sanctifying everything that was brought in contact with it; and the directions and restrictions concerning where it was to be eaten, i.e., the holy place, and the persons who were to partake of itthe sons of Aaron only being allowed this privilege "by reason of the anointing," (Lev. vi. 25-30; Numb. xviii. 8, 9, 10,)—are all designed to point out its "most holy" The burnt-offering (which, with the peaceofferings and the meat-offerings) were those of specifically "sweet sayour," give us that aspect of the work of Christ

in which we see the highest display of His love, obedience, and devotedness in offering Himself up on the cross to glorify God.

The man that sheds his blood or lavs down his life in any cause, or for any human motive, such as love of country, &c., is supposed to give the greatest possible proof that he can render of devotedness to it. But when Jesus died to glorify His Father in putting away sin, bringing man back to God, and destroying Satan's stronghold, all the power of the world and of Satan, and even the judgment of God and tasting death under it, lay in the path, so that every principle and motive of His heart was thoroughly put to the test; and the perfection and truth of all that was in it towards God fully manifested, in a way God could not but infinitely appreciate and accept. is why the burnt-offering stands first in the list of offerings, (Lev. i., v., vi.,) because it expressed not so much\* what the sinfulness or guilt of man required. (though, as we have seen, there was that also in the sacrifice of Christ,) as the fact that Christ could not so offer Himself without doing a great deal more, and awakening a delight in Him to whom the offering was made, that shall never pass away. To shew this also the victim was wholly burned on the altar, and called, "An offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord;" words repeated after each variety of victim that could be accepted as a burnt-offering. (Lev. i. 9, 13, In many passages of the New Testament the prin-

\* The idea of atonement is not, as we see from Lev. v. 4, excluded from the burnt-offering, for it typified that which is the ground of acceptance of men who were sinful, and this could only be through death. The sprinkling of the blood upon the altar, tells how alone God could righteously receive such into His favour, or admit hem into His presence as worshippers.

ciple of the burnt-offering is found: "when he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," for the last time; (Luke ix. 51;) when He goes "before" His disciples in the journey so that they are amazed and afraid; (Mark x. 32, 34;) when He devotes Himself, for the glory of God, to the hour of suffering; (John xii. 27-33;) when He arises to go forth to Gethsemane, saying, "That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment even so I do;" (John xiv. 31;) and to meet and give Himself up to those who were about to lead Him to judgment and to death; (John xviii, 4;) and numerous He tells us, in John x. 17, that the value other passages. of the offering consisted in the surrender of His life, being entirely voluntary, and done as an act of obedience to His Father-which is the very principle of the burnt-offering, and fully corresponds to the "sweet savour" of it-adding, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." This obedience, therefore, has the very highest character stamped upon it, being even given as a special reason for the Father's love towards Him who had been from all eternity the object of His love. Thus is made evident how totally false and incorrect has been that reasoning, apart from Scripture, which concluded that the death of Christ, in contrast with His life, was only passive obedience on His part. Indeed, the Scripture exactly reverses this, as the passage above quoted shows, and makes the "obedience unto death, even the death of the cross," the highest expression of obedience, as well as the completion or crowning of the whole. inexplicable that any Christian mind, unless blinded by previous adherence to some doctrinal invention of human origin, could overlook such plain statements, and the beauty

and harmony of the truth they express; or conceive that the Son of God, who "created all things, and without whom was not anything made that was made," and by whom we exist as creatures here in this world, should, when manifested in flesh, have suffered and given up His life, in love for these creatures when fallen, and that that should merely save them from wrath, but give them no title to heaven, or life, or glory!

The more Scripture is weighed, the more it will appear, on the contrary, that a peculiar glory attaches to the cross of Christ, as the sole means of a full display before the universe, of the essential attributes of the divine character in relation to the sin of man; for even to bear this, was the Son of God humbled in order to accomplish that glory. In His bowing to death, the truth and justice of God and the majesty of the divine requirements have been displayed, as well as the holiness which utterly rejected sin, so that He hid His face from His own Son when He Where has love like this been seen and towards those, moreover, who were enemies, (Rom. v. 8, 17,) or wisdom and power, "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth," (1 Cor. i. 18-24,) when man's inability to find out God by his own wisdom, and his helplessness and insufficiency to attain to righteousness had first been fully manifested? And though all had the outward appearance of nothing but weakness and shame, yet that "weakness of God" is stronger than man, and that "foolishness of God" wiser than man. The Apostle Paul may well say, in contrast with those who sought something of their own, something that this world could recognize, to boast of. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me

and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) There was something in that cross in which he could and would glory, in the face of a scornful world, as the infinite display of divine glory in the humiliation unto death of this divine Person, such as never will be seen again and which will shine through eternal ages and be reflected in the salvation and glory of the redeemed; for there, as He Himself said on the cross, that wondrous work was "finished" which was to bring man nigh to God and to be the foundation of eternal blessing in glory. Then was the veil of the temple rent in twain from the top to the bottom, for thus heaven owned the value of that work in the most significant and remarkable way, and the claim which that work had upon it, on behalf of man for whom it had been wrought; declaring also the entire change in the position of things as they stood between men and God, in that this barrier which the holiness of God had required because of sin, between Himself and man as a sinner, was completely swept away. The Holy Ghost could in consequence descend from heaven, to bear witness to the love which was expressed towards man in that work, as well as to the fact, that the exigencies of divine righteousness were satisfied in reference to sin, (Rom. iii. 25,) and that He was now, in the efficacy of saving love, not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also. (Rom. iii. 29, 30.) But this was not all, for this love, besides finding for itself in, and by means of, this work a way to man, has also, as we have seen, opened the way for us (i.e., believers) to God by the same act, i.e., the rending of the veil, so that we draw near in the holiest of all, where God The character of God which had been apparently tarnished by the fall of man, and by the reflection cast upon it through the craft of Satan, then received its public

vindication. It is for this reason that on the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi.) there were two victims provided and lots were cast on them, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scape-goat. (Ver. 8.) What was the meaning intended to be conveyed by the setting apart of this goat, on which the Lord's lot fell, the blood of which was carried into the holiest and there sprinkled on the mercy-seat, but that through the death of Christ for sin all the glory of the character of God was to be fully displayed in the sight of all creation? And this would have been the case even though not a sinner had believed it and been saved, for His Son had died to show what there is in God for man, and love, holiness, truth, and justice have all been harmonized and magnified. But for this sacrifice love and justice must have been eternally at issue, and the manifestation of one could only have been at the expense of the other. Had justice been maintained, all must have been cut off: had love prevailed, (though it would have rather been indifference to sin) where was righteousness? Whereas by the death of Christ both are united in their action, and that in favour of man. The sin of man has thus through that death become the occasion for their display, and for the character of God becoming known before the universe in a way it never otherwise could have been.

Three things will be evident from this, first, that the aspect of God from off His blood-sprinkled throne is now that of perfect grace towards man, which is alike witnessed by the veil being rent,—the gospel sent by Christ after His resurrection,—and the Holy Ghost's having come to make it known; and this grace can flow freely out according to the infinite resources of that which is even called a "throne of grace." God no longer hides Himself behind barriers

which His holiness interposed between Himself and the sinner, but He can display Himself in love to sinners in the gospel which tells of free forgiveness. For love is His nature, as the Apostle John tells us, and this love can have its way now without hindrances being raised by His other attributes, or His character being compromised before His creation by the display of it. Such is the evident meaning of the words of our Lord: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; but how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke xii. 50.)

Secondly. It will appear how defective are the statements concerning the atonement, which represent it merely as something required by the moral government of God, and needful to uphold the laws by which He rules the world. Whereas, by the rending of the veil, as well as by its previous erection and other evidence which has been sufficiently brought forward, it is clearly not only His moral government, but the holy nature or being of God Himself and all His attributes which imperatively required this, in order that sinners might be brought nigh to God. It is true that these attributes are involved in that government, but since the Son has come from the bosom of the Father to declare Him, we have not only God's character as the moral governor of the world revealed, but all His nature and being made known by Him who is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, so that the Apostle John can say, that the "darkness (which existed in former dispensations, and on account of which many things were tolerated which are now forbidden) is past, and the true light now shineth."

Thirdly. The character of God in its justice and holiness has now received not merely a satisfaction or vindica-

tion, as it is often stated, but each attribute has had its bright and glorious illustration and exaltation by the most costly means in the death of His Son.

When Judas went out to make arrangements for the betraval of our Lord, He looks forward to His death and says, "Now is the Son of man glorified and God is glorified in him." Christ has taken the divine glory and traced it a path in the very place of our sin; He has emblazoned the divine character in relation to it, and left nothing but the glory of that character instead of the For that very sin which had before cast its reflection upon the glory of God, now through the death of Christ is the occasion of that glory being brought out into full relief: and the poor sinner who looks at the cross to behold his sins there, in the unutterable conviction of the wrong done to the glory of God by them, may see that wrong replaced by the glory of God through Him who has died under them, love and holiness, truth and justice, majesty and grace all shining out in relation to them whilst, at the same time, they disappear for ever.

Christ, as Son of man, being the accomplisher of all this has gained unspeakable honour to Himself, as the passage just referred to states. As "man" He was "glorified" morally in being the means for the display of the glory of God, and "God was glorified in him." On this account God gives Him, as man, a place in the divine glory, so that that which is His by right in another way He now holds as Son of man. For not merely does He take the glory promised in the coming dispensation when God will "gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth;" (Eph. i. 10;) but even now He is seated on the throne of God as the just

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requital which He has received from the glory of God which is so indebted to what He has done. "If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." (John xiii. 32.) To this also there is evident allusion in John xvii. where, after saying at the commencement of His appeal, "Father, the hour is come," He adds in anticipation of the work He finished on the cross "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," (ver. 5,) making the accomplishment of this work by which God was glorified, the ground on which He now asks to receive that glory, which He had originally with the Father, before the world began.

The same thing may be traced in John xii., where, after saying, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified," He reverts to His death as the means by which that glory must be reached, for without it He must stand "alone." Then surrendering Himself to accomplish the glory of God at whatever cost, in the words "Father, glorify thy name," the answer comes from heaven, from which He anticipates as the result of that death, the judgment of the world in its present state, the setting aside of the power of Satan who is cast out, and that He will draw all men to Him; in other words, the accomplishment of His glory as Son of man in the millennium, besides having His own united to Him in His glory, in that day, symbolised by the ear of wheat risen from the ground in its new, glorious, and fruitful condition.

In Hebrews ii. we have His humiliation as Son of man also alluded to, (according to the testimony of Psalm viii.,)

in connexion with His subsequent exaltation, "He is made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," and afterwards "crowned with glory and honour;" and, as the apostle also tells us, everything is to be put under His feet, that He, as man, may be head over all, (comp. Eph. i. 22, 23,) but he adds, "we see not yet" that part of the prophecy accomplished, relating as it does to what is before referred to as the world to come, which is to be subject to man and not to angels. (Ver. 5-10.) Such is the consequence of His having shed His blood to reconcile all things to God, and His having tasted death for everything, which gives Him a title to inherit all, and places Him as man in the position of Lord over all; thus in Philippians ii. 8-10 we read. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."\* For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living." (Rom. xiv. 9.) All this corresponds with the place which, as we have seen. He takes as the Lamb slain over the whole creation in Revelation v. Even His present position as head of His body the Church, bestowing gifts of the Holy Ghost in the power of the victory He has gained, as well as exalted far above all heavens, is declared by the apostle (Eph. iv. 9) to be owing to His having "descended first into the lower parts of this earth," in other words, to His having taken in death and the grave, the lowest place, in order to gain the title in which we might share with

• These are the infernal things, and therefore are never said to be reconciled though subjected to the authority of Christ as man.

Him both the present effects of this in blessing, as well as His future glory. (Eph. i. 11, 22, 23; Col. i. 20; iii. 4.) Such are in brief some of the wondrous results of the work of Christ, in relation to His glory, ourselves, the world, and creation at large, over which that work has given Him positive claims as man, in a way which otherwise He could not have had, nor His saints either have been called into such association with Him.

Into these things, moreover,—"the sufferings of Christ and the glories (δοξαs) that should follow"—the angels desire to look. They have been, from the beginning, familiar with His title and glories as Creator; but those glories which He has gained by suffering, or acquired by purchase, are new to them, and have a deep and peculiar interest of their own as the result of that suffering. (Compare Luke xxiv. 36, 1 Peter v. 1.) Even heaven itself has taken a new character from this redemption, and one suited to it, and to the redeemed who are to enjoy it. The tabernacle, which, as we have seen, was "the pattern of things in the heavens," and of "heaven itself," (Heb. ix. 24,) according to this new order, had a mercy-seat, and that sprinkled with blood for its throne; and all its furniture was not only sprinkled with blood, but had some typical meaning and use connected with redemption, and suited to those who are called, as consecrated priests, to worship in it. the heavenly city is described as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, which indicates Christ's mediatorial title. It has the throne of God and of the Lamb in it, whose presence fills it with light, and life, and glory, consecrating the whole of it as the temple or divine dwelling-place, whilst it becomes the channel of light, healing, and power to the world below; so that it is heaven, as we have said, in a new form,

whether beheld from within or from without, whilst everything bespeaks redemption in its association with the Lamb; and that God delights to dwell in, as well as to make the seat of His government and glory, that which is all founded on and reminds Him of the death of Christ, in union with whom, as the Lamb, it is sustained and blessed. The angels, who represent the old creation, are seen there, but only as porters standing at the gate of it. Thus wondrously has God put honour on the work of Christ, which men have laboured to depreciate.

## CHAPTER III.

# JUSTIFICATION—ITS ESSENTIAL NATURE; AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

THE Scriptures that must come under examination will show that all the great fundamental principles exhibited in the death of Christ-redemption, propitiation, and substitution—have their place in connexion with, and cannot be separated from, both our justification and the righteousness of God, nor can the obedience of Christ either be excluded. (Rom. v. 19.) But in this obedience, the whole of the life and death of Christ is comprised, without being separated; from His leaving the throne of God and becoming man, to the offering up of His life on the altar, all is looked at as one great whole, for "taking the form of a servant, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil, ii. 7, 8.) The moment we begin to separate, or distinguish the life of Jesus from His death, the language of Scripture universally applies the death, or value of the blood of Christ, to our justification, rather than His life; separately and alone that is never referred to for our justification, whereas His death is repeatedly so used, which shows unmistakably where the justifying efficacy really lies. As to the law, it is never mentioned as the ground of justification in any way.

The dealings of God with the nation of Israel, when He adopted them as His people, and the ground on which He

placed them in relationship to Himself, will materially help to show what His holy nature requires, in order to justify those who though in themselves guilty, are yet to be brought nigh to Him; whilst they serve, at the same time, to illustrate the great truths already referred to—redemption, propitiation, and substitution—and their connexion with the righteousness which God bestows on those that believe.

When Balaam—after having been taken in hand by God, to make him express, what was really in His mind respecting His people—was called by Balak from the mountains of the east to curse Israel, he declared, notwithstanding their perverseness and rebellion, what they were in the thoughts of God—"blessed," beautiful, separated from the nations, and that strength and victory, and ultimate triumph over all their enemies was sure, for God was with them. But the reason for all this is given first—that they are "righteous;" and that, notwithstanding their misconduct, "He had not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel." (Num. xxiii., xxiv.)

This righteous condition of the people, dated from the time that they were brought out of Egypt, having been put under the blood of the paschal lamb. Then it was that God took His place with them, in the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, and manifested Himself for them, in the overthrow of all their enemies in the Red Sea. They were just as sinful in themselves as were the Egyptians, who were destroyed by the hand of God, when He passed through the land of Egypt in judgment. But how could He see iniquity where the blood was put? If God provides or accepts the price of redemption, it must be suitable to His own holy and righteous nature, and a righteousness

equivalent for the sin of man, that by which He delivers him both from the guilt and from His judgment; this price is both righteous in its nature and accords with His righte-Hence Israel could be looked upon from Egypt as a justified people; God could not otherwise have taken His place formally amongst them, or have identified Himself with them as He did. before the tabernacle was introduced, from the time they were put under the blood of the paschal lamb; they then became His recognized people, being taken into covenant with Himself. The same act of judgment that destroyed the firstborn, proclaimed their righteousness in the sight of God, and that God was on their side instead of against them. The Red Sea (type of death and resurrection,) was the definite expression of this. "God was their strength and their song," and he had · become their salvation. He would bring them in, and plant them in the mount of His inheritance, in the place He had made for Himself to dwell in; and Israel could prepare for Him an habitation. Their justification was national, temporal, and external: with us it is individual and eternal. Redemption is accomplished in righteousness. and brings out from the condition of sin into that of peace, justification, and acceptance with God. Hence the express statement of the New Testament, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 24.)

When God fulfilled the desire of His people to "prepare Him an habitation," for which desire redemption gave the title, He shewed again more distinctly, if possible, than before, that blood and nothing else was the ground-work of His relations with this people. For the tabernacle and its vessels, as well as all the people, were sprinkled with it, as

the apostle tells us in Hebrews ix., whilst the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat, and the confession by the high priest of the sins of the people upon the head of the scape goat who bore them away, bring out the great truths of propitiation and substitution so much enlarged upon in the New Testament, and which, as well as redemption, are all found in the death of Christ. What took place on the day of atonement, was after the law had been given and broken by the people of Israel, and hidden in the ark, because they could not stand on that ground with God. But nowhere is the law brought in as the ground of their righteousness or recognized as the reason of God's blessing or presence among them. Redemption in the case of Israel, where everything being only in type was imperfect, was separated from propitiation and substitution, which were brought to light distinctly only when God established His dwellingplace among them. In Romans iv. they are both united in our justification; for redemption by the shedding of blood, and its presentation on high for us, have both been completed by Christ on our behalf. (Heb. ix. 12.) The former is more connected with the justification of the person, the latter with the glory of God, and with the glory of His righteousness on the throne, and what it required.

In this Epistle, which is the great Scripture treatise on the subject of righteousness, the apostle, in chapter iii., brings in the question of the righteousness of God, which he says is "now manifested," contrasting it with the law in a way which shows that he could have no idea of its being accomplished by the fulfilling of the law, even by Christ Himself: "Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without

the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." (Ver. 20-22.) This righteousness of God being "without the law" certainly excludes the idea of the law lending a hand in the completion of it or having any part in it whatsoever, whilst the verse that follows, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," shows positively that what has been paid as a price for our redemption effects also our justification, that that which accomplishes the one, and is admitted by all, to be the blood of Christ, is equally efficacious for the other. The passage continues: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Ver. 25, 26.) Thus not only does God justify through this redemption, but He has a great end in view in setting forth Christ as a propitiation, which is to declare in two ways His righteousness now made manifest; first, respecting "the remission of sins that are past," that is, those committed in Old Testament times, before propitiation was made by the shedding of the blood of Christ, in forgiving which His righteousness was not before evident; and, secondly, to "declare his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;" that is, His righteousness in His present action in justifying a sinner, who comes to Him through that blood; in other words, He has set forth Christ as a propitiation, to be by His death the great means, for the display before the universe of the righteousness of His

dealings respecting sin, now made apparent, whether as regards the ages preceding or subsequent to the accomplishment of that great work.

Certainly the thoughts of men and those of God as expressed in His word on this subject, are very widely opposed, for what to His mind was the grand exhibition and warrant of His righteousness in justifying, which He brings before all His creatures for this purpose, they cannot see to be any reason at all for His doing so!

But besides this, in chapter v. 9 it is said in so many words, "Much more being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;" so that there is no room for dispute in the matter with those who accept the statements of Scripture. The word of God settles absolutely, that what these puritan writers and their modern imitators say, will not justify, in order to substitute something else, is the very thing by which He does justify; and that this precious blood, instead of being negative in its value, or able only to obtain pardon, is that which God delights in as of positive efficacy or meritorious worth in His sight, whereby He accounts us righteous.\*

In this passage and that in Romans iii. "justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," lie the issue of the questions now raised, for in principle all these writers deny justification in its essential nature to the blood of Christ. With them it does not really justify at all, but removes a barrier to justification; "innocence," as they call it, is all that they will allow to it, but then the passage should not have been "being justified by his blood," but, "being rendered innocent, or being made capable of being justified, by his blood." The word of God attributes justification in the fullest sense to this blood-shedding, which will never cease to be most precious in the eyes of God, as the outpouring of the life of His own Son, the most powerful appeal that ever could be made to His righteous nature or to His heart, whatever men may think of it.

One passage more may be quoted from the Old Testament, in the celebrated chapter of the prophet Isaiah, where the sufferings and death of the Saviour are so remarkably foretold. (Isaiah liii.) "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." If this righteous One does justify them, how is it done? The Holy Ghost tells us: by "bearing their iniquities." Impossible! says some theorist; that may procure pardon, but not justification. The Scripture, on the contrary, says, that both are enjoyed by the same means\*-the death and blood-shedding of Christ; for Christ having shed His blood for us, the efficacy or worth of this, according to the infinite value of His person in the sight of God, stands for our justification before Him. Now it seems almost inconceivable how, with passages so plain and explicit upon the very surface of the word of God, people should be found so blinded by their system as to deny that the blood or death of Christ justifies at all! Of what worth can such a system be, that has to be erected upon a supposition, so directly at variance with Scripture?

But to continue—We have to show more fully how it is

Besides this, we have, in several passages, the forgiveness or non-imputation of sins, acquittal, and justification, used as interchangeable or equivalent terms, which shows clearly that Scripture ignores the separation, attempted to be made between them, as well as the different means by which they are said to be obtained. "David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, 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. 6—8.) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth." (Rom. viii. 33; see also iii. 4; v. 16.) "By him all who believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 39.) "I know nothing of myself, yet am I not hereby justified." (1 Cor. iv. 4.)

that the righteousness of God, is brought to bear on our justification; what is its meaning; and to what it stands in relation.

There are three ways in which it will be found that the righteous character, or righteousness of God is involved; 1st. In the acceptance of the work of Christ; 2nd. In raising Him from the dead as the result of that work; 3rd. In the act of justification, in applying the value of that work to the believer.

This work, or blood-shedding of Christ, which God has set forth as a propitiation, or propitiatory, is that which has met the full glory of the divine character, which man, as a sinner, is stated to have "come short of." Divine righteousness has had all its due, its equivalent, so to speak, in the blood of His Son. Tried by this standard, there is enough in this sacrifice, to render this righteousness altogether glorious; so that instead of leaving the stain of sin upon that glory, it is the expression, and leaves on it the reflection, of that which is as perfect as itself. God therefore takes occasion by this propitiation, as has been shown, to declare His righteousness both with reference to past dispensations, and to His present action, in justifying those who believe in Jesus. (Rom. iii. 24, 25.)

This passage gives us the relation, between the blood of Christ and the righteousness of God, displayed toward us in justifying us according to its efficacy, declared in its being put upon the mercy-seat or propitiatory; an act which represents its full value according to the righteousness of God, whose throne the mercy-seat is. But 2 Cor. v. 21 goes further than this, for there we find its relation to the death of Christ, as bearing sin; and that it is not only displayed towards us, or manifested in God's dealings

with us, but that we are "made the righteousness of God in Christ." "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God acts towards Christ, according to what the righteousness of His own character has found in the cross, where sin was borne by Christ. There He drank the bitter cup of divine judgment and wrath, concerning which He prayed in Gethsemane, that if it were possible it might pass from Him. There He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, by this divine righteousness; there, it is said, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief." But the result is added: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sins, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." (Isaiah liii. 5, 10.) This moment stands alone in the history of the universe, and alone in the history of the Son of God. When the holy One was made sin, and treated by God as such; when the just One bore the stroke of divine righteousness for the sinner, and, He who was love and dwelt in the bosom of the Father, drank to the dregs the cup of divine wrath. It is evident by the cry uttered there, the darkness, and the forsaking of God, that there alone, He was under the imputation of sin, or "made sin," for us.

Nowhere else are these solemn indications of the reality of that which was taking place in the soul of Jesus, from the hand of God to be seen, nor does He ever ask that any other cup might pass from Him, which makes this one the more marked. Elsewhere, indeed, during His life, we have all the opposite. He says, He "abode in his Father's love;" "He that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him."

(John viii. 29.) But on the cross, when made sin for us, all is changed: it is all death, and darkness, and forsaking.

Thus we learn upon what a deep and solemn basis the pillars of divine righteousness are placed; 1st. In all that the Son of God could offer to it; 2ndly. In all that He submitted to and bore from it. Such we find in these two passages to be the foundation of the righteousness of God, displayed in its actings toward and on behalf of sinful man in Christ, and embracing both the substitutionary character of His death as well as its propitiatory value. It is now the glory of this righteousness to recognize the perfect, infinite satisfaction and illustration it has received, and which has been rendered to it by One who alone was worthy to do this and to give it honour in doing it.

The words "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin," show the bearing of His holy life as proving Him to be a suitable victim to take our sin upon Himself. because He knew it not; and those which follow, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," in making this the result of His having "been made sin," show that God's righteousness is exhibited—in reference to His having borne it, and all the consequences of it, in death and judgment-in setting Him at His own right hand, and also in giving us a place morally before Himself, according to the value of that which has been done for us. For when all the punishment of our sin had been gone through fully by that holy One, the righteousness of God must of necessity respond to it in this way, in taking Him out of the grave, placing Him, and us in Him, beyond the reach of the effects of the sin He had so borne.

There does not seem even a shadow of reason, for introducing, as some have done, the legal obedience of Christ into this passage. The words "for" and "that" connect the two parts of the sentence as the antecedent and its consequent in the strongest way together, as plainly as language can be made to express anything, and make our becoming the righteousness of God in Christ, the direct consequence of the imputation of sin to the sinless One on the cross.

The same connexion between the sufferings of Christ in atonement and the righteousness of God, may be seen in Psalm xxii. There we are led onward, through all the rage and enmity exhibited by man against Christ, to the brink of those unfathomable depths of suffering He passed through when forsaken of God, who, He says, was "far from' him now on account of the sin He bore, so that he was not and could not be heard. This is what we see unsealed His lips and pressed upon His soul, so that He could not keep silence; for in the narrative of the gospels to all the illtreatment undergone from man, He says nothing; yet He owns here the justice and holiness of God and justifies Him in what He endured. "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." From verse 21, when He has been heard, we have the results in blessing, not negative results, as has been so falsely said, but praise rendered by Christ Himself, with and on behalf of those who are made eternally happy through what He has done-His brethren -the seed of Israel, and finally all the ends of the earth in life for ever. The preserved remnant of Israel shall come and "declare His righteousness" to a people that shall be born "that he hath done this." This wondrous work is God's own act from first to last, and His own righteousness is displayed throughout it. He has dealt with sin, and with Christ on account of it, and He has raised Him from the

dead, hearing and answering Him in righteousness, and blessing others in His righteousness in consequence.

This scripture, therefore, again makes the substitution and all He went through on the cross and the consequent blessing, the expression of the righteousness of God.

Righteousness therefore, as presented in the Word of God—applicable to creatures who are guilty and sinful—is not a return to the condition of innocence, which was the state of Adam in Paradise, who was unconscious or ignorant of evil; nor is it that of righteousness as seen in Christ, who, surrounded and opposed by evil, maintained as man all that was due to God from man, and glorified Him in doing so, in spite of the evil. But righteousness for guilty man is the measure of what was due to the holiness, justice, and majesty of the character of God, being rendered by Him who alone was capable of this in making propitiation and bearing what was due to sin; and Christ having done this, it is impossible that God could do other than justify those for whom it has been done.

It is on this ground that the word of God invariably places our justification, and this alone is suitable to those who are guilty; they cannot be justified on the ground of having done everything right, or be restored to righteousness by the acts of another in this way, when they have destroyed positive righteousness by transgression—but the removal of that transgression according to the immeasurably perfect, just, and holy dealings of God with the sin in the person of His Son on the cross, brings them into righteousness according to the righteousness of the character of God, which has been fully vindicated and exalted in judging the sin to the uttermost in the cross of Christ.

All that was in God against the sin has been exhausted

in the cup that Jesus drank, and the wrath He bore, and the sin exists no more, having been consumed with the sacrifice like the sin-offering of old which was wholly burnt. We are more than defective, we are guilty, and hence the idea of justifying by the mere righteous acts of another's life is unsuitable, and would, if true, make us righteous before sin was put away, as it needed to be by the death of Christ; whereas, having incurred penalty, we could not be righteous except by what is penal having been endured by our Surety, which gives righteousness before God, not by restoring that sort of righteousness which was irrevocably lost, but by taking us out of the condition of condemnation and bringing us, in Christ risen, into a new position in which He Himself now stands by virtue of what He has done. the Scripture, as we have seen, justly connects justification with the resurrection: "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification;" (Rom. iv. 25;) plainly and evidently, this is not justification before the death of Christ by His law-keeping life, but subsequent to, and in consequence of, the full answer which He had given in death to all the evil of our sin in the sight of God, who raised Him up in consequence; this is also called in Scripture the "justification of life," for the life of Christ becomes thus the evidence of our justification.

Our sin and its punishment have been brought to their termination in His death, and our justification is seen in the new position taken by Him in consequence, and in God's acts towards Him and towards us, because of it. Not that His resurrection has in it any meritorious value—that is only found in His death; but it has its value in clearing us according to the full and perfect expression it contains of how Christ Himself is clear of or justified from our sins in the presence of God.

The resurrection, moreover, being the intervention of God Himself in power, to take our Surety out of the region of death and judgment, into which He had entered by reason of our sin, has especial weight in our justification, for it proves God in the most absolute way to be "for us."

In treating on the faith by which Abraham was justified before God, the Apostle draws an analogy between the faith he exhibited in believing in God who quickens the dead. and brings out of the death of the body, a posterity like the stars of heaven, and that which we are called to exercise—and this faith was imputed to him for righteousness. "It was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed. (savs the apostle,) if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 23-25.) Our faith is made to be in what God has done for us; Abraham's in what God had promised He would do; but the principle of resurrection is involved in what God accomplishes, whether for him or for us. Two great acts He has performed on our behalf, of far more striking import than the promise made to Abraham, which are the witness of His entire grace towards us and that this salvation is all His own, delivering Jesus for our offences and raising Him again for justification. But these two acts are all the apostle recognizes in connexion with this justifying faith.

Nothing can be more remarkable than the way in which justifying faith is repeatedly connected with resurrection, and made to consist in believing in Him who, with this end of our justification in view, raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Thus the apostle reasons in Romans x. concerning the righteousness which is of faith, and the way in

which the certainty of it, is brought home to the soul. He says the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above (to afford evidence of sin put away or of our righteousness in Him by that means); or who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead," for the word of God is sufficient to give the certainty of righteousness when it assures of the great facts of the resurrection and ascension, without their repetition before the eyes of each individual. But what saith that word? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Ver. 9.)

Thus the righteousness which the heart is made to recognize upon the testimony of the word of God is made again to relate to the value of Christ, and God having accepted Him and what He has done in raising Him from the dead.\*

Romans v. continues and carries further the argument of the apostle concerning justification, which, as we have seen, is connected with the blood of Christ in chapter iii., and

\* Observe that the apostle is here contrasting this with the righteousness which is of the law, which he says is described by Moses in the words, "Do this and thou shalt live;" but he does not add that the righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, "Christ has perfectly kept the law for you," but refers, as has been said, to the death and resurrection of Christ, alluding to the law only to contrast it with the righteousness of God, which faith recognizes. The idea, therefore, that the expression, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," means that He fulfils it for our justification, is not only not borne out, but excluded by what follows, which puts righteousness on different grounds entirely, and shows that what the apostle means is that Christ terminates the action of the law for the believer, satisfying its claim and bringing in righteousness in a different way.



with the resurrection in chapter iv., in making the application of this risen life of Christ to the believer, a corroborative testimony of justification on the part of God. seems to be expressed in the term, "the justification of life;" for if God not only raises Christ from the dead, justifying Him from everything which He took upon Him, of which this resurrection-life is a witness, but further communicates this life to us, it becomes an additional evidence of our justification, alike in its nature, source, and association; for it is brought out of death and the grave: it is from God who originates, creates, and confers it, and it is enjoyed in Christ the risen man whose life it On this account the Apostle John, speaking of the boldness to which we are entitled, in the day of judgment, says, "For as he is, so are we in this world;" that is, even here we have the same righteousness and life as Christ has, and are thus in God's sight identified with Him. This life in connexion with, and as the result of, righteousness is mentioned four times in Romans v.

Our justification, then, is provided and guaranteed by the character of God Himself, with which it accords and of which it is the expression. He could not do otherwise than accept the work, raise Christ from the dead, and justify us, consistently with what He is in Himself; and thus the righteousness of God is brought in as a party to our justification.

"That he might be just," can have but one meaning, and shows that His character or righteousness is involved in what He does in justifying, and the ground on which He does it. For His righteousness, now that the blood of Christ has been shed, is more established in justifying the believer, than it will be in condemning the wicked. From this, however, it will be evident that this righteousness of God

is not only a party to, but the source of, our justification; for the application of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to us individually, is the result of that blood having been previously accepted, according to the righteousness of God; and it also becomes, as we have seen, the ground on which we stand, in the acts which it has performed towards Christ. Hence the importance of what the apostle says of the gospel, not only that it meets the need of man, but "therein is the righteousness of God revealed;" and that "now," when no righteousness has been found in man, either Jew or Gentile, "the righteousness of God is manifested," and we are "made the righteousness of God in him," for God justifies by, or upon the principle of, His own righteousness. It is not said that this righteousness of God is communicated or imputed to us, (though faith is imputed to us for righteousness,) but it is the whole ground of God's actings towards sinful man in the gospel; that by which He provides all that is needed to justify, and does justify, a sinner; this attribute being so wondrously displayed and magnified in the death of Christ.

It is vain to reason, that the righteousness of God in justifying cannot mean an attribute of God;\* the reply is,

• If the distinction which Mr. Darby has noticed between what is relative and what is an essential quality in the character of God had been observed, the difficulty raised by these objectors would not exist. He says, "I hold no communication of essential righteousness; I hold Christ Himself in His own perfection to be, as now risen, our righteousness before God; but I believe that righteousness is the relative character of God as to good and evil, and that He accepts Christ in virtue of that character, and us in Him; but it would not be righteousness if Christ had not deserved it. To speak exactly, I do not think righteousness an essential quality at all. God is light and God is love—that is essential: but He is not righteousness nor holiness, because these are relative terms. He is righteous and holy."

the apostle so uses it; "To declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just," or righteous, in the justification of the believer; and though we admit that an attribute such as His righteousness, cannot be applied in the abstract to a sinner, it is undeniable that it is involved in His dealings with sinners.\*

Again, the argument that "the righteousness of God" must mean that of Christ, because Christ is God, is of no value, until it has been shown that the word of God so uses it; whereas, not one passage can be brought forward for this purpose, but long reasonings are substituted to the effect that as Christ is God as well as man, what He has done as man in obeying the law may be called the righteousness of God! a conclusion rather wide of the premises, to say nothing of the fact that the Holy Ghost applies it to

\* Bengel, who, as a careful and reverential analyst of Scripture, can hardly be surpassed, understands this point and applies these Passages in the same way. In commenting on the "righteousness of God," (Rom. i. 17,) he says, "It sometimes signifies that righteousness by which God Himself is righteous, acts righteously, and is acknowledged to be righteous; (chap. iii. 5;) and also that righteousness, as it is termed in the case of (when applied) to men, either Particular or universal, in which grace and mercy also are included, and which is shown principally in the condemnation of sin, and in the justification of the sinner; and thus in this view the essential righteousness of God is evidently not to be excluded from the business of justification. (Chap. iii. 25, &c.) Hence it sometimes signifies this latter righteousness, by which a man (in consequence of the gift of God, Matt. vi. 33,) becomes righteous and is righteous; and that too either by laying hold of the righteousness of Jesus Christ through faith; (chap. iii. 21, 22;) or by imitating that (the former spoken of) righteousness of God in the practice of Virtue and in the performance of good works. (James i. 20.) That righteousness of faith is called the righteousness of God by Paul, When he is speaking of justification; because God has originated

something else. Call His obedience to the law, which is the thing in question, "the obedience of God," and the value of this reasoning will be seen; no one doubts the character or value that His being divine gave to all He did, as indeed has been here pleaded with reference to His death, so that there is no question as to His blessed person, but as to what is applicable for our justification and what the Holy Ghost treats as being so, and whether in fact, acts essentially human, such as prayer, obedience, dependence, &c., can be properly called acts of God, because He is God and man, in one person for ever.

Much additional evidence that the meaning here ascribed to the "righteousness of God" is the right one is afforded by reference to the use of the expression, "the righteousness of the Lord" in Old Testament scripture, where it constantly has the sense of God's faithfulness to His character and promises, manifested in His ways toward

and prepared, reveals and bestows it, approves and crowns it, to which, therefore, man's own righteousness is opposed...... Moreover we ourselves are also called 'the righteousness of God.' (2 Cor. v. 21.) In this passage, as well as in the statement of the subject, the righteousness of God denotes the entire scheme of beneficence of God in Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the sinner...... The showing forth ('declare,' English Version) of the righteousness of God was made in the death of Christ. (Chap. iii. 25, &c.)" This passage is understood in the same way by Calvin, as may be seen in the extract given in the introduction, and by the Bishop of Ossory, Dr. O'Brien, in the following remarks upon it taken from page 385 of his work "On the Nature and Effects of Faith:" "Surely it is the fact that Christ was made a propitiatory offering which renders God just, when He passed over sins in the old dispensation, and when He justifies sinners under the new dispensation; and it is the shewing forth of this fact—the setting Christ forth as a propitiatory offering -which proves God to be righteous-manifests His righteousness in this forgiveness."

a sinful people. When Balak sent for Balaam to curse the children of Israel, God, though He had Himself to chasten them frequently for their misconduct, again and again refused to allow anything against them, and turned the curse into a blessing, so that Satan was foiled in his efforts and Balak in his purpose to smite them, and to this He appeals as a proof of His righteousness in His dealings towards them: "Oh, my people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord." (Micah vi. 5.) So Samuel says: "Stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord, of all the righteous acts (or righteousnesses) of the Lord which He did to you and your fathers;" (1 Samuel xii. 7;) and he then rehearses the frequent deliverances God wrought for them on different occasions, when they cried to Him, notwithstanding their sin and disobedience, sending one judge or deliverer after another to save them from the hand of their enemies. (Comp. for the same expression Judges v. 11.) So God declares, in the book of the Prophet Isaiah, that in this righteousness towards His people, He will raise up Cyrus and cause him to fulfil His promised restoration of them to their own land, (see chap. xlv. 13,) and that He will uphold that failing people in this final weakness and distress with the right hand of His righteousness; (see chap. xli. 10;) and David and Daniel both, when confessing sin, apply to God for aid in the same way, on the ground of His righteousness. (Psalm li. 14.; Daniel ix. 16.) Most of these passages refer to temporal deliverance or interference on God's part, such as is evidently desired in Psalm lxxi. 2, 24, "Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to

escape." "My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long, for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame that seek my hurt." (Comp. also Psalm xxxi. 1; xxxvi. 6; cxliii. 1, 2, 11.) This intervention is sought for on the ground of His righteousness towards those who are conscious of their own sinfulness; in the case of David, in Psalm li. it is especially the conscience that is in question, for he asks to be delivered from blood guiltiness, and says that then his tongue shall sing aloud of God's righteousness, which would be displayed in acting according to His revealed character as a God that pardons iniquity, transgression, and sin. This righteousness of God, being manifested in relation to the guilt of which he complains, is another proof that the word of God does not recognize the distinction between pardon and justification, and corresponds entirely with what we have already found in the New Testament.

There is no reason to suppose, judging from this general use of the term, "Righteousness of the Lord," in the Old Testament, that the expression, "The Lord our Righteousness," is any exception or has any different sense, unless indeed that it goes further and takes in the full manifestation of that righteousness when applied to Israel in justifying them as He does Gentile sinners now, by means of the blood of Christ, through which He will be just, and their Justifier as He is ours now, as it is said, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." (Isaiah xlv. 25.)

It is in allusion to this time of blessing for them that they are said to offer "the sacrifices of righteousness." They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness." (Deut. xxxiii. 19; comp. Isaiah ii. 2, 3.) "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burntoffering and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar." (Psalm li. 18, 19.) The nation of Israel will then be put on the same ground before God in approaching Him, and made to recognize the death of Christ as the foundation of righteousness for sinners before God; and this confirms what has been deduced from other passages, that sacrifice is always the ground of righteousness, whether in the past, present, or future dealings of God. Thus Scripture also speaks of the justification of Abel -the first of our fallen race said to have been justifiedaccording to the typical value of the sacrifice he brought. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh." (Heb. xi. 4.) His faith showed itself in offering the life of another in exchange for the life which he knew to be forfeited by sin to the justice of God. This was a righteous offer and God accepted it in righteousness and justified him for the sake of it.

If, then, we are justified by God Himself upon the ground of the substitutionary work and value of the blood of Christ, we cannot require any additional justification, or means of justification: the death and resurrection of Jesus have already settled all this according to divine righteousness, and what need is there of anything further, or of having our defects made up by the living obedience of Christ, as if our justification was incomplete without it, a thought that Scripture does not allow for a moment.

Such seems to be the reasoning of the apostle in Gala-

tians ii. 21, where he says, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." It may perhaps be said that this means by our fulfilment of the law, and that what is contended for is the vicarious fulfilment of it: but the Holy Ghost knew very well the force of the words He was inditing by the apostle, and if He meant only that our fulfilment of the law would negative the value of the death of Christ, He would have said so; whereas the words not only intimate that the death of Christ is that to which the apostle attributes our righteousness—the point we have been seeking to establish—but he uses the fact of its being by the death of Christ to exclude its being by any other means.

It is owing to this, that the endeavour has been made to separate between pardon and justification, and that justification has been denied to the efficacy of the blood of Christ, because it is evident that we do not need to be doubly justified, and if the value of the death of Christ is effective to accomplish this justification which is witnessed and secured by the resurrection, as the word of God positively says, this legal obedience is superfluous for the same purpose. The declarations therefore which we have seen Scripture makes, that the death of Christ justifies, are conclusive on the point at issue.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD. HIS LIFE IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH—THEIR CONNEXION. THE MEAT-OFFERING.

THE doctrinal bearing of the great fact of the resurrection has a cardinal place in the general teaching of the apostles, and one that has certainly been lost sight of in the various systems of theology, which have been prevalent; and this it is which has probably led to the substitution of the legal obedience of Christ in its stead.

Without at all admitting that the death of Christ is "negative" to justify, it will be seen from what has been said already that the moment resurrection is spoken of, it necessarily carries us beyond the idea of bare pardon or acquittal, for though the apostle plainly proves our acquittal by it, he always shows in the language he makes use of that it goes a great deal further, and thus becomes the great witness and illustration of the worth of the sacrifice that has been offered to God.

What the blood of Christ procures, the resurrection formally proclaims on God's part, and we enjoy in consequence and as expressive of this, the moral value which attaches to the present position of Christ and of all God's acts towards Him from the cross onwards, for such is the effect of His having become our Representative before God, taking our place that He might give us His. Hence

justification and acceptance, being measured by nothing less than the position of Christ in heaven, must be of the most complete, unequivocal kind.

There are three ways in which this doctrine of the resurrection is presented to us in the word of God.

First. In connection (as we have already seen) with our justification.

Secondly. As putting us into a new position or standing before God.

Thirdly. As giving us the acceptance of Christ as the risen man in God's presence.

The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians xv.,\* "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins;" but what if He is risen? Our faith is valid, we are not in our sins; God's own act has declared them completely cancelled and put away for ever; the Surety who became answerable for us is freed, and the debt is discharged. But (much more than this feeble comparison can convey) this is done in such a way, by His triumphant victory over death and the grave—which were the consequences of His having taken sin on Him—as to reflect the brightness and glory of this triumph, accomplished by the hand of God Himself, back upon the persons and consciences of those who were to be justified; so the Apostle Peter treats it, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, (like

\* It is in this chapter that the apostle declares what was the gospel that he preached to the Corinthians, "by which also they were saved," "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." But there is no hint at the legal obedience of Christ forming a part of that gospel, though he goes on to show how our title to eternal blessedness and glory is secured.



a Jewish ordinance of external application merely.) but, in its real meaning, the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God." (1 Peter iii. 21.) Here baptism, as emblematical of death and resurrection, is brought forward as an analogous figure to Noah passing through the waters of the flood in the ark, and landing safely after the deluge was over on dry land; so we, in the death of Christ, have passed through the judgment of sin. and in His resurrection have the witness that we are free from it, and in full acceptance before God. Again the same apostle says, He "raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God: (chap. i. 21;) and having "begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (Ver. 3.) So that the Apostle Peter brings forward what God has done in raising Christ from the dead as the witness of our present position and our future glory, in the same way as the Apostle Paul.

In 1 Corinthians xv. it is shown by the latter, that the resurrection of Christ not only gives present acceptance, but carries with it the full final triumph of all those that are Christ's in resurrection glory, and conformity to the image of Christ, who, as risen from the dead, is become the first-fruits of them that slept, and that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This passage contains a summary of heavenly privileges and glory in connexion with the risen Man, the second Adam, and the title to all as well as the place He takes, and what He accomplishes as such, are deduced from, and included in, His resurrection. This is made the key-stone of the arch, upon which faith and hope alike repose. It

assures us of sin put away, of a day of reward to come, of the victory and triumph over death for all that believe, of the removal of it from the sphere of blessing in which God will dwell.

Again, the Apostle Paul says, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. viii. 34.) Observe the gradation in the words "rather," and "even," "also." The apostle boldly challenges the right of any to condemn, and gives successive answers to the charge which might be brought, not from the experience of the Christian, but from the various positions taken by Christ for us consequent on this wondrous work which He has accomplished. Christ has died for him and borne the condemnation of sin in his stead, how can the believer be exposed to it? But more: He has risen again out of it and above it and the place into which it brought Him, and where now is the accusation of sin or the condemnation? Hence he says, "Yea rather, is risen again;" for that proves the clearance from everything in God's sight, and by God Himself; but He continues, "who is even at the right hand of God," where He is of necessity inaccessible to accusation of any kind, and in addition "maketh intercession" about the sin, the judgment of which He bore, and has so risen out of. Each stage adds force to our triumphant vindication from all charge of sin; for the One who took it on Himself and became answerable for it, is now not only risen, but even at the right hand of God, and His position there and title to be there (which God has owned) must be assailed before aught can be imputed now to the believer. In verse ] of the same chapter, we have "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;" not only they are not condemned, but there is no such thing for them; but why? Because they are seen before God "in Christ Jesus." This leads to the second point established by the resurrection of Christ. We appear before God in this risen and glorified Man, who represents us in His presence, and no longer in our old and natural position, that of condemnation through connexion with the first Adam, for we are in Christ Jesus.

This question, which is of the utmost importance, may be thus stated: Is there not such a thing as a new creation, of which Christ as risen from the dead is the commencement and Head, and do we not, as united to Him, stand before God now as in it, and forming a part of it, and therefore no longer, as beheld by Him, in the old creation at all?

It is evident, if such is the case, that Christ must have taken our responsibilities and suffered for our sins, in order to bring us into this new position. This He did, as we have seen, upon the cross, where He exhausted all the wrath that was due both to us as fallen and guilty and to our sin, when He bore it in His own body on the tree, and God has given testimony to this in that He raised Him from the dead. Now if we are in Him before God as so risen, no consequences of the fall or of sin can follow or reach us there. They cannot pass beyond the grave of Christ or enter into the new creation. Moreover, this new creation, which commenced by the act of God in raising Christ from the dead, is entirely of God, proves Him to be altogether for us, (instead of against us,) displaying divine, almighty power on our behalf, which He could not have done, if anything remained against us in His sight. God has come into the scene in divine grace and in creative,

life-giving power, to manifest Himself in this conclusive way on our behalf. He has Himself, with His own hand, broken our chains and set the prisoners free, and brought us into the daylight and the liberty of this new creation, which shall never pass away, and where, as we have said, sin or interruption of His favour and purposes of blessing shall never come.

Now it is undeniable that the word of God so speaks. "If any man be in Christ (it is) a new creation (καινή κτίσιε): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.) "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God bath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where ..... Christ is all and in all." (Col. iii. 10, 11.) But this shows how all is looked at by God. The old manall that we are by nature as connected with the first Adam -has been set aside, and a new man introduced in a new creation, in which Christ is all; i.e., the whole of that which exists before God, and He is "in all." We learn from this expression that having received Christ as our life. our feelings and conduct are to flow from, and be regulated by the standard of what Christ Himself is and nothing less, both in our intercourse with the world and with Christians, and even more, with God Himself. "For ye are dead," says the apostle, "and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 3, 4.) Again, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us

together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) Can words more plainly and conclusively demonstrate that we are no more in our old condition, dead in sins, but seen in Christ, as quickened and taken out of the grave in and with Him, and even ascended likewise. Chap. i. states in addition that we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," and chapter vi. that our conflict is "with wicked spirits in heavenly places." In the first man we were lost, condemned, dead in sins: now we are alive, risen, accepted, and blessed in the Second Man, and that, even where He is, in the place He has taken in the presence of God. God created Adam and set him in paradise in innocence, and blessed him, making him head over the world which He put under Him; but he ruined his whole race and brought it under condemnation, and the curse upon the world which he governed and which was involved in his fall. This same blessed God has commenced another creation in another man, with whom and of whose life, acceptance and blessing, He has made us through grace partakers. Hence the use of the expressions, the first man and the second Man, the first Adam and the last Adam, as though there were but these two heads existing before God, the whole of mankind being looked at as existing in connexion with one or the other. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) In Adam's case the world he was to inherit was made first; in the case of Christ the new creation has begun in His being raised from the dead, and the deliverance of our bodies, and of the creation, will complete the glorious purpose of God. This may be inferred from the statement of the apostle "that in the dispensation

of the fulness of times He will gather together in one (head up again ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι) all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in Him in whom we have obtained an inheritance;" and of this inheritance the Spirit who dwells in us, and by whom we are sealed is the earnest "until the redemption of the purchased possession;" that is, its recovery from the power of Satan. (Eph. i. 14.) This peculiarity, however, must be observed, that the Church does not only come under this federal headship of the second Adam, the posterity sharing in the blessings of the head, as we are taught in Romans v., 1 Corinthians xv., which blessing extends to Jews and Gentiles on the earth during the millennium; but that it stands in a far nearer and closer relationship to the Head of the new creation, viz., that of membership of the same body by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; for God has given Him to be Head (over all things) to the Church, which is His body, the "fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 1-16, 22, 23, &c.; comp. Col. i. 18.) It is evident that the members of a man's body are in much closer connexion with him than he is by descent with his progenitor Adam; so this relationship to Christ is not a mere connection by communication or inheritance of life, but union in one body by the Holy Ghost since Pentecost; "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body;" (1 Cor. xii. 13;) but this subject, deeply interesting as it is, cannot be pursued here.

It will be found that all the passages which speak of union with Christ, or of our sharing His life, are exclusively confined to the resurrection; there exist none which allow any thought of union before atonement for sin had been made, or His life on earth offered up in sacrifice

for us. Our Lord Himself, when speaking of His resurrection, (John xiv. 18, 20.) puts this life distinctly in connexion with it as a yet future thing: "Because I live, ye shall live also," and He breathes on His disciples to communicate it after He was risen, (John xx, 22.) Scripture is everywhere explicit on this point, that there is no union with Christ before resurrection, and that life begins there; "When we were dead in sins (God) hath quickened us together with Christ." (Eph. ii. 5; Col. ii. 12, 13; iii. 1, 4, &c.; Rom. vi., &c., &c.) Indeed the idea of union with Christ at incarnation, which is fundamentally destructive of the truth that Christ gave that life in which He died on earth for us, and which the holiness and justice of God alike render impossible, ere sin had been expiated, is chiefly held, as a definite doctrine, by the followers of Maurice on the one hand and of Pusey on the other; the former, in order to do away with the idea of guilt and the atonement which it required; the latter, in order to bring in the union with His humanity maintained during the absence of Christ, not by faith or in the power of the Holy Ghost, but by means of the sacraments. The words of our Lord Himself expressly deny any union with Himself during His lifetime: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." (John xii. 24.) He might have abode on the earth and have taken the glory of His kingdom, but He must, if He had done so, have stood "alone," like the solitary grain before it is put into the ground to die and to multiply itself. He could not have had others with Him or been united to any: He would have been "alone," but in His resurrection He is the corn of wheat when it rises from the earth in the power of new life, bearing the full ear.

this is only, and as He tells us Himself, after, and in consequence of His death; "if it die, it brings forth much fruit."

It follows from this that there could not be association with Christ in His legal obedience on earth, and that we do not begin to share anything with Him in the sight of God till He is risen, and that all participation with Him must be subsequent to and founded on atonement, and not before it. Previous to His resurrection He came in love to share with man that which was the lot of man; after it He takes man (i.e., the believer) to share with Him His life, His home, His glory. (John xiii.8; xiv. 1; xvii. 22, 23.) His death being, as we have seen, the title by which He does this.

This allusion to His resurrection, comparing Himself to the fruitful blade of wheat, when it springs fresh from the earth, corresponds with the figure used by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 20: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept;" and, again, in chapter v. 23, "Christ the firstfruits;" only that he looks more onward to the final, than the immediate, results of Christ's death and resurrection.

To confirm this, we have the remarkable type in the Old Testament of the wave-sheaf of firstfruits \* that was offered before the Lord, on the morning after the Sabbath,

\* This ordinance occupied a place in the great annual feasts of the Lord, related in their order in Leviticus xxiii., which makes its meaning more evident. That chapter describes the whole typical or ceremonial year in Israel, which was so ordained as to present essentially the ways of God on earth.

First came the passover or feast of unleavened bread with which the year commenced, typical of the death of Christ as the foundation of all that followed—of redemption and its effect in producing holiness. (1 Cor. v. 7, 8.) Then followed the offering of the firstfruits



the day on which Christ arose from the dead. This was the firstfruits of the land, which God had given them, and is, therefore, connected with heaven and the heavenly things which Canaan represents, and was to be brought as an offering to God before they were allowed to enjoy any of the produce of its harvest. "Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God." (Lev. xxiii. 14.) Being brought unto the priest, the direction was. "He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." (Ver. 11.) This waving the sheaf, shows how God delights to have Christ thus presented before Him, as the risen Man; the One on whom, now that sin is put away, His eye can rest with eternal complacency, and that this is for us and our acceptance, is shown by the statement, "He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you."

When our Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene on the morning of His resurrection, He said, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." (John xx. 17.) For God must have His place and His portion first in this,

on the morrow after the sabbath, and afterwards the Pentecostal oblation, which was fixed on the fiftieth day after the waiving of the firstfruits, in order, as we know from Acts ii., to connect the descent of the Holy Ghost and the results of His presence in the Church with the acceptance of Christ in resurrection. The feasts which follow give us the restoration of Israel and the blessing of the Millennium, after the gathering in or completion of the Church, under the figure of the harvest, of which, as we have seen, Christ is the firstfruits.

just as the sheaf was first to be waved to be offered to God, before the harvest was even tasted by Israel, whilst the word "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God" shows that they were accepted in Him as risen, that He had thus brought them into the same relationship and position before God and His Father as Himself. But mark by what offerings this one, so peculiar and unique in its nature, was accompanied: "And ve shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf, a he-lamb without blemish of the first year, for a burnt-offering before the Lord; and the meat-offering thereof shall be two-tenth deals of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savour; and the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin." (Ver. 12, 13.) So that we have in this risen Man, head of the new creation, in whom we are accepted, all the sweet savour of His work accomplished on the cross, (the burnt offering,) and all that of His life on earth, looked at in its general, not its Judaical character, (the meat offering,) as well as that in which He now stands before God in heaven, (the wave offering). Nothing is lost, all goes to make up our standing in the presence of God, or to form a part of that in which we are accepted. He carries into His present position, and thus makes available for us, every thought and feeling of a life consecrated to God here below, the value of His death in devoted self-sacrifice for God's glory. and that life in which He now lives to God and enjoys the unclouded sunshine of His presence, all is combined to make up our acceptance; hence it is said, "Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power;" (Col. ii. 10;) for such is His present title as risen. And again, "According as he hath chosen us in him before

the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love . . . . To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.) "For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 3, 4.) These passages, moreover, show us, that we are partakers in the title, life, acceptance, enjoyment, and future glory of this risen Man, and the apostle dates this, as we have seen, not from His life on earth, but from the grave of Christ, "when we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ." Thus it is that God has given us an eternal place and portion before Himself in and with Christ, to whom He has united us; thus it is that being part and parcel of Christ as the risen Man, Head of His body. the Church, all our interests, destinies, and joys are bound up in Him, yea, are even identified with His, His life being. in us in order to our partaking in all this, as well as we being in Him, as the apostle says, "Christ in you the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27.) But all these blessed truths, and others of a collateral nature, which flow from our being one with Christ, on which the apostle so enlarges in the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, can only be indicated here. and left to the reader to pursue.

Hence it will be seen, that whilst Scripture does not speak of this as the ground of justification, nor recognize any such thing as union with Christ before His resurrection, the excellence of His blessed life as a man on earth in all its perfection and purity, and what He now is in full acceptance before God as a risen and glorified Man in heaven, including the value of His work as the ground of it, all forms an integral part of our acceptance in the

presence of God. But this is for acceptance rather than for justification, and in Christ as risen rather than during His life upon earth, whilst all that He was properly and essentially as man, is included in this view, excepting His obedience to the law, which was for a specific object in connection with those who were under it. (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) In illustration of this, let us turn to the meat-offering, which will give us, in a divine way, the right use of the life of Christ.

The meat-offering is placed in the Book of Leviticus next in order to the burnt-offering, which was the highest in character of the sacrifices, and has this peculiarity, that it was generically the only one in which there was no offering of the life of a victim, no shedding of blood. It was composed of fine flour, the growth of this earth, only with the addition of oil and frankincense; and though not available to put away sin, vet it formed a most important element in the typical, ceremonial worship of the Israelite: it was the prescribed accompaniment of the morning and evening daily burnt-offering; (Numb. xxvii. 2, 5;) of vows. freewill-offerings, solemn feasts; (Numb. xv. 1-13:) at the consecration of the priests, (Exod. xxix. 2.) and on various other occasions; the burnt-offering being seldom without it when it had the character of worship. We have seen how it was associated with the remarkable offering of the sheaf of firstfruits, and the way in which that is identified by Scripture, in its typical fulfilment, with Christ as the risen Man. In addition to this, the offering of the firstfruits, which was waved on the morrow after the Sabbath, is classed with it in Lev. ii. 14-16, as having the same character, which confirms the application of the meat-offering to the manhood of Christ, the same in its essential perfection, whether looked at before or after His resurrection.

It was, as has been stated, the fruit of this earth, the corn of wheat, as our Lord speaks of Himself, but it had this peculiarity, (which contrasts with the offering of Cain, the fruit of the ground the Lord had cursed,) it was mingled or anointed with oil, with frankincense superadded, which last, the frankincense with part of the oil and of the fine flour, was entirely burnt upon the altar. The fine flour marks the perfectly pure humanity of our blessed Lord; and the oil mingled with it, or poured upon it, the action of the Holy Ghost in His nature, in a way in which He was perfectly alone; (Comp. John iii. 34; Lev. iv. 18, &c.;) while the frankincense indicates, how every pulsation of that life sent its sweet purfume up to God, who alone could fully appreciate its true purity, and worth, and entire consecration to Him. But all this mingling of oil, the frankincense, as well as the fine flour, and the prescribed absence of leaven, (the type of moral corruption,) point to the origin or source of this Holy One's nature, which was divine as well as human. Unlike our own-when we enter this world, at a distance from God, the connecting link between Him and ourselves broken by sin, and all its consequences entailed upon us in body and soul—this holy nature draws its character from the divine workman, under . whose hands, and by whose creative energy, it is formed to stand in abiding eternal relationship with Himself as its Author. "The Holy Ghost (said the angel, in reply to the enquiry of the virgin, how the promised child should be born) shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke i. 35.) Gabriel had before announced, that He should be the Son of the Highest, but now, after having detailed the marvellous nature of this conception, these words are added—"therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The same truth is expressed in the reply given by the angel, to remove the moral apprehension from the mind of Joseph that all was not right. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." ('ex reversatos agriov.) Hence, by this overshadowing power of the Highest, and the action of the Holy Ghost, He was, as to His manhood, the Son of God as well as the seed of the woman, for the same expression is made use of to show that the Holv Ghost is the source of this nature, in the reply given to Mary, "that which shall be born of thee:" and in the words, "made of a woman," ex yourses, (Gal. iv. 4;) and this accords with the statement in Hebrews x. 5, "a body hast thou prepared me." Man had defaced the image and likeness of God, in which he had been created, and sin had brought him, besides, under death; but though partaking, as we do, of flesh and blood, there was no trace of sin, nor its consequences, in His blessed person.

The difference between the meat-offering and the Penticostal offering of firstfruits—which typified the descent and subsequent action of the Holy Ghost in the Church, even in its purest state—is very significant, (Lev. xxiii. 15,) for in this last there was to be leaven, the symbol of corruption, with a sin-offering to counteract it, and it was not in consequence to be burnt upon the altar. The directions respecting the meat-offering, where the two are expressly contrasted, are as follows:—"No meat-offering which ye

shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven; for ye shall burn no leaven nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire. As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ve shall offer them unto the Lord, but they shall not be burnt upon the altar for a sweet savour." (Lev. ii. 11, 12.) In the life of the truest and holiest of saints. there are constant traces of the impurity, and of the corruptions of a fallen nature, which the power of the Holy Ghost may keep down, but which still remain, and mingle more or less with every spiritual service; but in Christ there was only what was entirely of God and for God, and could be offered up to God; for this devotedness to the glory of God, which led to the assumption of the form of a servant, by Him who, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," (Phil. ii. 6,) gave its character to the whole, and made that blessed life on earth. from the first moment of it to the last, a sweet perfume ever ascending until the time came for it to be offered up on the cross: "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" (Phil. ii. 8;) and this the apostle refers to there, not in the way of atonement, but like the meat-offering. as the divine and perfect example for us of lowliness and self-emptiness, of which His glorious exaltation is the consequence.

It would be much beyond the limits of this volume, to trace all the beauties and perfections of the life of Jesus as man here below. Whence its nature, what its character and aim, and how, moreover, the power of the Holy Ghost was exhibited in it, has been already stated, and to limit all this to a mere legal obedience is to lose sight of the divine glory of His person, which gave its character to all He did

as man, and to ignore a principal part of the teaching of the evangelists who represent all that God is and all that man could be combined, and picture—on the one hand, the display of truth, grace, holiness, and love—and on the other, devotedness, self-sacrifice, humility, obedience, and dependence, which the law never marked out for, and could not have demanded from, man.

Instead, however, of all this, or any part of it, being imputed to us, apart from His death, like everything else it is only made available for us by His death, for the meat offering was first to be presented by the worshipper at the altar, and then burnt upon the altar; and again and again it is declared to be "an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord; the altar indicates that it was upon the cross, and in death that all the value of His life was presented to render us acceptable; and the fire, that it was the holy judgment of God that searched and put to the test all the holy principles and perfections of the life offered there as a sweet savour. Its being voluntary, or accompanying the burnt-offering, and not offered for sin, shows that its use was not for justification, but rather for acceptance, and, as we have said, one element in the worship of those who are already looked upon as justified persons, or as a part of that which was to qualify the priests for their service.

The last point respecting this offering which adds weight to the remarks already made respecting what Scripture calls "that holy thing," is the sanctity with which it is invested, and even those who had to do with it, or were allowed to be partakers of it. It forms a part of that which is called "the bread of God;" (Numb. xxviii. 2; Lev. xxi. 22;) that which, as a figure, He delighted in and

feeds upon, as indeed He could in everything of this blessed life of Jesus: and in the division which was made of "the holy" and "the most holy things," it is placed among the latter, so that as, with the sin and trespass-offering, no other members of the family of the high priest but his sons, who had been anointed with the oil of consecration, might partake of it, and then only in the holy place, whereas "the holy things" might be eaten elsewhere, and by the rest of his household. "That which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons: it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire." (Lev. ii. 10.) It was not to be eaten with leaven, and every one that touched it was to be holy. "And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat, with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it. It shall not be taken with leaven; I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire: it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as is the trespass-offering." (Lev. vi. 16-18.)

## CHAPTER V.

## SIN IN BELIEVERS AND THE DIVINE REMEDY FOR IT.

Ir is true there is a want in the heart of many Christians arising from the constant sense of the deep corruption and depravity of that fallen nature, which, though renewed, they carry about with them in this world; and there is reason to believe that not a little of what has been written on this subject, apart from controversy, has arisen from the desire existing in the soul to find something that may answer to this want, and the fear of losing what appeared to meet it. But does not the word of God give a better and clearer answer respecting that corruption, and how it is met in His sight? And would not a more distinct apprehension of the provision made by God Himself, for this sense of inbred sin, give far more assurance to the heart than that which has been substituted by man for it?

What does God say respecting the sin that dwells in us, and how He has disposed of it in order to meet the wretchedness it produces? His way has not been to leave us in the misery which the thought that it is still under His eye must necessarily give rise to, even though we had something to patch over it, when painfully sensible of its presence; for the consciousness of its being there, and God seeing it there, would still remain. His word tells us that not only

our sins, but the sin that is in our nature—the tree itself, as well as the fruit-has all been dealt with by Him in the cross of Christ, so that it exists no longer in His sight: He "What the law could not do, in that it sees it no more. was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 2.) Now God in grace, on account of the weakness of the law, through the material it had to work upon, sent His own Son for this purpose, to condemn "sin in the flesh," according to its real demerit. Instead of condemning it in us, or condemning us for it, He has dealt with it and condemned it in the person of His Son; and this He did on the cross, the only place where sin is fully and finally condemned, excepting in the ultimate judgment of the ungodly. Just as the sin-offering was entirely burnt outside the camp, the sin being all consumed with the victim, so has the judgment of God been executed on all our sin in the person of Christ, and it is gone for ever.

Again, we have the apostle's statement in Romans vi. 6, 7: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead (or has died) is freed from sin." Here is the same truth, that our old man has been crucified with Christ. If this is so, it has passed away from God's sight for ever, for Christ is not on the cross now—He is risen, so that the believer is free from it before God. A separation has been wrought by God Himself between what I now am, and my old man, or what I was. The cross, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus stand between me as a believer and my former self, the flesh. So says the apostle also in the Epistle to the Gala-

tians. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I (οὐκότι ἐγὼ), but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

If Paul had been crucified with Christ, there was an end of him as a man in the flesh, and all that remained before God now was Christ, who became the life of the In accordance with this it may be observed that in this passage and at the close of Romans vii., the "I," i.e., the personal pronoun used by the apostle to describe his state before God, is changed in its application from what the apostle was as a man in the flesh, to what he is in his new nature, that God has bestowed; from "I am carnal, sold under sin," to "It is no more I that do it." and "I am crucified with Christ, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God," (Gal. ii. 20,) his personality being now linked to this new life. So in the preceding verse: "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." For the same reason we are said not to be "after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And again, as to our condition before God, though the flesh is in us, we "are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 5, 9.) The importance of this change is very great, for it shows that my personality is no longer identified in the sight of God with my former sinful self, or the sin that exists in my fallen nature, and with which I have daily to contend, but with the life of Christ and the Spirit which He has given, and which dwells in me, as well as with the person of Christ who appears for me at the right hand of God, from whom both proceed, for God has bestowed on us the life and Spirit of Christ to correspond with the position which He has brought us into in Christ, in order to render complete His divine operation on our behalf, and that we may be able to enter into the position acquired for us by Christ through partaking thus of His Spirit who dwells in us, and is our life. Thus the apostle says, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (for it is at once the life of Christ and the Holy Ghost) hath made me free from the law of sin and death." And again, "Christ liveth in me," and, "To me to live is Christ."

In Romans vi. the apostle shows what is the moral power of this new life, by virtue of which we are able to reckon ourselves as being dead and risen in Christ; and hence are called on to mortify the flesh in its affections and lusts. And in chapter viii., the effects of having received the Spirit of God are exhibited, and we are, consequently, said to be "in the Spirit, and not in the flesh."

If, therefore, the natural man, or all that the flesh is,—the sin that is in it or that springs from it,—whether before or after conversion, has been already condemned, and has disappeared from God's sight, and, as has been already shown, we stand before God in this new life, as risen from the dead, where the flesh has no place, and never can come, where is the need of a sort of constant, fresh application of parts of Christ's life on earth, or obedience under the law, to cover our innate corruption or deficiency, as though our position in righteousness before God was not already complete and unchangeable?

Our acceptance in His sight is not affected, and, therefore, it does not require to be made good over and over again in this way; but what is requisite, is that we should seek to walk in practical conformity with this position, according to the repeated exhortations in the word of God, to "walk in the Spirit," and to "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto

God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Where there is practical inconsistency of conduct with this our calling, we have need of the intercession of Christ, which is provided expressly to maintain our souls in the power of it, and to restore them to communion with God, and the enjoyment of these privileges, when this has been lost through our carelessness or failure. "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." (1 John ii. 2, 3.) Thus through this righteous advocacy, and the efficacy of His death, on which it is grounded, with the confession of sin on our part, (1 John i. 9,) the soul is restored to the consciousness of God's presence and favour.

John xiii. shows us, in a scene of marvellous moral beauty, the way in which this is accomplished, by means of the symbolical action of the blessed Lord in washing His disciples' feet; and that in order to cleanse us from the defilement which is contracted through our being still in this evil world, Christ is even now, though in heaven, the girded servant of our spiritual need. This service is undertaken in view of His going on high, with a love that lasts and that follows us "to the end," and with a full knowledge of what we are, and what the world is in which He has left "his own," and how it is fitted by Satan's power to act on the evil that is in our hearts.

Two things are evident in this passage: first, that our blessed Lord, at the present time, concerns Himself with the condition and state of each soul, for the maintenance of its communion with God, and that this is done by His unspeakably gracious dealing with it, from which He does not shrink, whatever the defilement may be; secondly, that what He uses for this purpose is what purifies from

sin, and corresponds, in figure, to that water which flowed from the side of Christ when He hung upon the cross in death. This fact is noticed, and thus commented upon by the same apostle: "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." (1 John v. 6.) That is, there was not only the water to cleanse, but the blood to atone for guilt; for it is the death of Christ that supplies that which is needful to cleanse the soul morally from evil, as well as judicially from guilt, in the sight of God, and by the application of this the soul is brought to see the true character of the sin in connexion with the death of Christ for it, and restored to a righteous estimate of its own failures and of the holiness of God. But, in reply to Peter, who asks, not to have his feet only, but also his hands and his head washed, the Lord is careful to point out, that the man who has been washed previously is looked upon according to what grace has already done for him, and which cannot be undone, as "clean every whit;" and that such washing of the whole person needs not to be repeated. But under the figure of washing the feet, which come in contact with the world, the remembrance of the death of Christ, as that which was needful for sin, and by which alone it could be measured in the sight of God, is brought home to the heart and conscience. The intercession and active operation of Christ in grace towards the soul, indicated by His own act in washing the feet, accomplishes this by the power of the Spirit of God. Thus we learn, in case of failure, not that there has been any loss of our original standing before God, but that which is indispensable is the judgment of the evil, through the action of the word of God upon the conscience, and recovery of communion with God; for the Lord says, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;" and the means used for this purpose is not-His living, legal obedience, which would not at all meet the case, or accomplish the washing or purification of the soul without which it cannot participate with Christ in anything -nor any part of His life on earth by which it may learn its defects, but which will not wash its defilement awavbut His living intercession in heaven and the remembrance of His death accomplished on earth for sin realized in the soul by the Spirit, and application of the word of God to it.

Further illustrations of the principle contained in this passage may be seen in the use of the laver in the Old Testament, where the priests who had been sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil and entirely washed on their consecration, washed their hands and feet when they came into the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they approached the altar to minister, (Ex. xxx. 17, 21,) and in the ashes of the red heifer (Numb. xix.) which were for a similar purpose, kept as a purification from defilement for the congregation of Israel when passing through the desert. The victim in this remarkable ordinance was killed outside the camp and then entirely burnt, even inclusive of the blood (excepting that which was presented to God being sprinkled before the tabernacle), and the ashes which remained were laid up in a clean place outside the camp to be used with running water in sprinkling one who had touched any unclean thing. The important features of this type are, first, the required characteristics of this victim which was prescribed to be "without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke," typifying the holy nature of Christ, where the stain, the moral weakness,

and the service of sin were unknown; next, the way in which, unlike every other offering, the blood with the whole victim, and all that pertained to it, was burned outside the camp, (for it was a sin-offering,) then the whole of the ashes so produced were laid up for future use; and, lastly, that no one who touched a bone or dead body was allowed to enter the camp, unless he was twice sprinkled, on the third and seventh days, with this water of purification, upon pain of being cut off from among the congregation, because he defiled the sanctuary of the Lord. we learn the jealousy of divine holiness, and, at the same time, the gracious provision made in the death of Christ for our need, whilst maintaining this holiness; and that there is power—in the remembrance of the death of Christ and of the value of His blood, revived in and applied to the soul by the Holy Ghost, whose action is represented by the running water—to remove all uncleanness, such remembrance alone sufficing for this purpose, according to the holiness of God.

Thus all the passages which expressly treat of failure or sin in the believer agree in making the death and intercession of Christ the sole means of restoration; but where does the word of God recognize that our failures are met or covered in detail by their corresponding opposites in the life of Christ on earth? Where is there any passage alluding to such a doctrine as this given to us by an upholder\* of these views when commenting on Romans v.? "Here we have evil deeds met by good deeds." "The holy nature and the sinless walk of Christ were intended as a substitute for your unholy nature and numberless shortcomings." "Earthly sin covered by divine perfection."

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Reposing in Jesus." By G. W. Mylne.

"What are all our transgressions compared with the fountain of pollution within—that heart of man whence every sin in thought, word, and deed is said to flow?" (Mark viii. 21, 23.) "Our very existence is sin, a standing transgression, inasmuch as it is our continued departure from the mind of God. Even if this inbred sin found no vent in the deeds of the flesh, it could not be borne by Him who is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' (Hab. i. 13.)" "What then would become of our guilty souls, if we had not the sinless nature of Jesus to cover our inbred sin?"

The passage in the Epistle of John, before alluded to. treats indeed of sin in believers, exhorting them so to walk in communion with God in the light that they may be kept from it. The apostle says distinctly, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Can anything be more gracious than this? We should have supposed that sin might have excluded us from the needed sympathy of Christ on high; on the contrary, instead of closing His heart against us, it awakens His advocacy for us, in order that our souls may be restored. Thus Peter found; for Jesus said even before his fall, "I have prayed for thee." His love anticipated the evil and the consequent danger to his soul of his faith failing; and he looked upon him to bring him to the consciousness of his sin and of its nature, reviving, at the same moment, the thought of His love, which had been so wronged; and Peter goes out and weeps bitterly. this we have an express instance of the Lord's dealing with sin in the believer, by His intercession, first meeting the case before God, and then taking up the condition of the individual soul. The application of His word by the Holy Spirit for the discovery of the sin in us, answers the purpose now of the look which broke Peter's heart. The apostle

adds, "And he is the propitiation for our sins;" so that there is nothing like Christ's fulfilment of the law to "cover earthly sin" here; but again, the propitiation or propitiatory sacrifice, made by the death of Christ, is brought forward as the remedy for "our sins;" i.e., the sins of believers.

The Apostle Paul also, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, refers to this needful judgment, by the word of God, of the evils existing in the heart. He says, "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" (Heb. iv. 12;) and then reminds us how "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Ver. 5.) Does he then say, 'We have the sinless nature of Jesus to cover our inbred sin, &c.?' By no means; but he encourages us with the thought that "we have a great High Priest, Jesus, (who saves from sin-comp. Matt. i. 21,) the Son of God," to sustain us, who has been appointed to meet the need of the weak and sinful soul, and that we have, moreover, a throne of grace or blood-sprinkled mercy-seat to go to with boldness, where we may obtain mercy for our failure, and grace to help our feebleness.

Never does the word of God speak of "evil deeds met by good deeds." It says everywhere, in the plainest terms, the contrary: "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 23.) And again, "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) "It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.) If these defects and shortcomings—to say nothing of "evil deeds"—are sin in the sight of God, there is no other way of meeting them than by the shedding of blood, and to allow the thought

they are not so, is to lower or destroy the holiness of God, and that which He expects should be maintained in those brought nigh to Himself, as well as the standard which the law itself gives concerning sin. There certainly lurks in this teaching the notion that shortcomings are something less than sin, and therefore require something less than death to meet them.

Again, the righteousness of Christ on earth being "an effectual substitute for their responsibilities, a more than sufficient equivalent for their lack of service." The moral effect of such doctrine as this is very questionable, and has a tendency to relax the sense of responsibility and diminish the consciousness of moral culpability.\* The word of God allows of nothing less than the death of Christ in all its solemnity and value for failures of every kind, even for sins of ignorance, as may be seen in Leviticus iv., and the

\* The following extracts from a little work entitled, "The Gospel Pointing to the Person of Christ," by the Rev. A. Bonar, will show the extraordinary use made of these sentiments when they come to be morally applied: "I confess more particularly the sin of my thoughts. 'The imagination of the thoughts of my heart have been only evil continually.' (Gen. vi. 5.) But I discover Him who not only could say that by death He had perfected the atonement for me, but who also obeyed my obedience in the thoughts of His heart, saying, 'Thy law is within my heart.' (Psalm exix. 8.) I confess the sin of my duties. But if it be the sin of my careless worship in the sanctuary, I find my glorious Substitute worshipping for me in the synagogue, (Luke iv. 16,) and vindicating the honour of His Father in the temple service. (John xi. 17.) His songs of praise, His deep attention to the written word then read, His joining in the public prayers, all this He puts to my account, as if I had done it and done it always; whilst also He blots out every accusation to the contrary by His blood. I confess my prayerlessness in secret. It has grieved the Lord to the heart. But I find my Surety 'rising a great while before day and departing to a solitary place to pray;' (Mark i. 35;)

passages already referred to, for this maintains the holiness. and majesty of the character of God in their integrity, and the reality of the guilt in the negligence arising from that state of soul which occasioned or allowed of such departure from that which is due to God in His saints. "If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance in the holy things of the Lord..... though he wist it not, vet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity; and he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation for a trespass offering unto the priest, and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him; it is a trespass offering: he hath certainly trespassed against the Lord." (Lev. v. 15-19.) Such is the divine estimate of lack of service or failure in our responsibilities, and such the provision for it according to this

or, 'continuing all night in prayer to God.' (Luke vi. 12.) This He will impute to me, as if I had so prayed every day and night, and the same time plunging my sins and omissions into the depths of the sea." This worshipping of Christ in the synagogue, which Mr. Bonar thinks available for spiritual negligence, was His reading the passage of the prophet Isaiah, which proclaimed that He was the Anointed, the Messiah: it is hard to tell how that should serve for the believer's defects in worship, or the other scene referred to where, with a scourge of small cords, He drives the traffickers out of the temple. Thus Scripture must be strained to make it appli-In truth, it provides very differently for all these sinful infirmities of the soul. The high priest wore the mitre with "holiness to the Lord" engraven thereupon, that he might bear the iniquity of their holy things; (Exodus xxviii.;) and offered incense with fire from the altar of burnt-offering while they were praying, the smoke of which ascended with their prayers from his hands. (Luke i. 9, 10; Rev. viii. 3.) Thus by the intercession of Christ, and the fragrance of His merits according to the value of His death. our worship reaches acceptably the throne of grace.

divine glory, viz., atonement made by the life of a victim, in our case with the surrender of the life of the Son of God; but to speak of the holy nature or walk of Christ as a substitute for our responsibilities and an equivalent for our lack of service has decidedly the character of relaxing the claims of the divine glory upon our conduct, and weakening our sense of the evil of our shortcomings. obedience, when once the obligations to the law were undertaken, was surely due to the position Christ had assumed before God, and could hardly, therefore, be made available for others, so as to make up their deficiencies and lack of service; but to die was not due from Him upon any ground whatsoever, but quite the contrary, for life was the result of perfect obedience to the law, and, therefore, His life remained to be voluntarily offered up in grace on behalf of others, and as such justly available for them.

Another objection to treating the subject in this way is, that it looks upon believers, not as the word of God presents them, viz., as being identified with Christ in their standing before God, but as distinct and separate from Him; for in so taking His sinless nature to make up for the evil of our hearts, patching something of Christ's life upon each of our deficiencies,\* it is evident that the idea is that believers and

\* A further instance of this moral patchwork, as well as the inextricable difficulty which it involves, may be seen in the following quotation from Dr. Crisp's sermons:

"If there be but a righteousness of Christ's human nature, consisting in His active conformity to the law, and suffering for the breach of it, and we do stand in this righteousness, this will not make us complete: for, mark, he that is complete, by the righteousness of Christ, it must serve for every purpose whatsoever; if there should be some defect which that, as it is acted by Him in His human nature, doth not make up, we could not be complete by it,

Christ are two distinct parties, instead of being seen as one and indivisible in the sight of God, Christ the Head of the body, and the members sharing in all the acceptance of their Head in heaven.

But besides this, the above quotation shows that the believer is evidently looked upon as still in the flesh, for the author is clearly writing for Christians—to whom alone this question of the use of this legal obedience is applicable—when he says "Our very existence is sin—a standing transgression, &c." Now this treats us as being in the flesh, and feeling all the misery of such a state before God, and entirely ignores the position He has given to the Christian, in consequence of what Christ has done and is in His presence, as expressed in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Holy and without blame before him in love,"

although that, even as it is human, is absolutely complete in its kind and without defect...... Suppose a magistrate, besides his common duties he is to perform, as he is a man or a Christian, he must perform the duties of his public relation, he must do justice in judgment and the like. Now suppose he should be exact in all the common duties, as he is a Christian, and should still fail in the duties of his public relation, he is not completely righteous, because there is a want of a magistrate's righteousness. So likewise if a father or a mother fail in the duties of their relation, they must go to Christ for a righteousness to supply this and all other defects. Now, where will you find it in Christ? He never was a father nor a mother; He never performed these several offices requisite to the several relations; He never brought up children; never was a magistrate. When a father fails in the duties of his relation, where can he find out a righteousness fit for him to make it up in Christ?"

To make up this defect, Dr. Crisp throws in the Godhead of our Lord, which only proves, as with Mr. Bonar, how the doctrine breaks down when worked out to its results; for the Godhead of Christ cannot form a substitute for relative human deficiency not included in His life as a man, as this system requires it should be.

(Eph. i. 4,) whilst it equally denies what the apostle says in Romans viii. 9, "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." The practical effect of thus losing sight of our true position before God is, to give sin power over the believer, for the thought that we are still in the flesh with all its corruption before God, Satan is sure to take advantage of, to destroy that confidence in the presence, and power, and help of God, which alone enables us successfully to resist the attacks of sin which proceed from our fallen nature, and thus we are rendered helpless against them.

But not only is confidence in God weakened, but the standard of what the Christian's conduct ought to be, is In the word of God this is drawn from the position which grace has given us in Christ, which makes practical failures and shortcomings in our walk as Christians inexcusable, because of our being united to Christ, and having all fulness laid up in Him for us, and we are taught to condemn in ourselves, not only what is morally defective, as between man and man, or a breach of the law, but everything that is unlike Christ, or which does not proceed from the Spirit of God as the spring of life within us. (Col. iii., Rom. viii., &c.) Thus the nature of sin in the sight of God, the true position of the Christian before Him in Christ, besides the application of the value of His death in case of actual failure, and of the intercession of Christ. alike combine to show how inadmissible these sentiments and expressions are as a resolution of the question of the evil of the sin that is in one's flesh, or its results in positive failure, where the soul has been unwatchful.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## IS THE CHRISTIAN UNDER THE LAW?

What is the position in which the word of God places the Christian, with respect to the law? It describes him as dead to it; "I," says the apostle, "am dead to the law that I might live unto God." (Gal. ii. 19.) "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." (Rom. vii. 9, 11.) He was slain by the law, it had killed him; it could do no more with him; and he was, in consequence, he says, dead to it, for it had no further claim upon him after it killed him. It could not follow him beyond death, into the risen place, into which he had entered in Christinto the new creation. To do that, Christ Himself, who sits on the throne of God, in heavenly glory, must be again brought under it, for Christ is our life in heaven, and we are united to Him there. This is seen in the argument addressed by the apostle to the Colossians, (chap. ii.,) who were seeking, by the law and its ordinances, to gain something in which they thought themselves deficient. shows them that was impossible, for they were complete in Christ, who had (though once subject to them for the glory of God) now left them all behind, for they could not reach in their claims beyond this earthly scene, of which the cross was the close. Then, "if they were dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, were they subject to ordinances," which were only shadows suited to children, and to a religion formed for the world? (Comp. Heb. ix. 1; Gal. iv. 9, 10.) They were united to Him who was raised from the dead; could they make Him more complete than He was in the presence of God; or add anything to Him there, in the new sphere of life and glory He had entered, and in which they were associated with Him?

The law was not given in heaven, but on earth, and its range does not lie beyond it.\* This may be seen very distinctly in Romans vii., where the apostle says expressly, that "the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth;" as, indeed, the application of the figure of the law of marriage, which is only for this world and life on earth, undeniably shows. But he goes on to tell us how it was he had been killed by the law, and applies the great

\* It is a modern fiction, unsupported by Scripture, that the law had anything whatever to do with heaven or giving a title to it. It was given not in heaven but on earth, on Mount Sinai, which the apostle contrasts with what is heavenly, and calls it the mount that might be touched, (Heb. xii. 18,) that is, palpable to the senses; while that which grace introduces us into, and which is all heavenly, is unseen and spiritual, and apprehended by faith.

Moses speaks of the law thus: "It is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." (Deut. xxxii. 47.) "Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," and the claim upon Israel as a people, because God had brought them out of Egypt, the house of bondage, shows that God is speaking as a moral governor here on earth in relationship with Israel as a nation; whilst these and other expressions throughout the decalogue, which relate to earthly crime, such as "steal, kill, commit adultery," show that it was not intended for heaven; and to this may be added, its prohibitory character.

doctrine of the death and resurrection of Christ as settling the claims of the law and placing us, through death, in a position altogether new with respect to it, as we have seen he applied it with respect to sin and the flesh, and, in the Colossians, with respect to ordinances; for the apostle only knows a Christian as one who has died, or is dead and risen. He is dead to the law in two ways: 1st, by the law itself, which had killed him; and 2ndly, by the death of Christ for him. The first has been alluded to as the just effect of the law upon a sinner, shown by the apostle, where he says, in writing to the Galatians, that "through the law he was dead to the law;" but in this chapter he enlarges upon this killing power of the law, which once had been unknown to him and the extent of its application to the thoughts of the heart, before its spirituality was discovered. But when its claim to obedience and its prohibition of lust came home to him, it provoked the evil that existed in him, and condemned him for it; "sin," he says, "revived, when the commandment came, and I died;" and the effect of the law, instead of being life, was death, (ver. 5,) for he was a sinful man, and he was slain or condemned before God by it for the evil that was in him. Hence he was dead to the law, through or by the means of the law, which thus put an end to him judicially, as a man in this world. But as has been said, there was another way in which he was dead to the law,—because Christ had gone through death under it, in the sight of God, for him, and thus he was looked at as having borne its extreme penalty and exhausted its demands. Its claim was not over a dead, but over a living, man, and death and the grave put him out of the sphere of its power, or reach of its action. Thus the apostle says, "The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth."

"Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." For the believer is treated by God as having, in the person of Christ, passed through death morally and judicially; whilst the new life he has received in Christ enables him, by faith, to view himself in the same light in which he is looked at by God, and to act accordingly. Thus he is doubly dead to the law, both by its effects upon him and by the death of Christ on his behalf.

No words can be used to express more plainly that he had nothing more to do with it, nor it with him, in the sight of God; for what we are dead to, we have certainly ceased to have any relation with whatsoever. Through the law he was dead to the law, that he being free from it might live unto God in this new risen life of Christ, instead of under the power of that which was only death to him.

The question of relationship is then introduced in order to throw further light on this subject, for the apostle represents Christ and the law as having the distinct and opposing claims of two husbands, and that death came in to release from the obligations of the first husband, the law, that those of the second, Christ, may take effect. ordinance of marriage is binding upon either party until "For the woman dissolved by the death of one of them. which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband; so then if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." (Rom, vii. 3.) position of the believer: the death of Christ, as his substitute or surety, has freed him from the claims of the law,

(the old husband,) and he is brought to stand in relationship to another—that is, Christ—One in whom there is life-giving power, not death, as there was in the former, so that he can bring forth fruit unto God. "Therefore, mv brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. vii. 4.) Now, as in natural life, this relationship cannot be maintained with two parties at the same time, so the apostle proves that we cannot be living, at the same time, under the law (the old husband) and under Christ. "But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that (marginal reading) wherein ye were held, that we should serve in newness of life and not in the oldness of the letter." (Ver. 5.) Thus our service to Christ flows out from our relationship to Him, and is influenced by the character of Him to whom we are now related; not being rendered, as formerly, to a legal, literal requirement, but by entering into the spirit and mind of Him to whom the service is due, and with the feelings of grateful love, that prompt the performance, and make it a willing and happy service.

Is it to be believed that there are Christians so foolish and so blind to their own interests, as to prefer the old husband to the new, when God has set the old aside as powerless for good; or to think that the obligations which bind us to the new are less sacred and more likely to be violated than the demands of the old husband? Are they not, on the contrary, higher and more powerful, and that beyond all comparison? Has the Christian no heart to comprehend the elevation, the dignity of this relationship to Christ, into which His wondrous grace has brought him, that he should

be afraid to commit himself to the supreme excellence and life-giving power of this new bond, or fear because it is pleaded for, in place of the old one, that power against his evil nature will be lessened? Is not this, in reality, distrust of Christ, and of the effect of greater nearness to Him, in whom alone, and not in the law, he has certainly found whatever victory he has gained over his own corrup-The law commands, saying, "Thou shalt love," but gives neither the motive nor the power to do so: he looks at Christ and finds both, for he sees at once in Christ, God's love shining out to him, and divine help extended to meet him in his feebleness. Indeed, as He is our life, we have a claim upon Him as such; not only that He gave His life for us, but, being united to Him as our head, we share His life in heaven in its thoughts and feelings, its reality of affections, and confidence, and fulness of grace, claiming all that is in Him as our own, and looking to Him to minister it to us accordingly. This faith is called into exercise by having Him before it, "faith which worketh by love," as the apostle says: "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) He had an object before him in order to maintain this life, and that object is Christ, not the law. To think of Him is to be reminded of His love-love fully expressed in His dying for sin-of tenderness and sympathy, all divine in their strength, yet the feelings of one who, as man, has taken us into friendship and fellowship with Himself, and who is not ashamed to call us brethren, who is our Advocate with the Father. We ought not to love the world, for if we loved God supremely, as the law commands, we could not. "This," says the apostle, "is the victory that overcomeththe world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." (1 John v. 4, 5.) God sets His Son before us as an object superior to the world, so that our hearts are raised above it and strengthened against its opposition or attractions, and thus it is our souls are brought into fellowship with Him; for to think and feel as He does about His beloved Son, and to have Him for the object of attraction and delight, is fellowship. Moses and Elias (who represent the law and the prophets) appear in glory with Christ upon the mount of transfiguration, and converse about His death, which will be the subject of interest in glory; but when Peter classed them altogether, and proposed to make three tabernacles, as if they were all to remain, and each to have his place, Moses and Elias disappear, and the cloud overshadowed them, and a voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear we him." This One only is left before us as the object of divine delight, and the centre of the divine counsels. and the One to whom alone attention is to be directed.

Thus a divine object being set before us, we are attracted and won, instead of repelled; and affection and strength are produced in the heart by the contemplation of it, and we enjoy communion with God, finding our delight in One by whom all that is in God has been fully displayed, and who is Himself superior to all created objects, as the Creator and Lord of them all. Such an object man needs to sustain him, and lift him above himself and the sin that is natural to him as fallen, and thus through the Spirit of God dwelling in him, he is transformed into the likeness of that which he believes in, and is occupied with.

Mark the conclusions of the apostle respecting the law in

the following statements:—"Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace." (Rom. vi. 14.) "The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, but after that faith is come, ye are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. iii. 24, 25.) "But if ye are led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." (Chap. v. 18.)

Strong as is the language of these passages, there is one yet more so: "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." (1 Cor. xv. 56.) It is evident in all of them that the apostle is speaking, not of justification, but of the life or conduct of the Christian, for he is treating of the power of sin, and how it is to be resisted, as the being "led of the Spirit" and the figure of the schoolmaster also, What is the meaning of such statements as these, and if they are true, what can those Christians be about who seek to put themselves, or others, under the law, for "the law," says the apostle, "is the strength of sin?" Is it that the law is evil? by no means; it is the opposite; holy, just, and good; yet the word of God declares it gives power to sin instead of power against it. How can this be? The answer is, that the Scripture always sees in the law the pure absolute principle of requirement, (not to speak of the curse from which its infringement in the very smallest degree cannot be separated,) and this is what man, such as he is, cannot bear. The believer needs that God should help him, for he is weak and sinful; whereas a mere demand assists him in nothing, but, on the contrary, deprives him of all force, for in it God says I must and will have such and such things, or such a state of heart, and it must be a perfect one. Thus all it does is to make the soul sensible of its poverty, feebleness, and depravity, and reduce it to the lowest state possible, as is taught us in Romans vii. This

is its invariable effect; it can do nothing else, and nothing less than this, whilst it even provokes the evil which it judges. This is why the apostle speaks of it as "the strength of sin." The force of these passages is evident The law condemns us both for what is and undeniable. evil and for what is deficient in us; grace supplies the latter, whilst it assists us against the former, telling us that the sin that is in us is not imputed, and that God is against it, but for us, holding out His hand to strengthen us in the The law throws us back upon ourselves; the conflict. Spirit of God occupies us with Christ and His love, and all that Christ is towards us, and thus supplies the thoughts and feelings which lead to christian action and practical devotedness, transforming us by this means into the likeness of Christ. "We all," says the apostle, (not looking on the face of Moses which required to be veiled, but) "with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord;" (2 Cor. iii. 18;) and thus we become epistles of Christ written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." (Chap. iii. 3.) The material upon which the Spirit of God writes, and the letter or epistle which He indites are alike changed; for the grace and truth of Christ, of whose fulness we are partakers, ought to appear in us instead of the rigidity of the law. (See Matt. v.) This is what is called in James "the law of liberty" to the Christian, and the Apostle Paul hints at the same principles when he says in the same passage just cited, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." The Christian having received the life of Christ, finds the example of Christ and the commands of the word of God suited to this life

which he enjoys, and the Spirit of God leads him to take pleasure in the fulfilment of it, so that it becomes a law of liberty, for it corresponds with what he wishes or desires in accordance with the feelings of his renewed nature.

Is it to weaken the stays of morality to say that our allegiance is due rather to Christ than to the law, to a husband rather than to a schoolmaster, to One who is life to us rather than to one who kills? Has that highest of relationships no power, or is its claim empty, or title vain? Has a wife no duties to perform, no service of love she is bound to render, because she is not in the position of a servant, but one in which affection and the sense of the relationship in which she stands predominate, instead of the motives that govern the action of a servant-fear or duty merely, and the expectation of reward? Are there no higher or stronger motives than these to control the heart, and are not privileges always accompanied by corresponding responsibilities, though, as in the position of a wife, it is the consciousness of the relationship and its privileges that ought to be uppermost, and love the spring of all: for the mere sense of duty would little satisfy the requirements of this highest of ties, however suitable that may be in a servant?

But there are other scriptures bearing on this point, which it may be well to consider. Let the reader turn to the end of Galatians iii. (ver. 24—26) and the commencement of chapter iv., where the apostle states, "The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster: for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;" that is, emancipation from this tutelage of the schoolmaster has taken place, to bring the believer

into a new position, that of a son of God. In the following chapter he thus continues this argument, that the heir during childhood differs nothing from a servant, "but is under tutors and governors, (the schoolmaster to wit,) until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children were in bondage under the elements of the world" (the law and its ordinances). "But when the fulness of the time was come. God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ve are sons. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father: wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Rom. iv. 1-7.) The believer who was under the law is redeemed from under it, in order to receive the adoption of a son; wherefore he is no more in the position of a servant, like the Jew under the law before Christ died, but as a son in the full possession of the privileges and rights of a son, who has moreover attained his majority, and who is to be guided by the motives which ought to actuate the conduct and regulate the obedience of a son whilst enjoying the bright and blessed privilege of sonship, and the divine love which has conferred it, and brought him so near to itself. Would it satisfy the heart of a parent (any more than a husband in the case of his wife) that a son should take his place with the servants, and refuse to recognize any higher relationship, or act on the principle and under the influence of the motives which guide the conduct of a servant? and is it not to raise, instead of lower, the moral standard to press upon the heart, that God has brought us into these higher relationships in connexion with Himself and with Christ, in the power of the Holy Ghost, and that He expects our feelings and conduct to flow from, and be moulded by, them?

Hence the activity of a Christian, in the service of Christ, is upon a higher footing, and upon different grounds to anything the law could give rise to; for influenced by the grace which has been shown him, and by the love of Christ in dying for him, he seeks the glory of God and the exaltation of the name of Christ in what he does, and these principles are by the Spirit of God to be carried into all his life, whether in word or deed: he is to do all in the name of Christ, i.e., as representing Him, exhibiting His character in the world; if he eats or drinks, whatsoever he does, all is to be to the glory of God, which grace has linked to the most apparently trivial actions of the redeemed; (1 Cor. vi. 20; x. 31;) he is to forgive as God, to love as Christ; (Eph. iv. 32; v. 1, 2;) how much higher is this than anything prescribed by the law, and how impossible to have conceived and still more to have acted on, had not that "mystery of godliness" been revealed to us "God manifest in the flesh."

Everywhere and at all times the apostles, though they may occasionally refer to the law, to point out with greater force any inconsistency with the more exalted principles on which the Christian is called to act, present Christ to us as the alone standard of conduct or rule of life for Christians, and never the law; for every christian act, or motive, or feeling, the scriptures hold up Christ before us. Is strife or vain glory to be avoided? it is through having the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who, having the divine glory, took the form of a servant, and by lowliness and self-renunciation in this world traced the path out for us that leads to

exaltation and glory from God alone. (Phil. ii.) Is liberality to brethren in question? The grace of the Lord Jesus is the example set before us, who "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. viii. 9.) Is patient submission to injustice from others, without murmuring to be inculcated? We are "to follow his steps," who alone of all others being free from blame and able to punish, "when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. ii. 19-23.) Is unselfish surrender of our own feelings and inclinations for the good of others the lesson to be taught? We are told of One, "who pleased not himself," but made Himself, for God's glory and our sakes, the object of all human reproach. (Rom. xv. 3.) Is faith to be maintained in the heart of the Christian amid circumstances of affliction and danger? The confidence in God exhibited by Christ in presence of death and the grave, and all the power of the world and of Satan, and which was answered in the resurrection, presents itself at once as the means of support. (2 Cor. iv. 13, 14.) Indeed it would be difficult to find any trait of christian character, of which He is not made the illustration, for our general walk, (1 John ii. 6,) for purity, (iii. 3,) for love, (iii. 16,) for holiness of conduct, (Eph. iv. 20, 21.) and for patient endurance. (Heb. xii. 2, 3.) During His own lifetime, He Himself teaches us, that in our path in this world where He was rejected, we must take up our cross and follow Him who had no place where to lay His head; (Matt. viii. 20;) that instead of self-exaltation amongst our brethren, we are to resemble Him who said, "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth;" (Luke xxii. 27;) and in submission to the will of God who controls all things for our blessing in this world, that we are to learn of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart," and who when "despised and rejected of men," could bow in all things to His Father's will and say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. xi. 26.) But in vain we look in the law for these moral beauties 'which God as man could show;' it could neither display nor impart them, and still less attract the heart, filling it with the sense of that superlative excellence and loveliness, as portrayed in all His life, which His person gives them. Thus, alone, could we be shamed and weaned from the selfishness of our natural hearts by the display in Him, as man, of what is so divinely perfect.

But it will be asked, If the apostle rejects the idea of the Christian being under the law, what does he require from the Christian relative to the practical fulfilment of it, inasmuch as it expresses what is according to the will of God respecting human conduct? There are three passages which treat expressly on this point, and which are important as serving to illustrate further the principles here It will be seen in them, that the apostle invariably states that the law (so far, at least, as regards our fellow-man) will be fulfilled by the Christian; but he as invariably puts this fulfilment upon the higher ground of christian motives, principle and power. Let us first turn to Romans xiii., there he shows that the Christian owes a debt of love to his brethren (through what Christ has done for him) which he can never repay; and that in the exercise of this love, by which and in which he lives, he naturally fulfils the law. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the

law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10.) So, again, in Galatians v., though called unto liberty, or freedom from the bondage of the law, liberty is not to be used for a license to the flesh, but love, the principle of christian life, is to make each the servant of the other. "Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Gal. v. 13, 14.) The Galatians are directed to walk in the Spirit and they will not fulfil the lust of the flesh; but if "led of the Spirit they are not under the law," for the Spirit of God is a spring of liberty and grace in the heart from God and towards God, and leads the heart into communion with God, and acting in the new nature, brings forth fruit of its own, like the vital sap, which of itself rises up into and nourishes the plant. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) The Christian's responsibility, therefore, is to live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, and he will then bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, which no law, either of God or man, forbids; and this he does by the grace of God and upon the principles suggested by the knowledge and love of Christ. One passage more remains of the same nature as those we have been considering; viz.. Romans viii., 3, 4, which, strange to say, has in spite of

itself been enlisted in the service of the doctrine of our Lord's vicarious fulfilment of the law: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This teaches us that what the law could not of itself effect is accomplished by other means; i.e., the death of Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost. In order to bear out the other interpretation which has been put upon it, the passage ought not to have stood. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us:" but, 'That the righteousness of the law has been fulfilled for us.' The previous verse shows still more evidently how entirely different are the thoughts of the apostle from those who would strain his words to make him "What the law could not do in teach their own ideas. that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." Sin in the flesh was condemned, not by His keeping the law, but by His death for it; and then, as a consequence, we, who felt nothing but our inability under the law, might be so freed from the power of sin that the practical righteousness (δικαιωμα) of the law might be fulfilled in us who "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The conjunction "that" shows this to be a distinct effect of the death of Christ in the life of the believer. not as under the law, but as led by the Spirit.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE NATURE AND OBJECT OF THE LAW,
AND THE EXTENT OF ITS APPLICATION, WITH
OUR LORD'S FULFILMENT OF IT.

It is evident that the law as summed up by our Lord, love to God and to one's neighbour, was absolutely the expression of what man ought to have been, as man. But inasmuch as it was only given to man when fallen, it was not, as we shall see, intended for his justification, for man was incapable of fulfilling it when he received it, being a sinner. It had a penalty attached to its non-fulfilment; besides, if the actual form in which it was communicated on Mount Sinai be examined, it will be seen that it was chiefly directed against lusts or evil in man; the existence of which it supposed, being almost exclusively prohibitory, as the repetition of the words "thou shalt not" plainly shows, so that it would not have suited man when unfallen, nor would a command to love God have been appropriate to such as had always done so. In addition to this it may be observed, that before the fall man had not the knowledge of good and evil, and therefore the command given to him in innocence was not of a moral character, for the thing he was commanded to abstain from was not evil in itself, but was evil to him because forbidden by Him to whom his allegiance was due. The law, moreover, was not

given at the first, nor until after (as we shall presently see) various other important dealings of God with man.

These observations will prepare us for the absolute statements of the New Testament, respecting the purpose for which the law was given, and which, we need hardly say, ought to be taken as conclusive upon this point. There we shall see that in the mind of God it was never intended as a means of justification for man, but on the contrary of condemnation, and that though it said, "This do and thou shalt live;" yet that in offering this inducement to obedience, God purposed to show man his imperfection and sinfulness in order to prepare him for salvation by Christ. In this way our Lord Himself used it when applied to by the lawyer in Luke x, 25—29.

There are four great ends for which the law is stated, in those epistles which treat on subjects of doctrine, to have been given.

First. For the condemnation or reproof of open ungodliness in man generally.

Secondly. In order to make evident the guilt of man, in disregarding not only what conscience told to be right, but the authority of the lawgiver, thereby showing that he was wilfully disobedient.

Thirdly. That the nature and extent of the evil in the heart of man might be made known to him.

Fourthly. That by means of its stringency, man might so feel his helplessness as to be entirely cast upon Christ, not only for salvation, but also for strength to serve God.

The first of these is found in chapter i. of Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, where pointing out the error of those who desired to be teachers of the law without understanding its nature, he says, "But we know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully, for the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Intended to expose the ungodliness of man and put it to shame, he who used it for this purpose used it rightly, for it was made for such and not for the righteous man, is a very plain statement, as to what its lawful use was, viz., to condemn sin in human conduct, but instead of adding that it was meant to justify believers through Christ, or that Christians were under it, he says expressly that it was not made for such.\*

From this passage it will be seen that the law is of universal application; that is, not limited in its use to the Jew, for inasmuch as it expresses the will of God respecting the conduct of men as such, whenever it became known among the Gentiles, it brought with it a corresponding increase of responsibility, just as the light of Christianity does in a higher degree, wherever it has penetrated. This is, of course, a different thing from having the special responsibility attached to being under the law as the Jew was, having taken this place nationally at Mount Sinai and having been formally and definitely put under it by God,

<sup>&</sup>quot; Against such," says the apostle, describing the fruits of the Spirit, "there is no law." This confirms the idea of the law being intentionally antagonistic in its character, and, like the laws of man, enacted because of the existence of evil, against which they are always directed.

which the Gentiles never were. Hence the latter are constantly spoken of as "without law," having only the light which conscience afforded, for this was their case originally. To those that are "without law" the apostle became as without law, not being lawless (avous) towards God, but under subjection (evropos) to Christ; so in Romans ii., "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves." (Ver. 12-14.) It is quite true that the Gentiles have for the most part put themselves under the law and confounded it with Christianity, so that they, that is those of them contained in what is called Christendom, can hardly be spoken of now as without law, though they are not under it in the strict sense in which it can be affirmed of the Jew; but that, as has been already stated, especially in their present position and knowledge of its character, does not deprive it of the force of its application to them or take away the guilt that follows, where it is despised; nor is it intended in these pages to call this effect of it in question, but that the distinction between it and Christianity should be distinctly marked. The Christian, as we have already seen, is not under it on the special and higher ground of his association with Christ.

Secondly. The law gave a character to the sin of man which it had not before, and thus made him more guilty and more deserving of wrath; for in sinning after the law was given, he despised the rights of Him who gave it, and

added the wilful disobedience to a command, and rejection of the authority of the Lawgiver, to the knowledge which he might partially possess before, of the nature of evil. "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed (as transgression) where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," which was the breach of a distinct command. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound;" (Rom. v. 20;) that is, in the character of an offence against the government of God. "The law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression."\* (Rom. iv. 15.) There is sin without law, but it is not the character of transgression. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (Gal. iii. 19.)

Thirdly. By contrast with the law which was holy, just, and good, the apostle found out the evil which was in his nature, and its exceeding sinfulness; for the law being spiritual, discovered to him that not only his actions were sin, but even the thoughts of his heart, which otherwise he had not perceived, and thus he came to know that he was, when in the flesh, carnal, sold under sin. "I had not known sin but by the law." (Rom. vii. 7.) And again, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) This use of the law, with which most of us are familiar, connects itself with the

\* The schoolboy who can read his Greek Testament knows that the statement in the English translation in 1 John iii. 4, is a mistranslation, and that it ought to be not that sin is the transgression of the law, (παραβασις νομου,) but lawlessness, (ανομια,) the human will displaying itself instead of subjection to God, the only thing right for the creature; unrighteousness (αδικια) also is the corresponding expression of what sin is in Scripture. (1 John v. 17.)

last or fourth object of it, which was to show man's powerlessness for good apart from Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost which is enjoyed in knowing Him as risen from the dead. If the soul is renewed by grace, and is still under the law, the effect is, that whilst producing admiration for and delight in its moral character, it begets in the same proportion excessive distress, because the soul is felt to be incapable of the good it has learnt to desire; so that the apostle says that he found in such a state that there was no good thing in him, that is, in his flesh; he did the evil he wished not to do, and the good he sought he had no power to perform, thus his misery was complete. condition was one of absolute bondage to evil, which, to one having life became intolerable, and he cries out, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Ver. 24.) From this he finds relief when he looks at Christ as now exalted, and sees himself in Him, and he says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Ver. 25.)

Let us now turn for the general aspect of the law to 2 Corinthians iii., where the apostle draws a contrast between the position of Moses, coming down from the mount with the tables of the law in his hands when his face shone, and his own and the much higher character of ministry which he bore. "If," he says, "the ministration of death written and engraven on stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious; for if the ministration of condemnation be glory much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory: for if that which was done away was glorious much more that

which remaineth is glorious." This ministration of death and condemnation written and engraven in stones, in other words the ten commandments, (which alone were so written,) he declares to be "done away," not taken up and completed for us by Christ, so as to have the two glories amalgamated, or the former included in the latter, but set aside entirely -"that which is abolished," (ver. 13,)—to make way for that which remains, and which is not as the law was a ministration of death and condemnation, but of righteousness life and glory treasured up for us in Him who is at the right hand of God, and communicated by the power of the Holv Ghost. The result of this is found to be through the Spirit a transforming power when the soul accepts Him as the One in whom these blessings are provided for us on God's part. But the apostle only knows these two great systems and the glory attaching to each in contrast one with the other, and the ministration of death written and engraven in stones with the glory that accompanied it now eclipsed or superseded by the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. For this no veil is required by the beholder, and instead of condemnation effects are produced according to its own life-giving nature and the power of the Holy Ghost who witnesses to it in the soul.

We may next refer to Galatians iii. 15—25, where the apostle draws a similar contrast between law and promise; he there declares that the promise being made absolutely by God centuries before the law was given, could not be annulled by it. For the promise of God was made without condition except of His own faithfulness to His word, whereas the law was conditional and depended not on the faithfulness of "one," viz., God who could not fail, but also on that of man who could not but fail. The inheritance

being by promise, on which ground alone it was given to Abraham, the law could not destroy the title to it. Then instead of saying that the two were harmonized and united by Christ fulfilling the law for us, so that we received the blessing on the double footing of promise and fulfilled law, the apostle continues the contrast, "if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." If it is on one principle it is not on the other that the inheritance is enjoyed, says the apostle, but God gave it to Abraham and his seed by promise, and cannot go back from that; and being in Christ who is Abraham's seed, "We are heirs according to the promise." (Ver. 29.)

Besides this he says, the promise was not only absolute in its nature, but made to Abraham and his seed which was Christ (of whom Isaac, after he had been offered, was a figure); and if God could not depart from His original promise of blessing by bringing in conditions, still less could He do so when this promise was made to Christ, to whom we are united, and who was distinctly contemplated in the contract: and, therefore, when He came, promise again takes its course as it was given originally to Abraham, though temporally intercepted or suspended by the law under which the children of Israel voluntarily placed themselves. He then repeats, what surely ought to satisfy all, what he has said in the Epistle to the Romans as to the rise of the law: "Wherefore then serveth the law? added because of transgression till the seed was come, to whom the promise was made." (Gal. iii. 19.) That is, it was only intended to be temporary not eternal, and to last "till" the seed should come, to whom the promise had been made by God, so that the law stood in a parenthesis,

with the promise both antecedent and subsequent to it, and its object in the mind of God was not to put in possession of blessing by its fulfilment, but as serving a temporary purpose by the demand for righteousness which it contained, to make it evident that man wilfully set at nought the divine authority, (Rom. v. 20,) and force him for salvation to be entirely a debtor to the sovereign grace which was contained in the promises.

Throughout the whole of the argument, the apostle treats the law as opposed to the promise, or at least to the accomplishment of it, for man could not obtain blessing by his obedience to the law, and hence, if the promise were by the law, the enjoyment of the blessing contained in the promise was imperilled, and, therefore, if the blessing was dependent on the law, the promise, he says, would be annulled, and a prior contract, made without conditions on God's part, broken; for when He had given an absolute promise, He could not consistently bring in a condition afterwards. which put the whole in jeopardy. But in all this reasoning the idea of Christ fulfilling the law for us, and so combining the two principles, never enters the apostle's mind in any way. He adds, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law." But that was impossible, it not being in the nature of the law to give anything. But righteousness by the law, say the upholders of this doctrine, is through Christ fulfilling it. How, then, we reply, could the apostle, or rather the Holy Ghost, have uttered such words as, in such and such a case "righteousness would have been by the law?" What do words mean, if that is not tantamount to saying that in the present case righteousness is not by the law in any sense.

To give an instance of the mistaken views which prevail on the subject of the law, we may refer to a letter\* by the same writer already quoted, which states as follows:--" We may simply declare our Lord's own summary of the law. that it is the love of God and love of our neighbour, in fact that the law (which is perfectly distinct from the penalty of the law) breathes nothing but love; and what is God? 'God is love.' (1 John iv. 8, 16.) Is the law, then, a transcript of God's mind or not? God is love; the law is love; wherein lies the difference between the mind of the law and the mind of God? The law commands nothing but love; the penalty of the law is merely to punish the want of love." The confusion of this passage is extraordinary: it identifies God's mind concerning man with His own nature or being. It perverts entirely the true character of the law as the apostle has explained it, and attempts to make out a separation between the law and its penalty, as if they were not homogeneous.

The law is not love; it is a demand for love, which is just the opposite, just as to give and to take are opposites; but more than this, it is a demand for love made upon man, who is a sinner, with the purpose of showing him that he has a nature at enmity with God, so as to bring out his real condition more plainly and to condemn him for the want of love towards his Creator. Now the gospel which reveals the nature of God is the exact contrast of this. "Herein," says the apostle, "is love; not that we loved God," (which was what the law claimed,) "but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) God has thus shown that He is love; that is, what He is in Himself, His very nature and

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<sup>\*</sup> Mr. Mylne to "The Record," of February 4th, 1863.

being, and that which He delights to display, whilst the law bears upon what we are towards God, or rather ought to be when we are not. For God thus to make known Himself in the blessedness of His own nature and in the full measure of what is in His heart toward man in the gift of His Son, is the very antipodes of His looking into man's heart to see what is there, even if He made no demand in justice upon it. Instead of this, in the gospel He shows us His own, as the apostle says again: "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him;" and even towards the world He displayed Himself as love in sending His Son into the world and giving Him up to die for it. "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;) and to die for sin in love is the very reverse of imputing it, as the law does.

Christianity is the expression of what divine love has provided for the need of man, and puts man in the place of the receiver and God in the place of the Giver. He gives His Son, and through Him forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life, and that when the law had shown that man was utterly lost, disobedient, and helpless; so that it is expressly intended to meet the necessities which the law awakened or proved to exist, whilst it gave nothing to man, but asked for everything from man. In the law, God makes all the demands which His holiness and justice are entitled to from man; in the gospel, love undertakes to supply all the wants that man's wretched state of guilt and misery makes him conscious of. This love is drawn out by, and suited in its nature to, that condition of need in which

man is found, who is even an object sought after and rescued by it. (Luke xv.) The law commands love to God, which command is death to us, if found deficient in it; but for Him to love us when we have not loved Him, but done just the reverse, is the perfect grace of the gospel. Is it the same thing to demand payment and to distrain for a debt, as to pay it oneself or provide for its liquidation?

The apostle, as we have seen, contrasts the law with grace. The law demands, and will not be satisfied with anything short of, absolute perfection. It asks for "all," and will not take less. It cannot do so without foregoing that which belongs to God as Creator, which it was given to represent and require. Its requirement is imperative, for in it God insists upon His rights and to their full extent, and these rights involve the punishment of the defaulter; so that it is a mistake to attempt to separate between the command of the law and the consequence of failure under it, as if the one did not inevitably follow the other in every case. It is not giving the law its due. The apostle says. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," (Gal. iii. 10,) and this curse the death of Christ alone can meet. It is a ministration of death written and engraven in stones. Whoever is under it and fails, it curses—that is its nature—it cannot do otherwise, whoever the man may be; and it is the recognition of this that establishes the law, as the apostle says, instead of making it void. To deny its character or claims is to make it void. To give them their full answer in the death of Christ for those who believe, and leave the law untouched in its integrity for those who do not, is to establish its authority. To put a man under it and then deny its effect, whether he be Christian or otherwise, is to destroy its nature and demand. (Rom. iii. 21; iv. 13—16.)

The passage we have quoted admits that the law has a penalty, but to get over the inconsistency of the statement that the law "breathes nothing but love," explains away the force of it by saying it is merely a penalty for the absence of love. This is poor consolation. Has the writer never heard or read of Sinai, where the law was given, and its fire, and thunder, and blackness, its boundary line to keep at a distance, under penalty of death, both man and beast? Did it breathe on Sinai nothing but love? If so, why were the people so frightened and Moses himself distressed-fear, moreover, which God Himself justified? What is the meaning of its numerous, unmitigated curses? These are strange accompaniments to an expression of love. The apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, wishing to assure them of the grace of God towards them says, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. For they could not endure that which was commanded; and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight. that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But ve are come to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 18-24.) Why does he say, they are not come to Mount Sinai, with its terrors, and curses, and condemnation, but to Mount Zion the place of grace, and to Jesus the blessed Mediator of the new covenant, and His blood which put away sin instead of condemning for it, if all these things were only the manifestation of love? The apostle does not so regard the law. He feels that its tendency is to repel the soul from God, instead of drawing it to Him as grace does, and strengthening its hold on God, and seeing the danger in which the Hebrews were from their early educational training and national associations added to the troubles through which they were passing, of mistaking the aspect of God towards them, and of being thus discouraged and of departing from Him, he seeks to reassure them by showing them how God had manifested Himself to them (not as He did on Mount Sinai, where He kept man at a distance from Him, but) in grace and love in the person of Christ, and by His peace-speaking blood, whatever sense of sinfulness might exist in the soul, whilst everything into which Christianity had brought them betokened the same grace in God which they were to hold fast (exwher) as constituting their only ability to serve Him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Let the reader mark the contrast here and remember that the God he has come to and His thoughts and feelings toward Him are to be learned in One who was full of grace and truth, and who, unlike Mount Sinai, rejects none that come to Him though the vilest of the vile; (Luke vii. 34-50; xxiii. 43;) and in the precious blood of Christ he will find all that would keep him away

from God taken away for ever, that blood being provided for this very purpose. (1 John i. 7.)

Lastly, we have the statement that the law is a transcript of the mind of God. It is not. Christ is the transcript of the mind of God and Christ alone, whose name is "The Word," because He alone could be to all His creatures the full, unfailing expression of that mind. He is the "brightness of His glory, the express image of His person." A law for a creature could never be the measure for the manifestation of God Himself and all that was in Him. He was "God manifest in the flesh." "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) The law described what man ought to have been according to the mind of God, before grace was revealed in the gospel by the manifestation of the Son of God, which taught that as God acted, so ought the Christian to act, loving enemies and forgiving trespasses, not resisting evil, &c., which could not have been set before men before Christ came, who as the true transcript of the mind of God and the witness of what was in His heart towards man, has been the manifestation and given the example of all that is divinely perfect in His sight.\*

In this is to be found the explanation of the fact of which cavillers and men of infidel minds have taken advantage against the truth, that with reference to the treatment of enemies, marriage, truth, &c. conduct was permitted or passed over that Christianity does not tolerate, for the law, which made nothing perfect, was suited to man's early education, and the partial knowledge of God then given was all he was at that time capable of bearing. It was the childhood of man: God in His condescension and goodness suited Himself to it, so that this is in reality a further proof of the wisdom of the divine ways.

To give an instance of the perversion of thought occasioned by these views, it is stated by a leading evangelical periodical already referred to, that "there was nothing in the heart of Christ at all but the law:" and again, complaining of those who question the soundness of this application of the law, as if it were to deprive them of the Saviour Himself, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him." This is to make the law and the Saviour identical. Such sentiments are scarcely conceivable in the mind of a christian man. Has the writer never found in Christ anything but the law, and never personally known anything better than love to a neighbour in that blessed Saviour, viz., sovereign, unutterable grace to a lost sinner and love that led Him to bleed and die for his transgressions? Besides, this is, as we have said, to overlook entirely the glory of His person, as well as almost all that was the object of, and connected with, His manifestation here in this world.

Every Christian assuredly believes that our blessed Lord fulfilled the law, and that in so doing He magnified it and put honour upon it,\* which it would not otherwise have had,

\* Magnifying the law and making it honourable, and God being well-pleased because of Christ's righteousness, (Isaiah xlii. 21,) says nothing of imputation to others. The same chapter (ver. 1, 2) tells of God's delight in the perfect and gracious character of Christ, (ver. 19, 20,) also how the Jews despised His law (ver. 24) with these, the path and righteousness of Christ is contrasted, as elsewhere God says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" but there is not a syllable about justifying others in any of these expressions, though it is easy, where a theory pre-occupies the mind, honestly to suppose a passage teaches it, the terms of which will not bear it out when examined. This scripture does not go beyond the fact, that God's favour was attracted by Christ's presence and ways in Israel, which every Christian assuredly believes.

for He was the Creator and the Lawgiver, and therefore above all law. He did the same with every ordinance of God, circumcision and even John's baptism receiving from Him their due recognition,\* much more this which had a moral character so peculiar to it, and which He had come to obey. But while this is the case it is far from the truth to suppose that the personal glories of His character or the purport of His mission were limited to this fulfilment of the law; and if the testimony of the evangelists be examined, it will be seen how small a part it formed of the wondrous and divine portraiture they give us of His person and ways.

Take the Gospel of Luke, which presents Him in His character as Son of man, and where we consequently find His genealogy traced up to Adam, and notice of His childhood and subjection to His parents, to whom He renders the honour commanded by the law; (chap. ii. 41—52;) but at the same time He claims a higher occupation and rights to which this honour conferred by the law must be subordi-

\* The difficulty of finding anything in the word of God to substantiate a theory so elaborate and so important if true, as the imputation of Christ's legal righteousness, has led to the most extraordinary application of various passages of Scripture; among them Matthew iii. 15, where our Lord, taking His place with those on whose hearts grace had acted in leading them to own their condition before God in being baptized by John, gives the reason for His submitting to this ordinance, in reply to John's remonstrance: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness;" and this forsooth is His fulfilment of the law for us! What, was John also working out legal righteousness to be imputed to us? for the Lord associates him and others with Himself in the words, "Thus it becometh us." What part of the law or of moral precept was John's baptism so that this should form a part of legal righteousness?

nate; for when they found Him sitting among the doctors. in the temple and complained of His apparent neglect of them, He replies, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and this shows us the title and glory essential to His person all the more, as it took place before He was specially anointed by the Holy Ghost for His public ministry. Indeed, if the mere fulfilment of the law be looked at, which as a law must be suited to the circumstances of all, He might have continued in private life and only have been known as the carpenter's son. never going beyond the precincts of His parents' dwelling, and so none of the grand and all-important features of His mission contained in these words, "my Father's business," would have been displayed; that the claims of the law gave way when this mission, which was ever uppermost in His heart, was in question, appears also when His healing on the sabbath and the conduct of the disciples occasioned Him to declare on what ground He stood respecting it; "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath;" (Mark ii. 27, 28;) for He was come as Son of man to do what the sabbath could not do for man. i.e., to save him when he was lost; hence, useful and important as the sabbath was for man, His errand as Son of man or Saviour of mankind gave Him a title over it, as well as to forego parental claims when they came in the way of His mission.

In the Gospel of John where the same point is at issue between Himself and the Pharisees "because he had done these things on the sabbath day," He takes (according to the character of this gospel which exhibits Him as the Son of God) still higher ground, saying in reply, "My Father

worketh hitherto and I work"—that God could not but work again in that world where man's sin had completely spoiled His rest—into which rest also Israel had failed to enter—and that in grace, as the Son of God, He was acting in the midst of the ruin to rescue and recover man, carrying on the same operations of love and mercy as His Father had from the very beginning amongst those ruined by the fall. Thus the need of man in the sight of this grace, and His own work as the Son in concert with the Father, carried Him beyond that which conferred a certain national importance on the Jewish people, to whom God had given the sabbath as the sign of His covenant. (Exodus xxxi. 16.)

Thus decidedly and repeatedly does the Lord rise above the law when it comes in the way of the testimony He bore to divine love in healing man, or of that object for which He came into the world, viz., "to save sinners." (1 Timothy i. 15.)

It is evident that the way in which the evangelists present Christ to us harmonizes with this, that is, though He accomplishes the law, He has higher objects constantly before Him. In Luke especially He is seen as the Saviour of the lost, and in His sympathies as Son of man, the Holy Ghost anoints Him to preach the gospel to the poor, and to heal the broken-hearted; He is the "friend of publicans and sinners;" He seeks that which is lost; He preaches in the cities and villages the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, for therefore is He sent; He weeps over Jerusalem; He prays for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they not what they do." Of all this the law knew nothing, for there was nothing of grace in it, nor could it demand from man what none but One who had divine power and

love in His heart could show, and who had come into the world for this purpose.

Even in the gospel of Matthew which is the only one which speaks of the fulfilment of the law by Christ, the burden of its contents is entirely in other things. prominent subjects are—His fulfilment of the promises as the seed of Abraham and as Son of David evidenced by the genealogy—His title as Messiah, His presentation to the people of Israel as Emmanuel, God with us, and as their Jehovah, come to save them from their sins. His mission is to announce the kingdom of heaven and its principles of grace: (though the law and the prophets were all to be fulfilled by Him;) yet those principles went beyond what had been before revealed, for the character of the Father was now unfolded. He is the Shepherd of Israel, healing all manner of sickness and disease which awakens His sympathy. He teaches and feeds the multitude, and when rejected by the nation, He is a Sower going forth to sow the seed of life in the heart of man.

Such are a few of the leading features descriptive of the person and of the ministry of Christ, and characteristic of this gospel, which expressly deals with His position in Israel and where we might expect, if anywhere, to find the fulfilment of the law detailed; but beyond the general statement of the fact, His fulfilment of the types, &c., and the prophecies which had reference to His own person, of actual exhibition of the fulfilment of the law there is nothing. He there says that He was not come to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfil, and that one jot or one tittle should in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled; but from this passage we learn that the law being all fulfilled by Christ, ends there and passes away. (Comp. Lev. xxiv.

44.) That this fulfilment of the law was intended to terminate that system in order to substitute something higher with which He was more occupied we learn from our Lord's statement in Luke xvi., where He says, "The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached and every man presses into it." So again using the figure of a piece of new cloth put to an old garment, and new wine put into old bottles, He shows that the grace of the gospel and of the kingdom of God or Christianity in general was not to be mingled with that which went before it; "And he spake a parable unto them, No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old, if otherwise then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old; and no man putteth old wine into new bottles, else the new wine will burst the bottles and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish; but new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved." (Luke v. 36-38.)\*

In the Gospel of John, which rises to the full height of the glory of His person as the Son of God, He is the Word, the Creator-God, and when coming into this ruined world,

• Our Lord refuses to own or allow a kind of patchwork of law and gospel. What He came to bring to man was entirely new in spirit and character, and did not agree with the old. The object of the old system was the reformation of man, if he had been capable of it; but God had tried man by the law and found him incapable of this, and hence Christ comes with a different object, treating man as lost and as having come to save him. The new principle therefore is regeneration, which is the work of the Spirit of God in or upon man, a new creation and salvation, not reformation or mending man in the flesh; for tried in every way, he had been found irremediably bad, as the Apostle Paul states doctrinally: "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." If God works in grace for man or in man, that is not of man but of God.

the light of men shining in the midst of darkness, for in Him was life, and those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. His glory is seen as the Word made flesh, and thus forming a tabernacle for itself, and that glory is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and hence just suited to man's fallen condition, for this grace and truth came into the world by Jesus Christ in contrast with the law which was given by Moses. (Ver. 17.) He reveals the Father, for as the Son who dwelt in the bosom of the Father, He alone could do so. He is the Lamb of God. the One who baptized with the Holy Ghost, the Messiah, the object of the testimony of Moses and the prophets, the Son of God, the King of Israel; and lastly, the Son of man, upon whom the heavens open and the angels of God ascend and descend; and all this is but the witness that is borne by one chapter of this gospel (though doubtless introductory and characteristic of the whole) to the worth of His person and the varied glories exhibited in it when manifested here in this world; and there is not one of these titles or glories, whether personal or official, that does not rise higher and take a wider range in blessing and display of the grace of God, than the fact of His having fulfilled the law. Whilst the glories which shone in His person in coming into this world are thus declared, how varied were the divine objects in view, and extensive was the bearing of His coming upon the condition of man and the glory of God. But we need say no more, for it will be sufficiently evident that to reduce the blessed and eternal glory of the Son of God, presented to us in the Gospels as displayed in this world, to a mere fulfilment of the law, would be to obliterate nearly all that is written in them

and show how far the maintenance of a system may obscure the mind, and even lead people (however unintentionally) to disparage the person of Him who is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person.

Here it may be well to refer to two passages in the Epistle to the Galatians which speak of our blessed Lord in relation to the law, but both of them in the way of redemption, which has been expressly contrasted with justification by the writers who insist on its being by the law; "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.) when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Chap. iv. 4, 5.) The first of these passages speaks of our Lord having borne the curse of the law to redeem those who were under its penalty; the second, of His having been born under the law to redeem those who were under it from its claims in order to bring them into the position of sons, which He could only do as we have already seen by His death under it, but in neither of these scriptures, though the reason for which our Lord was born under the law is expressly declared, is there the slightest hint that it was to fulfil it for others that they might be justified thereby; but on the contrary another motive is assigned as the occasion for His being so born; so that in the passages where we should most of all expect to find this doctrine, if it existed in the creed of the apostles, not only is it entirely wanting, but something else put in the place of it.

Finally, the law is contrasted by the apostle in the

matter of righteousness with grace, faith, and promise; and he states as follows its entire inconsistency and the impossibility of reconciling it with any of these great principles or with the death of Christ in a way that shows that there was not even a shadow in his mind of the law having a share in our justification through our blessed Lord's fulfilment of it.

"I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. ii. 21.)

"For if they which are of the law be heirs faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." (Rom. iv. 14.)

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident, for the just shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise." (Gal. iii. 11, 12, 18.)

Besides this, as we have seen, he contrasts it with the gospel which he preached, or the ministration of the Spirit, characteristic of this dispensation. (2 Cor. iii.) And respecting the principle and power of the believer's life, he puts the law in opposition to grace, the Spirit, life, faith, and Christ Himself, in the following passages already quoted:—Rom vi. 14; Gal. v. 18; ii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xv.

On the other hand, does it not seem remarkable that the defenders of this doctrine are not able to bring forward one passage of Scripture which directly and distinctly teaches in so many words that Christ fulfilled the law vicariously? They do indeed quote various texts, which we have examined under the impression that they can infer something like it from them; but that is all they can even pretend to, and when these passages are analyzed, it becomes evident that no such doctrine is intended.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## ETERNAL LIFE, OBJECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE, AND CONCLUSION.

The object of all that went before the manifestation of Christ in the long trial of man, both without law and under law, was to show man's condition as a sinner to be one of death and condemnation, without eternal life, which he had not and could not obtain by any means within his reach. In Eden when innocent he had life, but it was not eternal, for he lost it by disobedience, not to a moral precept, but to the authority of God expressed in reference to a thing in itself indifferent. The law said, "Do this and live," but this put life in the future, and he was incapable of rendering the obedience it required. The law itself never speaks of eternal life,\* for that was a glory reserved for the revelation of God's Son in this world; nothing short of His manifestation in the flesh being capable of bringing this blessing into a world of perishing sinners.

• The Pharisees connected eternal life with keeping the law, because they did not know the impossibility of so doing; and our Lord when asked by the lawyer what he was to do to obtain eternal life, refers to the law which prescribed what man was to do, but here, as elsewhere, He changes the words and adds, "This do and thou shalt live," not obtain eternal life; this was to show the insufficiency of man (Luke x. 25—28) thus to obtain life, as the reply of the lawyer, in trying to evade the force of the law, shows he felt it

Then the streams of the water of life—which issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb will be the delight and the refreshment of saints throughout eternity in the presence of God—began to flow where all was weariness and death around. Having come down where man was, Christ could say, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink," and "the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Where does this begin? When the law had been kept, or when He who is eternal life was manifested?\* Let the Apostle John again reply, "That which was from the

• Let the reader weigh well the statements of this apostle, for this truth everywhere pervades his writings. (See John viii. 12; xi. 25, &c.) On the other hand let him mark the effect of the system we are opposing in the low thoughts which it produces respecting the person of Christ. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more apparent than in Mr. Govett's work on this subject. He declares that Christ "won" or "earned," eternal life by keeping the law. If so He had not eternal life Himself until He had so acquired it! Of course he can produce nothing but his own reasoning for it; here are his statements: "Jesus first obtained the righteousness which is of the law, and then made it over to the elect Gentile. Jesus is the Righteous One, justified by the law itself, and winning eternal life as the law's proffered reward...... Moses describes the righteousness out of the law, which Jesus won. He was the Man who did them, and earned life by them."

"Faith in Jesus brings with it the righteousness of law fulfilled. For while no fallen son of Adam is just by law, Jesus was. He obeyed the moral law and the law of Moses too. He won eternal life upon the terms proposed by the law. Christ was justified by law.... which is asserted by the Holy Ghost and admitted by Mr. Darby. (?) 'For he that died hath been justified from sin.' (Rom. vi. 7.) 'God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit.' (1 Tim. iii. 16.)"

The word of God never speaks of Christ as justified by the law; it would be derogatory to the glory of His person; for though as every

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beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life; for the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." (1 John i. 1, 2.) This life had found its expression in every look, word, and act of the Son of God with which the apostle had been so blessedly conversant, and which, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he communicates to us with divine certainty; he traces it also to its source, viz., that which He was essentially when with the Father, but in consequence of His having appeared here in flesh, it is received and enjoyed in its blessedness through

christian man believes He kept it perfectly, it was not to obtain righteousness or for His justification, or to borrow or receive anything from it that He did so, but to put honour upon it when He stooped though Himself the Sovereign to obey it, that His own perfection in every condition might be exhibited. The passages cited in defence of this notion show the constant perversion or distortion to which Scripture is subjected in this work. There is no allusion to law at all in 1 Timothy iii, 16, or Romans vi. 7; the former teaches that He who as God was manifest in the flesh, was "justified in the Spirit;" that is, that in His sealing by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him, the works which He wrought in the power of the Holy Ghost and in His resurrection when He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, His claims as a divine Person were verified; the word "justified" being used in the same sense as elsewhere-"Wisdom is justified of her children." The second passage quoted as having reference to the claims of the law is Romans vi. 7. "He that is dead is freed (or, justified) from sin." Justification here is used in the very opposite sense to that of being justified through keeping the law, viz., as clearance from sin, as in Acts xiii. 39: "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

faith. How expressive is His own language, and how suitable for all those who are spiritually destitute and famishing: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, he that believeth in me shall never thirst." (John vi. 35.)

It is the apprehension through faith of His glory and the divine worth of His person, and of the love and grace of God the Father in sending Him that makes the soul participate in this eternal life. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) Again, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (Chap. vi. 40.) A similar thought is expressed in John iii. 35, 36, where as the consequence of the Father's love to and delight in His Son, who came in humiliation to glorify Him here, the eternal destinies of man are made to depend on whether His person is owned or disowned. (Comp. also ver. 18, and chap. i. 10-13.) As we have stated, all this is the result of His becoming man, "for the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world." (Ver. 33.) This is undeniably His incarnation; for it is as coming into the world He became the bread of life to perishing sinners, bringing it thus within the reach of every one, and He adds, "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." (Ver. 51.)

In order, however, that we should righteously be made partakers of it in eternal glory, it was needful that He should die; hence, the Scriptures not only connect eternal life with the person of Christ and His presence

here as the source of it, but with His death as the efficacious means of its bestowal. "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." (Chap. iii. 14, 16.) In this passage there is the demand of justice as well as the display of love, and both are seen in His death. As the Son of man He must die on behalf of perishing men, in order that they may have have eternal life; and as the Son of God He is given by divine love for the same purpose. It must be at the cost of His life that we enjoy ours for ever. It is a purchased, as well as a communicated, life. For this there was divine requirement, whilst it makes it all the more precious to ourselves. It is the fruit of redemption as well as the free gift of love. From the worth also of this gift is made to flow that eternal life which is the consequent result to those that believe: God could not be said to have given His Son for the world save in death, when He truly and righteously becomes ours, for there the value of His life and His person was all made available for us; when speaking of Himself as the bread of life He adds, "The bread which I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world," and "whose eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." (John vi. 51, 54.)

This declaration as well as that made by our Lord of the absolute necessity of His death, that "He must be lifted up," in order that those who were perishing might have eternal life, and the statement, "Except ye eat the flesh

and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you," entirely nullify the effort to connect our title to eternal life with the law or anything else whatever besides the intrinsic glory of His person and His death. Thus the interpretation is fully confirmed, which in these pages has been put on those passages in the Epistle to the Romans which connect the reception of life with, and make it the result of, the righteousness displayed in His death.

It is this also which gives Him His title over death and the grave, and him that had the power of death. The Apostle Paul expressly tells us that He partook of flesh and blood, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

By no other means could Satan be foiled and finally overcome but by death. (John xii. 31—33.) His stronghold has been entered by Him who could not be holden there, the Prince of Life; who having gone through it under the just judgment of God has wrought deliverance for those that are His, "abolished death, and brought life and incorruptibility to light" in His own blessed person as risen. For Satan's claims against man, and title to hold man in death and the grave by the sentence of God, were put an end to when Jesus died. Then the earth quaked, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened to release the sleeping dust of those they contained, and to give confidence to every believing heart that Satan's dominion had been destroyed, for he had been overcome in the very centre of it in order to wrest from

him his prey and turn into a means of victory and of life peace and blessing, that death which before he held as a terror, a penalty inflicted by God upon man. He spoiled "principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. That His title to give life in resurrection is founded on His death, as well as what He is in His own person, we may see again in His reply to the Apostle John when he fell at His feet as dead in the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. i.) Laying His right hand upon him He says, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Ver. 17, 18.) Why was John not to fear, when brought to a sense of his own weakness and insufficiency by the sight of the Son of man, who was walking in judgment in the midst of that which He had set as His witness on earth? Because Christ had kept the law for him and so gained eternal life, or because He had lived for him on earth? of the kind; His death and life out of death, when the judgment of sin had been endured, were to give him relief and confidence and to raise him beyond the effects of all that could reach him here, if his shortcoming in his responsibilities as a servant of Christ oppressed him, when seen in the presence of One who had eyes like a flame of fire.

Christ was the first and the last, the eternal Jehovah, and He had been dead, but now lived for evermore and had gained entire, absolute power over all man could have to fear in connexion with the consequences of sin, whether God's judgment or Satan's triumph; for Christ had taken all upon Himself for the believer when He died and now held

in His hand the keys of death and the grave, the triumphant proofs of His victory and of power over all that concerns the destinies of man, to be exercised in favour of those that trusted in Him.

The book of life, in which the names of saints are enrolled for eternal life in glory, is designated the book of life of the Lamb and of the Lamb slain. The book is His. as having been slain, for it is His title according to the eternal counsels as having died thus to distinguish those that are His own and to secure their eternal interests. Thus eternal life and redemption are again connected, and the right of Christ as the Lamb or Redeemer to give this life is recognized.

All the scriptures therefore bearing on this branch of the subject agree in referring the bestowal of eternal life on man by Christ the Son of God-to the essential glory of His person-His incarnation which made that glory available for us and brought it within our reach—His death in righteousness for us, and finally, to His life and power as the Son of man risen from the dead, when He becomes our life and we are united to Him. (Col. iii.)

Nowhere, except by the Pharisees, is eternal life attributed to law-keeping.\* Nowhere is Christ said to have gained life

Mr. Govett, in order to support this idea, is obliged to invent a theory of his own, that Christ after having spent thirty years of His life in obedience to the law had this limited period reckoned as sufficient. "The term of labour to the mere man under law was co-extensive with that of life. Just so long as He obeyed should He extend his life. From moment to moment, so long as He was obedient should He earn life. But no limit was set to his term of labour."

<sup>&</sup>quot;However constant his obedience, he still lay as at the first,

by keeping the law either for us or for Himself, and no one who had right thoughts of His person—"the eternal life who was with the Father and was manifested unto us"—could entertain the idea for a moment. That the Pharisees, who knew nothing but the law, nothing of Christ nor of their own incapability as sinners to render obedience to the law, should look for eternal life from it is not surprising; but for Christians to take up their language as if it were the exact truth, is to put themselves on the same level in their ideas and feelings as the Pharisees, and to lose sight of the fact that the law itself never so speaks, and that the Lord in His replies to them on the subject is careful to express Himself differently.

There are several passages referring to Christ, as the efficient cause of our righteousness before God, and their meaning has to be ascertained. But the reader will remember that what we are contending against is not that Christians are righteous in Christ, or for the sake of Christ, which we all believe, but that they are under the law, and that their righteousness is necessarily and purely a legal one, supposed to be founded on the fact that Christ fulfilled the law in their stead, or that His life on earth is our righteousness in contrast with His death, which is only

under the peril of the curse and of death at one step of transgression. But so it was not with Christ. In His case thirty years of obedience earned eternal life. The Father bade the term of labour cease. His merit was infinite." (Page 63.) But this is to confess that the law of itself did not give eternal life, for according to this theory, God had to interfere in order to release Christ from further claim by an act of special favour on His behalf. He omits to tell us where all this is recorded.

allowed to have a "negative" value, as clearing away transgression which would otherwise stand in the way.

Romans v. 18, 19, has been repeatedly referred to as if it proved conclusively the doctrine called in question. but with how little reason will be seen upon a careful examination of the passage; "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto the justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Now the words "by one offence" and "by one righteousness" (Greek) are very abstract and do not say in what the righteousness consists; except that it is contrasted with one offence, the one act of Adam by which all were ruined, which makes the ascription of it to the one act of Christ's death most suitable. But the next verse contrasts the obedience of Christ with the disobedience of Adam. What does that mean? In Philippians ii. where the same contrast with Adam is in view, the obedience of Christ from first to last is looked at as one great whole, "He took on him the form of a servant" and "became obedient unto death even the death of the cross," where His obedience was fully tested. Besides this we have what is similar to this "obedience of one" in many other passages already examined as in Hebrews x., where Christ is represented as

<sup>\*</sup> In making use of this word it is not intended to imply that it is strictly accurate; but throughout this work it is applied in the sense assigned to it by these writers who speak of the death of Christ as "negative" in respect of righteousness, though admitting that it puts away sin.

saying with reference to His death, "Lo, I come to do thy will." These and other scriptures, for which the reader may refer to the early part of this work, suffice to show that the word of God makes more of the obedience of Christ in His death than in His life. It therefore falls short of supporting what it is brought forward to prove in the following points:—

First. It does not say that Christ's living obedience justifies us in contrast with His death.

Secondly. There is not a syllable in it about His obedience to the law.

Thirdly. The apostle's argument is to prove that the sin of Adam has ruined the whole human race without and apart from the intervention of the law which, no doubt, had its own specific effect in condemning man to death where it was disobeyed. But he says that death reigned from Adam to Moses over those who had not had any distinct command given to them (like the law or the injunction laid upon Adam) to disobey; hence the reign of death over such is to be traced not to the law but to Adam's fall, combined with their own sin which is its cousequence, and he then contrasts all this with the second Adam, and righteousness and life derived from Him, as sin and death had been derived from the first Adam; so that if the law is alluded to, it is only to put it on one side, as not entering into the parallel which he is here drawing between Adam and Christ, the effects of the sin of the former, and redemption and righteousness brought by the latter. order to do this he dismisses for the time the effect of the law over a part of the human race because he is specifying on the one hand what had affected the whole, i.e., Adam's

fall, and on the other what is equally intended to apply to the whole, viz., the redemption wrought by the second Adam.

Fourthly. That in the next verse the law is brought in as something quite distinct from this, and having a separate object of its own. "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound;" i.e., not only that men were made sinners by one man's disobedience which had been met by the obedience of Christ unto death, but that they were "transgressors" or offenders when the weight and authority of a distinct command had been superadded; but this has rendered grace more apparent, and that it much more abounds by Jesus Christ over sin however aggravated. Respecting the expression "those that receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness," since righteousness in its application to the individual is undoubtedly a gift,\* it does not touch the question at issue, for all believe righteousness to be by Christ and bestowed of God, consequent upon what He had done, whether it be as the result of His death or in His fulfilment of the law.

That Christ is made unto us righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30) says nothing as to how He is so made, except that He is made so to us by God; and if other scriptures tell us that this is by His blood justifying us, or as the result of His having borne sin for us, (2 Cor. v. 21,) and being now risen from the dead, it is merely an assumption to say it is by His keeping the law, when the word of God says nothing of the kind. In the same passage it is stated that "he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." How can wisdom, or sanctification, or

<sup>\*</sup> See Bengel's observations on this point, already quoted.

redemption—all which Christ is equally said to be "made to us"—be imputed? Indeed the form of the expression "made unto us," instead of favouring this doctrine is rather fitted to suggest other ideas. Had the supporters of this doctrine written the passage, they would have said, His legal obedience is our righteousness, whereas the Holy Ghost says of Christ Himself in His present position before God, "He is made unto us righteousness," for this is what we have obtained through Him and in Him, and thus He is made righteousness to us rather than having fulfilled it for us.

Indeed it is now confessed\* that the precise expression the righteousness of Christ is only once used in the New Testament. "Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter i. 1.) But had the apostle even meant to teach this doctrine he would have reversed the words and put "through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our God and Saviour;" whereas, as it stands it is far from expressing it, and as has been suggested, in an epistle addressed to Jews may well bear the force, we have seen it constantly has in the Old Testament, the faithfulness of God to His promises, which accords better with the form of the expression. But even if we take it as the righteousness of Christ, where is there a syllable of His obedience to the law? And we have seen that His death and suffering, and our present standing before God in Him, are spoken of as righteousness. What a feeble foundation upon which to build such a systematic superstructure of doctrine. is admitted that "the righteousness of Christ" (in reality it is of God) is only once mentioned in the New Testament,

<sup>\*</sup> By Mr. Mylne in "Reposing in Jesus"—more recently by others.

and as we have seen His obedience to the law justifying us, nowhere; whilst to deny thereupon that the blood of Christ justifies and admits to heaven, or obtains eternal life for us, is in truth in defiance of all Scripture.

The explicit and positive statements of particular passages as well as the general bearing of Scripture have been fully and carefully traced, and the result is now left to the impartiality of the reader, only recalling to his mind how serious are the questions he is called on to weigh; for a slight has been undeniably put upon the value of the person and of the death of the Son of God, the real nature and evil of sin in believers has been disguised, and the standing of the Christian in full peace and blessing before God in Christ has been disfigured and beclouded. This cannot but produce distance from God practically and corresponding feebleness of action and power against evil, though it may be freely and thankfully admitted that many who have obscure and uncertain views of truth are more earnest and faithful in carrying out the measure of light they possess than others whose knowledge is more advanced, whilst their hearts are less devoted Nevertheless it is Christ who is the truth, and to Christ. it is the truth that makes free when known, and we are sanctified by the truth; so that if the light it gives be dimmed and the standard of truth lowered, the consequence is that our power of living to and enjoying God is infallibly weakened as well as the strength of christian life and of holiness.

Besides this, the idea held by some to the present day, that the whole work of Christ consists in His having kept the law in His life and suffered its penalty in His death. and that there was nothing in His heart but the law, besides contracting the personal glory of Christ to the limits of the law, produces very narrow views of the character of God and His grace toward man; and whilst it provides (in comparison) little for the believer, leaves nothing for those who are far off from God. This is a very capital defect in this system, and in practice the reflection of these principles may be seen in the harsh, exclusive spirit often exhibited by persons of this and of the ultra-Calvinistic school towards the unconverted, and those who differ from them. For our views of the character or aspect of God towards man as manifested in the person and work of Christ, will infallibly and very materially affect our behaviour towards others, as our blessed Lord has shown us. (Matt. v. 44—48; comp. 1 John iv. 11.)

In every sense, therefore, these questions have a practical bearing, and their importance as regards christian life and character can hardly be exaggerated.

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London: G. Morrish, 24, Warwick Lane, Paternoster, Row, E.C.





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